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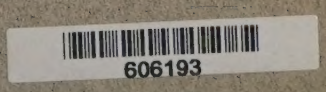
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REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

1868-9.

TWENTY-TWO VOLUMES:—CONTENTS OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

N. B.—*THE* Figures *at the* beginning of the line, *correspond with the* N° *at the foot of each* Report; *and the* Figures *at the* end of the line, *refer to the* MS. Paging *of the Volumes arranged for The House of Commons.*

AGRICULTURE (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN):

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COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

SECOND REPORT

OF

THE COMMISSIONERS,

WITH APPENDIX PART I.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
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1869.

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3. Obligation of school attendance to cease altogether for any child who at the age of 11, or at the time between that age and 12, passes in 5th Standard - - - - „
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COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

1. WE, the Commissioners appointed by Your Majesty to inquire into the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, "for the purpose "of ascertaining to what extent, and with what modifications, the principles of the "Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, and espe- "cially with a view to the better education of such children," humbly submit to Your Majesty this Second Report of our Proceedings in execution of Your Majesty's Commission.

Reports of Assistant Commissioners.

2. The Assistant Commissioners have presented to us their Reports on the respective counties or portions of counties assigned to them, as follows:—The Honourable Edward Stanhope on the counties of Dorset, Kent, Chester, Salop, Stafford, and Rutland; the Honourable Edwin Portman on Hants, Devon, and Cornwall; Mr. F. H. Norman on the counties of Surrey, Wilts, Warwick, Worcester, and Hereford; Mr. G. Culley on Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Derbyshire, and Hertfordshire; Mr. R. F. Boyle on Somersethire. Not long after commencing his duties under us in June 1868, Mr. Boyle felt called upon to accede to an invitation to stand for the representation of the county of Cork. We accepted Mr. Boyle's resignation with the understanding that when the election was over he would complete his inquiry and his Report on the county of Somerset. The other counties which we had destined to Mr. Boyle were Cumberland and Westmoreland. To supply his place we proposed to the Secretary of State the name of a gentleman who had for many years resided in Westmoreland, and was well acquainted with both counties, Mr. Henry Tremenheere, of Craigside, Grasmere. The assent of the Secretary of State having been signified to us, Mr. Henry Tremenheere commenced his duties on the eighth of October 1868. We have, therefore, the satisfaction of adding his Report on those two counties and on a portion of Lancashire. We adverted in our last Report to our loss of the services of the Rev. James Fraser and Mr. J. J. Henley, the first from the demands upon him of his parochial duties, the second in consequence of his accepting an appointment as Poor Law Inspector.

Course of proceeding.

3. The course of proceeding adopted by all the Assistant Commissioners was to select, under the best local advice, certain districts in each county that might be considered typical, to make the inquiry as minute as possible in their districts, and to invite opinions and information by their circulars of inquiry, and other means, from the portions of the county exterior to those districts. By this system the whole of England, with the exceptions, comparatively unimportant to this inquiry, of Middlesex and the manufacturing portions of Lancashire, have been in these two years brought under review. We have much confidence in submitting to Your Majesty that a picture of the various conditions of agricultural life in England, so exact, so impartial, so valuable, both on account of fulness of detail and comprehensiveness of view, has never before been presented for the consideration of Parliament and the public as that afforded by the Reports of our Assistant Commissioners for these two years.

Questions ready for legislation.

4. The questions, therefore, respecting which we are enjoined by our Commission to inquire have now received illustration amply sufficient to point out the course for legislation in regard to England. We anticipate that during the autumn the inquiry will be completed in Wales, and that our Report will be ready for presentation at the beginning of the next Session of Parliament, and will thus enable both Reports to be then considered together. The inquiry in Scotland will follow immediately after that of Wales, and will, we expect, be completed early in the summer of next year.

Separate Reports necessary.

5. Not being able to concur in the conclusions suggested to us by the evidence, we are obliged to present to Your Majesty separate Reports.

All this we humbly certify to Your Majesty.

Given under our hands and seals this 22nd day of October 1869.

HUGH SEYMOUR TREMENHEERE.
EDWARD CARLETON TUFNELL.

2, Victoria Street, Westminster.

MR. TREMENHEERE'S SEPARATE REPORT.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

1. MY colleague, Mr. Tufnell, and myself not being able to take the same view of the results of the evidence which has come before us, I proceed to submit to your Majesty my separate Report.

Subjects of inquiry.

2. The principal points of the general question are stated as follows in our instructions to our Assistant Commissioners (Appendix to First Report, p. 161).

1. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?
2. If it is, what is the age below which it would be desirable to enact that no boy should be employed in farm labour?
3. Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which girls should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?
4. If it is, what is the age below which it is desirable to enact that no girl should be employed in farm labour?
5. Is there good ground for limiting the hours of work of boys?
6. If there is, what are the limitations proposed?
7. Is there good ground for limiting the hours of work of girls?
8. If there is, what are the limitations proposed?
9. Is there any need that the proper meal-times should be secured by legislation to the young and to females engaged in farm labour?
10. Is it necessary to secure by legislation that there should be limitations in proportion to age of the distance to which it should be lawful to take children, or young persons, or women to work?
11. Is it necessary to provide by legislation that females should be protected from unhealthy or unsuitable employment in agriculture?
12. In what manner can the principle of the Factory Acts be best applied to the education of the young in the agricultural districts, especial regard being had to the necessity of adjusting the periods of education to the different circumstances of different parts of the country?

3. In dealing with these points it will not be necessary to adhere to the order in which they are above stated; it will be more convenient to follow the order in which the facts present themselves in their bearing upon each other.

The most prominent fact, the exclusion from work proposed of all children under 10.

4. The most prominent fact, which cannot fail to strike any one seeking from the whole body of the evidence the solution of these questions, is the wide concurrence of opinion among farmers, owners of land, the clergy, and others in favour of arriving at a due measure of education of the young by excluding from work all children under 10 years of age. This opinion is embodied in the resolutions of a very large proportion of the meetings of Boards of Guardians and owners and occupiers of land called together by Mr. Fraser in the counties of Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester (A. 94). It is the "almost universal" opinion of the farmers in Mr. Stanhope's district—the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester—that there should be "a simple prohibition of "field work up to 9 or 10 (C. 173). Mr. Portman states, with a qualification hereafter to be adverted to, that in the county of Cambridge, and the three ridings of Yorkshire, "it is pretty generally conceded that 10 years of age would be a fair age to fix as a "limit below which boys should not be employed in the fields." Mr. Norman states that the majority of farmers in Northamptonshire think that children could be spared from field labour up to the age of 10 (E. 31). Most of the persons assembled at the meetings attended by Mr. Culley in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, who favoured legislative restrictions at all, were for fixing 10 years as the age below which boys should not be employed (F. 51, 66). The same fact shows itself in all our Reports of the present year.

This is especially the farmers' view.

5. This is especially the farmers' view over a wide extent of country. But if closely looked at it will be found to exist almost universally where the farmer has no need of the labour of children under the age of 10, and where if debarred by legislative enactment from employing them, it would be no disadvantage, but rather a gain to employ older children at an increased wage. "At the worst it would only cost a farmer 6*d.* a "week more to get a boy over 10 to do the work now done by a boy under 10," and

this additional expenditure would purchase more efficient labour (E. 31). In the stiff clay districts, with some exceptions, it appears that boys under 10 years are but little wanted. "On this heavy land in Sussex a boy under 11 or 12 (driving the plough) would "not have strength to get through the day" (A. 26). The same is the case, with exceptions, in Nottinghamshire (C. 31) and in Yorkshire (D. 29), and for the same reasons. In North Northumberland the favourable conditions of agricultural life lead to the non-employment in field labour of children under 11 or 12; any legislative restriction, therefore, regarding the age of 10 would not affect that county. In Cumberland and Westmorland they are rarely employed before 12 or 13 (L. 105–6). In Berks and Oxfordshire Mr. Culley shows that very few children are employed under the age of 10 (J. 50, 63).

6. But general, although with important exceptions, as the opinion of employers of agricultural labour in wide districts in many midland and southern and other counties may be in favour of excluding children from field labour under the age of 10, the proposition assumes a different aspect when looked at from the labourers' point of view, even in the counties above mentioned, and much more so elsewhere. The labourers' point of view.

7. It is very true, as has been seen, that in some counties but few children under 10 years of age are employed at all. According to Mr. Culley's labour returns for Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, the proportion of boys employed under 10 years of age usually ranged from 4 and 3 to 1½ and 1 per 1,000 acres (F. 28, 29). In Oxfordshire and Berkshire Mr. Culley's labour returns show that very few children under 10 years are in regular employ during three-fourths of the year (J. 48). Mr. Fraser shows a very small number under that age so employed in the counties which he visited, even after the considerable correction which he states his table would admit of (A. 41, 42). In other counties the same fact exists.

8. But the small number of children under 10 employed in agriculture for longer or shorter periods in the year in certain counties affords but a limited ground from which to derive conclusions on this wide, and to the labouring man in particular, most important subject.

9. Even in the counties or portions of counties where there are the fewest children under 10 years either permanently or occasionally employed, the prevention of such employment by the act of the Legislature, may in many cases inflict privation on a labouring man and his family. But in many counties and portions of counties the labour of children under 10 years of age is largely employed, and is of much importance to the farmer. The earnings of these children are, in numerous instances, an important addition to the family income. In others the labour of such children is, in a large mass of instances, indispensable to the parents, quite irrespective of the question of earnings. Neither does it appear by the evidence that such labour as children under 10 years of age are put to is in general physically injurious to them; and wherever it is so, such injury may be arrested by a very moderate degree of interposition on the part of the Legislature.

10. The counties where the fewest children under 10 years of age are employed in farm work are for the most part those in which the total earnings of the agricultural labourers in permanent employ are high. In North Northumberland, where the earnings of farm labourers, nearly all being engaged by the year, amount in value to from 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week, the parents allow their children to remain at school until the age of 11 or 12, and then send them to work only in the summer up to the age of 14 (B. 7, 32). In Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, counties reported upon by Mr. Culley, the wages of permanent farm servants are 14*s.*, 15*s.*, 16*s.*, up to 17*s.* and 18*s.* a week (J. 101). In Yorkshire, where Mr. Portman reports that the children ought to be excluded from work until the age of 10, the value of a permanent farm servant's earnings is stated at 40*l.* per annum (D. 14, 15). In Norfolk, Essex, Suffolk, and Gloucester, the counties reported on by Mr. Fraser, the earnings of men in constant employ varied from 33*l.* to 37*l.*, 40*l.*, and 45*l.* per annum. Under such circumstances,—and happily this inquiry has brought out the fact that the earnings of the best class of agricultural labourers in permanent employ are now, generally speaking, such as to afford them the means of living and maintaining their families in decency and comfort,—where the total earnings of the year are of the satisfactory amount above indicated, and are rendered secure by a yearly hiring, the labourer of the southern and midland counties would suffer no pecuniary loss that he ought to regret if he were compelled by the act of the Legislature to do that which the Northumberland peasant does of his own accord, namely, to forego the earnings of those of his children who were under 10 years of age in order to let them go to school.

11. But even in those counties where the total earnings of permanently employed farm servants are as high as they are seen to be, there is below that class a large proportion of

farm labourers who are not hired for "wet or dry,"—said by Mr. Fraser to be in the counties visited by him about one-half (A. 76, note). By Mr. Culley, in Oxfordshire and Berkshire those who are not paid in sickness are said to be two-thirds of the whole even of those hired by the year (J. 29). There are others also who are incapable, either by want of aptitude or physical strength, of earning the higher rates of wages; others who are only wanted occasionally, or who are thrown out of work in winter, and whose total earnings consequently fall far short of the higher standards; these classes of men are thus described by Mr. Fraser (A. 76):—

"* * Though the more liberal farmers pay their regular men 'wet or dry,' yet this is by no means a universal practice, and the 'shifty' men who only work for the farmer when they can't get a job elsewhere, and leave him the moment they hear of anything more attractive, are naturally treated with much less ceremony." "* * At the Cromhall meeting it was stated that about half the men "on a farm, those, namely, employed about horses or stock, would be employed wet or dry. The others "would be paid if they chose to brave the weather, which few of them are inclined to do." (Notes of "meeting, No. 87, *see also* Miscellaneous Evidence, No. 24.) "* * So that there must be a very large "number of men in an agricultural district, men not disabled, but past their prime; men with less natural "aptitude and who can't put their hands to any sort of farm work; men who from sickness or weather "lose a considerable amount of time in the year; men whose roving unsettled habits indispose them to "regular employ, whose sum of yearly earnings must often be pounds below what farmers would state "to be the standard of the neighbourhood."

12. To these the earnings of their children from the earliest age at which they can earn anything are, in their eyes at least, of importance. Where the total earnings of the father of the family are low, it is doubtless, in the words of Mr. Portman, "of very "great importance to the mother that every sixpence that can be earned should be "obtained. During the last winter, when flour was at a high price, and where wages "had not risen in proportion," Mr. Portman found that "out of 12*s.* a week (the "husband's earnings) the outgoing for flour alone for the support of the said family of "six children was 10*s.* 6*d.* a week. The woman said she could not live without the "children's earnings" (D. 36). Again, it is possible that while the father's earnings may be low and precarious all his children may be under 10 years of age. "With the "value of every sixpence," Mr. Fraser says (A. 78), "so appreciably brought home to "their intelligence, and with odd jobs of all kinds which children can do, and by which "sixpences can be earned, so continually presenting themselves, it is a matter of regret "rather than of surprise that parents of this humble rank should not be superior to a "temptation the power of which no other class of parents can so fully feel."

If all children under 10 excluded from work aid in some shape would in some cases be required. Dispensing power proposed by some.

13. "That in such cases," Mr. Culley says (F. 102) legislation excluding from work all children under the age of 10, "would oblige parents of young families to apply for "aid in some shape cannot, I think, be denied" (j. pp. 362, 396). Mr. Fraser and Mr. Portman "would accompany such legislation with some dispensing power. If a high amount "of school attendance (for all under 10) were required, the magistrates, it was said, "might be empowered to relax the requirement in the case of any man who could show that "his family was above a given size or his earnings below a certain sum" (A. 98, D. 41).

Both undesirable.

14. I hope to be able to show that the desire of the country,—which aims at taking security that every child engaged in agricultural labour shall receive a satisfactory amount of elementary education,—can be fulfilled without having recourse to the principle of prohibition of the child's labour at any age; and without imposing on the parent the necessity for aid which would impair his feeling of independence, or on the magistrates the difficult, invidious, and undesirable task of granting dispensations from the requirements of an Act of Parliament.

The principle to be kept in view.

15. The principle which I desire to keep in view in the consideration of this complicated and difficult question is that Legislation should conform as nearly as possible to the existing habits of the country, and should interfere with those habits only to the extent indispensable to the objects to be attained.

Reasons.

16. I have referred to counties where children's labour under the age of 10 is very little required, and where the farmers are quite willing to be prevented by Legislation from using it at all up to that age.

17. I now beg to direct attention to those districts where the labour of children under the age of 10 is very much used; and where it is of the greatest importance both to the farmer and to the parent.

18. In four out of the six districts into which Lincolnshire may be said to be divided, —namely, in the Wolds, the Cliff, the Heath, and the Fens, where the farms are large and the population scanty, and the soil and cultivation of a peculiar kind, there is so large a demand for the labour of young children in bird scaring, tenting (looking after cows, sheep, pigs, or horses), weeding, picking twitch or stones, bean-dropping, singling turnips, and other descriptions of light work (C. 45, 59), that "the common age for boys to begin

"work in the field is 8, and many go at 7, some at 6 years old" (C. 70). In the two other districts of the county, the Isle of Axholme and the Marshes, there is a class of small freeholders and small farmers occupying "very rich land, especially suited for "garden cultivation, where the growth of potatoes is carried on to a great extent. The "land is cultivated by the small occupier with the help of his family," and he employs very little hired labour. This class is also very numerous in several parts of the Fens (C. 16, 17, 26). Being in many cases very little raised above the hired labourer, and more hardly worked and less well-fed and housed, "and often under a heavy incubus "of debt," and not being able to afford to hire labour, they are obliged to avail themselves of the labour of their children at the earliest age that they can be of service to them. At certain seasons (at potato-setting and potato harvest) almost all the female and juvenile population is engaged in field work. Their children are "worked earlier," and as a consequence have less schooling than those of hired labourers (C. 16, 17, 75). In the same manner in the south of Durham, where "the land is much subdivided, that "is, broken up into small farms," the labour upon the small holdings is done by the farmer and his family, perhaps assisted by one or more young people hired into the house and living with the family. "These small farmers," while always spoken of as an honest industrious race, "have a hard struggle to live," and take their children away from school to help them "at a very early age" (B. 66).

19. In Lincolnshire, the earnings of "confined" labourers, that is, men hired by the year and living on the farms, and "paid partly in kind," are good, amounting to 40*l.* or 45*l.* a year (C. 21). In their case, therefore, it is the great demand for children's labour by the farmers which causes it to be employed at an early age. In the cases of the small freeholders and occupiers of other portions of that county and of the county of Durham it is the poverty of the parents which obliges them to the employment of the children in field-work at the earliest possible age, and the demand is, under both these very different conditions, so great that, as appears from the evidence relating to those districts, a very large proportion of all the children available for field labour are brought into it as soon as they can be of any use. The same fact appears in Somersetshire (k. 215, 230.)

20. In Cambridgeshire, and in the north and west ridings of Yorkshire, this same class of small occupiers exists. "To these men," Mr. Portman says, "the loss of their chil-"dren's aid (under 10 years of age) would be fatal; they are too poor to hire labour, and "the assistance rendered by a child of 8 or 9 years of age is of great value" (D. 39). Mr. Portman perceives that the mere exemption of such children from a measure prohibiting the employment of child's labour up to the age of 10 would afford but little security for their obtaining any more education than the very small quantity they pick up at present (D. 39-42).

21. The higher rate of wages in Yorkshire, Mr. Portman thinks, is the reason why children do not go out to field work at so early an age as in Cambridgeshire. But, nevertheless, even in Yorkshire, they "do go out as young as 8 or 9 years." Children below 10 years of age are employed by the farmers at scaring birds and "tenting," which includes looking after pigs in the stubble and cows in the lanes (D. 25). In Yorkshire the hirings are for the most part by the year, and the earnings as increased by harvest and piece-work are "much in excess" of the average rate of 14*s.* a week. The necessities, therefore, of the farmer, probably more than those of the few labourers earning lower rates or having uncertain work (D. 10–13), cause the employment when it does occur of children under 10 years of age. But, in Cambridgeshire, where the practical working of the system of field labour with regard to education is, that now, as a rule, boys leave day school entirely at 9 years of age, never to return, "it is the com-"bined effect" both of the great demand, in public and private gangs, for children's labour on the light lands in weeding, gathering crops, twitching, singling turnips, and harvest work, occupying nearly nine months of the year (D. 18), and of the poverty of the parents (*ibid.*) that leads to their going out to field work "as young as 6 years old, "many at 7 or 8." "The reason for their going out so young appears to be in many "cases this, that the parents compel the ganger to take the little ones as a condition of "getting regularly the labour of the bigger child in the same family" (*ibid.*) Although, therefore, in some counties where the labour of children under 10 is little wanted, their exclusion from work under that age would only occasion their parents a loss not exceeding the rate of 1*s.* a week throughout the year, as in the cases adverted to by Mr. Culley (F. 102), and even less in the instances quoted by Mr. Norman (E. 31), it is clear that in the counties above named, where the demand for the labour of children under 10 years of age is great, and the desire of the parents that they should be employed, great also, the value of their labour to their parents in money or money's worth is equivalent to a considerable addition to the family income.

22. Precisely the same state of facts is found in Dorsetshire, Kent, Shropshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, and other counties reported on.

23. In the portion of Dorsetshire where the farms are small "the occupiers in some "cases cultivate them with the help of their families with very little hired labour;" the population is "less well off," the wages are lower, and many men are thrown out of work in winter (G. 3). In another part of Dorset there is another class of labourers who have obtained small pieces of land on a lease for lives, with permission to build on it (G. 3). In the county generally one of its special characteristics is the system of "hiring whole families" (G. 7). The consequence of these various conditions is that boys go to work at a very early age, "some at 6 or even younger" (G. 6). "To "speak generally," Mr. Stanhope says, "the proportion of boy labour employed upon "farms is larger than in any county visited by me, even in the Fens" (*ibid.*). The causes are "the lowness of wages," which makes every labourer anxious to send his children out, although near Dorchester this is certainly surpassed by the eagerness of the farmer to get them (G. 7).

24. In Kent many men are thrown out of employ in winter; they are glad, therefore, to yield to the great demand in that county for children's labour, and to allow them to go to work for "occasional jobs" at the age of 7 or 8 for two, four, or even seven months in the year, as well as to employ them themselves from the age of infancy (G. 25–6).

25. In the south-western corner of Shropshire, bordering on Wales, there is a district of small farms. Employment is less regular and wages are low. "The condition of the "peasantry, in no part of this county very satisfactory, is in this hill country of "the south most deplorably low." The poverty of the parent consequently, for "in "this district little pressure is put upon the children by the farmers to go to "work," causes the children "to become irregular at school about the usual age of 8 "or 9" (G. 64).

26. In all these, as in other counties which it would be superfluous to refer to by name but where the same facts may be verified (h. ss. 1, 2, 3, 19, 23, 42, 49, 79, 83, 120, 135, 229, 304, 310, 336, j. pp. 374–5, p. 394, s. 26b., k. 181, 229, 230, 256, s. 6), it is, in the words of Mr. Stanhope (G. 103), "mainly the struggle for existence among the poor," which makes them wish to withdraw them from school and profit by their earnings at the earliest possible age; and the fact that in some counties, as in Oxfordshire and Berkshire (J. 63), (although with exceptions even there,) Cumberland and Westmorland (L. 92, 94), and others already referred to, "agricultural labour is but little wanted before "the age of 10, and does not seriously interfere with the school attendance of children "under 10 years of age" (J. 63), would afford no sufficient justification for an enactment excluding from farm labour children under 10 years with a view to their school attendance up to that age while such pressing demands and necessities both of the farmer and the parent exist on so wide a scale in other parts of the kingdom.

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27. If facts too strong to be disregarded, namely, the vital importance to the labourer of the earnings of his child in numerous cases, and the imperious demand for children's labour for farming purposes at an earlier age than 10 years in many of the most important agricultural counties, afford strong reasons against an enactment excluding children from farm labour up to the age of 10, the next point for consideration is, would such non-interference with their labour up to that age leave them exposed to physical injury, arising from work at too early an age, and further would it present any serious obstacles to their acquiring such an amount of sound elementary education as is now generally recognised to be indispensable both for their own interests and those of the country at large?

28. Speaking generally, and subject only to very limited exceptions hereafter to be adverted to, the early age at which children go to work, and their hours of work, are not found to be physically injurious to them.

29. In North Northumberland the hours for women and children are so regulated as to be deserving of consideration in other parts of the kingdom. Mr. Henley thus describes them:—

"The hours of labour for women and children are nine and a half hours in summer, viz., from six to six, with two hours and a half for meals; that is, two hours for dinner and a short break at nine and at four. In winter the hours are regulated by the light. These hours of work are earlier and longer than in the south. On the other hand, the women and children are able to return home for a long rest in the hottest time of a summer's day when they find their dinner cooked for them, and as the majority are single women the early start from home cannot be prejudicial.

"I am persuaded that any restriction or interference in the present system of employment of women and children would be detrimental to the social condition of the district and destructive to the turnip husbandry of Glendale ward.

"At certain seasons it is absolutely essential that all the labour on the farm should be united, men, horses, women, and children working together. And though the work at such seasons is severe the pressure only lasts for a limited time."

30. And as the children seldom go to work before 11 or 12 years of age, and then only for summer work (B. 32, 46), the habits of that county afford a standard of comparison with the ages of going to work and the hours of work elsewhere.

31. Of the age and hours of work for boys in the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Chester Mr. Stanhope says that,—

"Where the hours are not too long or the work too hard, few persons think such employment as is given to young boys hurtful to them. The medical testimony is almost unanimous on this point. Several witnesses, on the contrary, speak to the great advantage a boy gains from the better food which his earnings enable his family to give him, but the best evidence on this point is the appearance of the boys themselves. No diseases or deformities appear traceable to this early work; no such cases were pointed out, and few were mentioned to me. The boys throughout my district appeared to be healthy and well formed. Where boys in a school were indicated to me as having just come back from field work they were almost always strong and healthy looking" (C. 71).

32. Again,—

"Boys working alone are generally employed from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and from light to dark in winter. At tenting these hours are exceeded, but this is 'passive work,' and the time is only complained of on account of the long exposure to bad weather and vacancy of thought.

"These hours do not appear excessive for boys 12 hours (inclusive of meal times) may seem a long time for boys of 8 or 9, but in practice it is found that the work done by such children is so light that it can do them no injury, and employers are very reasonable in adjusting the description of work to the strength of the lad" (C. 88–9).

33. Again,—

"These children do not grow up to be unhealthy or deformed or unfit for work, but, on the contrary, they become labourers who can compare in strength and ability with any in England."

34. In Cambridgeshire and the three ridings of Yorkshire, Mr. Portman did not find that the health of children had suffered from overwork in bad weather or in wet crops (D. 19), and, with one of the exceptions hereafter to be noticed, he thinks generally that the light work of children under 10 does not injuriously affect them (D. 40). The same opinion is expressed by Mr. Norman in relation to Northamptonshire, where boys "begin "to work about the age of 8, a few as young as 7" (E. 10, 11, 18). Mr. Norman states distinctly (E. 23) that he thinks it clearly proved by the medical evidence that no restriction upon children's labour is required on the ground of health. Mr. Culley in his Report on Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, although referring to the same exceptional cases as have been adverted to by others, concurs in the very strong opinion expressed by almost every witness he examined that "as far as protecting the children from personal injury "arising from the nature of their employment in agriculture is concerned no legislative "interference is necessary" (F. 32). In his Report on Oxfordshire and Berkshire Mr. Culley, while referring to the same exception, expresses the same general conclusion that legislative interference, for the sake of protecting children from physical injury supposed to arise from the manner in which they are employed in farm labour, is not necessary (J. 52). Mr. Stanhope in his Report on the counties of Dorset, Kent, Chester, Salop, Stafford, and Rutland, while strongly commenting on one of the exceptions about to be noticed, states that "on physical grounds alone there appears no reason for interfering "with the ordinary light labour to which boys are now put at occasional seasons," but rather sound grounds for encouraging it (G. 97). In other counties where the labour of children under 10 years of age is employed the same opinions prevail.

The exceptions above alluded to are the following:—

35. The first relates to the employment in some counties of boys at a very early age with horses, following either the cart or the plough, the horse-hoe or the drill. This is very much the case in Dorsetshire, where boys begin to go with horses at the age of 7 or 8, and are often so employed very long hours, *i.e.*, from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. In Leicestershire they begin at 10 (C. 172). Mr. Stanhope thus describes the practice in Dorset:— Exception, boys going with horses.

"But employment with horses when regular throughout the year appears to me to be the reverse of 'light.' The hours are very long (often from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.); it gives little leisure to a boy, and requires him to walk every day at least 10 or 12 miles over ploughed ground. In most counties no farmer would think of putting a boy to such work, unless very exceptionally strong, before 10 or 11 years of age; yet in Dorsetshire many boys, as before mentioned, begin at 7 or 8. One very large employer of such boys near Wimborne, who begged that his name might not be made public, considered all fit to go with horses at 6, and to plough at 8 or 9 years of age. In that county, indeed, the per-centage of boy labour is excessive, and it seems probable that to this cause, next to insufficiency of food, is partly traceable the stunted condition and early decrepitude of the adult population." (G. 94.)

36. And it is thus further described in detail:—

"But the objections to early employment with horses are very strong. Dr. Aldridge, of Dorchester, attributes to it 'the prevention of proper muscular development, and very often the production of 'tuberculous diseases.' 'The sameness and overhardness of toil mars the young and yielding 'muscles.' 'It is seen in their after life in a way to me most clear; there is a want of physical 'energy,—of what I may call labour pluck,—a deadening of mind and body force.' 'A boy of this sort '(7 or 8 years' old) gets up with his father at 4 or 5; has to help to prepare and feed the horses; walks 'from 6 till 2, except a little halt for meals; then comes to dinner, and returns to feed the horses. I 'see the effect of this early work in making the boys bow-legged.'" (G. 96.)

37. Mr. Stanhope adds in the following paragraph that he believes that "the opinion "even of farmers in most counties would agree in condemning continuous work with "horses at an early age, and in fixing 11 or 12 as the very earliest time at which it "ought reasonably to be undertaken." (G. 97).

38. In North Northumberland the practice is that "horses are never entrusted to "boys before the age of 14" (B. 33).

39. Mr. Stanhope says above that in most counties no farmer would think of putting a boy to such work, unless very exceptionally strong, under 10 or 11 years of age. In the counties reported on by Mr. Fraser, "few farmers are said to be likely to put "boys to drive the plough, the horse-hoe, or the drill until they were 11 or 12 years "of age" (A. 45), but Mr. Fraser had reason to assert that at plough-driving a boy's day's work was not unfrequently 14, 15, and even 16 hours long, of which he had "abundant proof."

40. The farm labourers with whom Mr. Fraser had a conference at Newent told him that "a carter boy would be expected to get to his work between 5 and 6 a.m., and "perhaps does not leave off till between 7 and 8 p.m." And they added that "these "hours are too much for little boys, but they can't be shortened: and the change "that is wanted is to employ bigger boys, who can better stand the time. A lad "of 14 to 16 in their opinion would make a better carter boy than one of 12 or 13" (A. 46).

41. In Kent, the same fact presents itself, although in a minor degree. The waggoners occasionally take their own sons to help them as their "'mate' before the age of 10 "years." As soon as the boy becomes a "mate" "almost all opportunity of self-improve- "ment is gone. A boy works from 6 a.m. till 8 or 9 p.m., and is entirely under the "control of the waggoner, almost invariably an utterly ignorant man. Very few "farmers will interfere to make it possible for the mate to go to a night school, if he "would, but no great disposition seems to be shown to do so. Often the hours for "feeding horses are so arranged that it is quite impossible for the lads to get away to "either school or church." (G. 27.)

42. And although there appears to be an increasing disinclination in the boys to become "mates," the hours "being too long for them," yet as "almost all the boys of the "agricultural labouring class leave school altogether at 10 years of age on the average, "and in the case of schools under a mistress about a year sooner," there will always be a probability of some boys being subject by their fathers to these long hours of work at an age before 11 years. (G. 28, 29.)

43. The same point was brought to the notice of Mr. Culley by several medical gentlemen in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Mr. Culley adverted to the effect produced, or supposed to be produced, on the feet and limbs of plough boys (and field keepers) by travelling over the tenacious soil which covers a considerable area in the north of both counties, and the practice of leaving boys when too young in charge of horses and carts (F. 32). Also in Oxfordshire and Berkshire Mr. Culley found that "carter's boys, *i.e.*, "those who help the carters who have charge of horses, are expected to be in the "stables soon after 4 a.m., when they bait their horses; at 6 they are allowed an hour "for breakfast; from 7 a.m. till 3 p.m. they drive the team in the field, having a rest "of from 15 to 30 minutes for luncheon at 12 o'clock. After putting in the horses "at 3, they are allowed till 4 o'clock for dinner, and are in the stables again baiting "and doing up their horses till about 6 p.m. They, therefore, have 11 or 12 hours' "work, less the 15 or 30 minutes for luncheon, according as they are in the stables "at 4 or 5 a.m."

44. Mr. Culley proceeds to remark that "the long hours of carter boys are by several "witnesses considered to be injurious to their health." "The evil effect on the feet "and limbs of boys, arising from the tenacious character of the soil, over which many of "them have to drive their team for eight hours in succession, was pointed out by "several witnesses;" and on this head Dr. Batt, of Witney, says (see Oxon evidence 72),

"I think that children are employed too young in heavy ploughed land; it tells on them "in after life; when they get to be about 50 they go at the knees and are very much bent."

45. Mr. Culley while thinking that "the long hours of the carter boy are unsuited to "the age of many of those who are employed in that capacity," and while attributing "the peculiar gait of the male agricultural labourer in these and the adjoining counties "to the effect of the sticky land (perhaps aided by tight leggings) on the feet and legs "of the team boys," thinks, nevertheless, from the facts gathered in the counties he visited, that legislative interference with this practice is not required. The question, however, as has been seen, involves still graver facts in the county of Dorset, and has been shown to be of importance in other counties.

Age below which boys should not be employed with horses.

46. All these facts point to the propriety of fixing an age below which children should not be employed with horses. By the Act 3 Geo. 4. c. 126. s. 131, no boy under 13 may drive a cart on a turnpike road. That Act is said to have failed in some places as being adverse to public opinion (C.111; G. 95). I presume to think that an enactment prohibiting boys under the age of 11 from going with horses, and therefore freeing them from liability to be at work from 4 or 5 a.m. to 7 or 8 p.m., would have a strong public opinion in its favour.

Private gangs do not require legislative regulation.

47. The question of whether any restrictions are required on physical grounds on some other branches of juvenile agricultural labour has been adverted to in several of the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners. The matters most prominently mentioned are those of the employment of children in private gangs, and the distances to which in some counties children are obliged to go to their work, whether to be employed in a private gang or individually.

48. I agree with an observation referred to by Mr. Stanhope (G. 92), that in respect to these matters it "will require a strong case to justify interference." On reviewing the whole of the evidence on these points I do not think that there is such a case. The difference between a private and a public gang is thus very clearly stated by Mr. Norman (E. 6) with respect to a private gang:—

"The remuneration of superintending labourer does not depend upon the amount of work performed by the gang, therefore it is not his interest to overwork them; and the profit of the farmer does not depend upon his employing very young children, therefore he has no inducement to engage them before they are strong enough to perform the labour allotted to them."

49. To the same effect are the remarks of Mr. Portman:—

"The private gang is constantly employed by one and the same farmer, and is always at hand for the work. Half an hour's cessation from any particular job on account of bad weather would not be of much consequence to the employer, because he can with certainty put on the same number of hands on the following day, whereas in the case of a public gang they are taken from farm to farm and are compelled by the ganger to complete the work at each place on a specified day in order that he may proceed to fulfil his contract on another farm" (D. 19).

50. Mr. Fraser, although disposed towards extending to private gangs some of the limitations existing in regard to private gangs (A. 38, 39), adverts to the fact that "it "would only be on farms of the largest size, ranging from one to two or three thousand "acres, that anything like continuous employment could be found for a private gang; and, "unless it were likely to be continuously employed, few farmers would take the trouble "to organize one." In this a witness, quoted by Mr. Portman agrees; he thinks that "the farmers will find it very expensive to send out a man in charge of five or six "children, and that a small farmer would have a difficulty in getting the work done one "or two days in the week" except by a public gang (D. 21). On such exceptionally large farms as above adverted to, or even on farms of much smaller size, but still large enough to make that species of organized labour profitable, it may be inferred from the evidence before us that the intelligence of the employer would lead to a system of work most conducive to permanent efficiency. Such are the examples given by Mr. Culley in his Report on Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

"It will be seen from the evidence that employment in private gangs exists only to a very limited extent in either Bedfordshire or Bucks, and is usually confined to the employment of from 10 to 20 boys between 8 and 13 years of age under a steady labourer or foreman. In only one instance was a return made to me of such a gang where both girls and boys are employed, and in that case it consisted of five boys and five girls all under 13 years of age, occasionally employed in twitching, weeding, &c. (see Mr. Stephenson's evidence in Summary of Circular Questions).

"I had several opportunities of seeing these boys during my stay at Woburn, and I think that if children are to be continuously employed in farm labour between 10 and 13 years of age they could not be employed in a manner better calculated to make them efficient labourers without overtaxing their strength than that in which the boys composing the Woburn gang are employed. The Melchbourne Park gang consists of 10 boys between 8 and 10 years of age employed in light work during spring, summer, and autumn. The Aston Clinton gang is composed of 15 boys whose average age is 10½, and of these the Rev. C. W. W. Eyton says, 'there is nothing injurious to the health of these boys arising 'from the nature of their employment, nor are they ill-treated in any way.'

"The same remark would, I think, apply to all the boy gangs in these two counties, and putting aside the educational part of the subject, it appears to me that children are better employed in such gangs or parties than when mixed up with adult labourers or draggling after their parents in piece-work" (F. 26).

Question of restrictions on female labour.

51. There is no question within the scope of our inquiries upon which greater differences of opinion have been recorded in our evidence than that of the necessity or otherwise of legislative restrictions on the employment of women and of female children.

Great varieties of opinion.

52. The varieties of opinion on the subject which appear in the Reports of all our Assistant Commissioners are thus fully represented by Mr. Fraser (A. 51),—

"Some would prohibit female labour altogether; some would limit the restriction to unmarried women under 20; others would prohibit up to the age of 18, or 16, or 13; some would allow work up to 13 and prohibit it afterwards. Some would limit female labour to special kinds of work, or to special seasons; would allow it in haymaking, harvest, and hop-picking, and in the more temperate months of the year, but would prohibit it in other farm operations and during the winter. Some think the evil is confined to cases where females work together in gangs, and that there is very little harm in their employment in small groups, still less when they work in their mother's company or under their mother's eye. Not a few consider that the evil is lessening, and in some parishes has even disappeared, and see no necessity for legislative restrictions at all."

53. These diversities of opinion doubtless truly represent the impressions of individuals well competent to judge upon the state of circumstances coming under their observation in their respective neighbourhoods.

54. The physical injury attending the employment of females in farm labour is nowhere represented as weighing so much in determining the question as the presumed moral injury. In a few cases indeed, such as that in particular of women attending to threshing machines (A. 49, C. 44, G. 80), legislative restrictions have been suggested. But the practice is also said to be on the decline (C. 44); and in Northumberland, neither that nor any other description of farm work is found to be attended with injury or disadvantage to the women (B. 22–31). In all the other districts reported on no restrictions were thought necessary upon the labour of women or girls either on physical or moral grounds (D. 33, 34, F. 33, G. 82, 86–89, H. 48, I. 24, J. 55, K, 16, L. 22).

Legislation not necessary.

55. The opinion is very general that there is an increasing "disinclination to field "work on the part of women" (I. 24); that "the employment of women in the fields is "gradually dying out" (H. 48); that "the practice will in time disappear under the "influence of public opinion and the gradual improvement in manners" (L. 22); that "no gain to morality" can be expected from legislative interference by attempting "the "separation of the sexes while at work" (C. 64–66). In other districts "few "young girls are employed" (J. 53), or few females generally (E. 8), or the employment of young girls in the field is almost universally condemned (D. 34).

56. "The evil," Mr. Fraser says, "is to some extent being mitigated by natural and "spontaneous influences. Everywhere I heard the same story that women are found "to be less and less disposed to go out to work upon the land. They will refuse "unsuitable work; they will stay at home on wet days. Whether from the easier "circumstances in which they live, or from their having become intelligent enough to "take a more accurate measure of loss and gain, there seems to be much less attraction "for them in the farmers 8*d*. or 6*d*. a day than there used to be" (A. 49).

57. I therefore think the following conclusions of Mr. Fraser applicable to the general question:—

"One may venture to trust somewhat to the curative influences of education and social progress. Agriculture, I pr sume, has not declined in the last quarter of a century in the counties of Gloucester, Essex, and Sussex, yet not a fifth part of the number of women is employed upon the farms in these counties now that was employed upon them 25 years ago. Many forms of labour—driving carts, for instance—which they undertook without reluctance then, nothing probably would persuade them to undertake now. The more extensive introduction of machinery is likely to supersede much female, and indeed much juvenile, labour; and though to our impatient eyes the march of social improvements always seems slower than we think it ought to be, and in fact we can only estimate its rate when we carry our memory back over a considerable flight of time, yet it may be retarded rather than quickened by legislation, if public sentiment rebels against that legislation as needlessly vexatious, interfering, uncalled for, or inopportune." (A. 53.)

Distance to which a child should be allowed to go to work.

58. On the subject of regulating the distance to which a child should be allowed to go to its work, Mr. Stanhope refers to the fact that "the only time when it is a real hardship "to children" to go long distances to work "is when their hours of work are not "diminished in consequence of the distance they have to go" (C. 103). In the counties reported upon by Mr. Portman, it appears that "the women and children "travel to and from their work in their employers' time and not in their own" (D. 30).

59. Mr. Portman adds that "inasmuch as the interests of the employer would lead him to seek his labour in the nearest place, and the interests of the head of the labourer's family would prevent the children being sent a long distance to work at the same rate of wages as if the work were close to the door, legislation on this point is not necessary" (D. 30). Legislation not required.

60. In the districts included in Mr. Stanhope's Second Report (G. 100) he found that "women and children are rarely taken long distances to work, the Irish gangs out of the large towns of Cheshire and Shropshire constituting almost the only exception. In other cases the work is at no such unreasonable distance as to call for any special notice." Also, Mr. Henley states (B. 214) that in his district "it is not necessary to limit by legislation the distance to which children should be taken to work, as no abuse exists."

61. A point on which it was thought from the evidence collected during the Inquiry of 1866 into the public gangs, that legislation might be required, namely, the employment of females in weeding high corn in wet weather, appears to be confined to the Fen district of Lincolnshire, where it was first observed" (C. 113) (D. 19). Another point is also cleared up by the evidence, namely, that no legislative interference is required in regard to meal times. Employment of females in weeding high wet corn. Legislation not required for; or as to meal times.

62. Having disposed of the instances in which children's labour at a very early age is, or has been supposed to be, physically injurious to them, I will now advert to one species of employment in which moral injury may reasonably be inferred to result from the manner in which it is now carried on.

63. The species of employment alluded to is that of "tenting," which includes the scaring of birds, and looking after cows, sheep, pigs, or horses. "The scaring of birds," Mr. Stanhope says (C. 45), "would for the most part employ children for a few weeks in spring or autumn, but other descriptions of 'tenting' often employ a boy almost all the summer. On the sand of Notts I found many children employed in this way in the winter also. This employment involves a long day's work from sunrise to sunset. It is a passive work, for a boy tenting crows has little else to do but 'to 'shout.' So little is there to occupy the mind in it that the chief complaint against it is that it encourages vacancy of mind and listless habits, and it is of no use in training up a child to work." Sunday work of children.

64. But the evil arising out of these occupations is that they are continued during the whole of Sunday. "Boys go to it at 7 or 8 years old. Some go even at 6. Girls do a great deal in some districts, and at the same age as the boys" (C. 45, 46).

65. Mr. Fraser thus speaks of the injurious moral effects of the practice in the counties which he reported upon:—

"The effect of employing the same boy every day in the week, perhaps for months together, upon his general character and tone of mind is one that only those who have had experience of it can adequately appreciate; it is emphatically brutalizing. The boy never cleans himself, never puts on his best clothes, loses all reverence for the Sabbath, severs a link that attached him to his teachers and school-fellows, and misses the chance that the Sunday school would have given him of having a little intellectual movement imparted at least once a week to the stagnant faculties of his mind." (A. 48.)

66. Mr. Fraser calls our attention to a suggestion made to him by the Rev. J. D. Ballance, vicar of Howford, Norfolk, namely, "that where boys are employed, as they frequently are when bird scaring or sheep tending, all the seven days in the week, the same boy should not be employed on two successive Sundays, but only on alternate Sundays" (*ibid.*).

67. In Northamptonshire, Mr. Norman found that "the boys employed in scaring birds usually have to come on Sundays. They were occasionally relieved for a part of the day by another member of the family so as to have an opportunity of going to church" (E. 17). This amount of consideration for the children so employed does not appear to be common, and is not to be depended upon. In Somersetshire, Mr. Boyle notices that "Sunday is no exception" to the days in which children are employed at bird scaring, so that they get no holiday at all during the week. From the nature of the case this may be inferred to be the most common practice throughout the kingdom, and one with regard to which it may well behove the Legislature to interpose in order to secure for the young children so employed the benefit of every alternate Sunday for attendance at church and Sunday school. Should only be allowed to be employed on alternate Sundays.

68. I have shown that there is no ground, from a physical point of view, for adopting the suggestion made by so many employers of labour that all children under 10 years of age should be excluded from farm work, and I have adverted to the two species of work—the going with horses and "tenting" on Sundays, in respect which a very

moderate amount of legislative interference is required. The next question for consideration is, Is it necessary to fix any minimum age, as under the Factory Acts, below which it shall not be lawful to employ children in agriculture? I am of opinion that it is not.

No minimum age required under which children should not be employed.

69. The conditions under which a child is employed in a factory or a workshop are so different from those under which a child is employed in any occupation connected with agriculture, that reasons for the limitation of children's labour which were of irresistible weight in one case have a very restricted application in the other. In a factory or a workshop a child is liable to work in a close and heated atmosphere; and when working in connexion with machinery its attention is ever on the stretch and its movements are often rapid and continuous for various periods of time together. The effect of such a mode of employment upon the very young was shown to be physically injurious to them, and therefore to justify legislative measures for their protection. But it has been seen that employment in the healthy occupations of agriculture cannot be shown to be attended with physical injury, even to the very young, with the exception which has been pointed out above, and for which the interposition of the Legislature has been suggested. There are, doubtless, cases in which children may have suffered from being so long on their legs at bird-scaring and tenting while the days are long (A. 46), but Mr. Stanhope remarks that although in "tenting" the hours are long, it is nevertheless "passive work" (C. 88), and Mr. Boyle's remarks (K. 6), that fatigue arising from it is exceptional, corresponds with the general opinion as already referred to in detail. Also, although being exposed to wet and cold in spring is noticed, in the case of children so employed, as an occasional subject of complaint, it is not a matter of such gravity as to require that the protection of the Legislature should be invoked on behalf of such cases. The good feeling of employers "in adjusting the description of work to the strength of the lad" (C. 89), and in affording the means of shelter (Boyle, K. 6), and due care on the part of their parents to shield their children so employed against wind and weather by proper clothing, may be looked to as their sufficient protection.

The analogy of the Factory Acts not applicable.

70. Another marked difference also between employment in a factory or workshop and employment in agriculture consists in the fact that when once a child begins to be of use in earning wages in manufacturing employment, it is liable to be so employed continuously. From the effects therefore of such continuous occupation at too early an age the factory legislation very properly interposes to shield the child entirely until the age of 8 years, and then only permits it for the half of every day, or for every alternate day. But the necessities of agricultural employment do not demand the continuous employment of children below the age of 8, or even, except in the particular cases which have been noticed above as justifying legislation on their behalf, below the age of 10 or 11 years; and the periods of demand for the labour of very young children are separated from each other by others when there is no demand for it, and which consequently are to them periods of entire rest.

Much reason for leaving children free to accept work when wanted.

71. There being no reason, on the ground of physical injury, for fixing an age below which children shall not be allowed to work, there is, on the other hand, much reason for leaving them free to accept work when wanted for it. They have been shown to be indispensable both to large farmers and small occupiers at certain times of the year in a large portion of the kingdom; and their earnings are in so many cases of such importance to their parents that it would demand a very strong case of physical or moral injury to justify Parliament in depriving the family of that source of income. It is said, indeed, that in some instances, taking the extra amount of food required by the children when at work, and the extra wear and tear of clothes, the sum earned does not equal the expenditure. But the remark of a lady whose experience among the labouring classes is said by Mr. Stanhope to be very great (C. 81) may be taken, on this point, as of very general application. "It is" (under certain circumstances) "bad unprofitable work, but hunger is worse." (*g.* 45, 150, 200, 201; *i.* D. ss. 11, 15, 17, 22, 24, 26, 27, 31, 36; *j.* p. 395, s. 28 b.; p. 405, s. 68; k. 141, 151.) On the whole, however, the evidence demonstrates that it is far from unprofitable. Even the minimum wages of 3*d.* a day, for the occasional periods of work, for the very youngest, go some way towards the family sustenance "in hard times;" and there can be no doubt that the more usual rates in many districts of 4*d.* or 6*d.* per day for children under 10 years of age are a substantial addition to the resources of the family (*infra* § 113).

Exclusion from work would not necessarily imply attendance at school.

72. It is with a view to a more regular and more prolonged school attendance that a restriction at which children may go to work in agriculture is most strenuously urged. It is argued that they should be excluded up to a certain age from going to work, in order that they may go to school; and it being plain that their not going to work does not necessarily involve their going to school, it is further required that Parliament should

devise some form of compulsion to oblige them to do so. The form of compulsion very much advocated is that no child should be allowed to go to work in any agricultural employment unless it can produce a certificate of having obtained a certain amount of education or having fulfilled certain conditions of school attendance (A. 60, 62, 94, 99; E. 29; *j.* p. 375). Form of compulsion suggested by some inadmissible.

73. But it is essential to observe regarding this proposal that it is one that has only been accepted in the legislation of its country in one case, that of the children working in mines and collieries; and that this case is not one the circumstances of which afford a justification for its adoption, as an example, in the case before us. The Act 23 & 24 Vict. c. 151., s. 1, excludes any boy under 12 years of age from working in mines or collieries, but permits him (by s. 2) to work at 10 on production of a certificate, "under the hand "of a competent schoolmaster, that such boy is able to read and write." The wages of a miner or collier are so high as to permit of a provision excluding his son from labour in a mine until he can read and write, without hardship. The Act is, nevertheless, rendered nugatory by the employers almost universally declining to take boys to work under the age of 12, and its provisions are in course of being reconsidered by the Legislature. The certificate is considered of no value, as it fixes no definite standard of acquirement. The circumstances of the agricultural labourer are so different from those of the miner and collier that it appears to me impossible that Parliament should be willing to adopt the principle of this Act by excluding his children from work under a certain age.

74. Such a proposal, if sanctioned by Legislation, would throw upon the parent the whole burden both of the maintenance and education of the child without any contribution on the part of the child towards either.

75. It has been shown most distinctly in previous paragraphs that there must be numerous instances throughout the country in which such a burden could not be borne by an agricultural labourer without external aid. It has been seen that even in those counties where the wages of agricultural labourers in constant employment range high—to say nothing of those where the rates of wages are low—there is the whole class of men not in constant employ; a certain other proportion of men unequal, either from want of aptitude or physical capacity, to earn anything beyond the lower rates of wages; a certain other portion thrown occasionally out of work by ill-health or accident. To all these the obligation not only of keeping their younger children from work but of clothing them sufficiently to enable them to attend school, and of paying the school fees, would be felt to be more or less oppressive under these varying circumstances. It is, Mr. Stanhope rightly says, mainly the struggle for existence "among the poor which makes "them wish to be free from any restrictions likely in any possible case to interfere with "their earnings" (G. 103). The mere payment of the school fee from some public source would be an equivalent for only a small fraction of those earnings, but as far as it went would but strengthen that feeling of dependence which the mal-administration of the old Poor Law has infixed so deeply in the mind of the rural population, and which it is of the utmost importance by every possible effort to eradicate (F. 102). On the other hand, if the principle of a dispensing power were admitted in cases where the earnings were below a certain standard, or the family numerous, or the labour of a child even without earnings indispensable to a small occupier as an assistance to himself, the instances of exception must inevitably in many localities be so numerous as to leave large numbers of children free from any obligation as to school attendance, and everywhere the pressure upon those who may have the dispensing power in their hands would be liable to be so great that its exercise under the various and complicated circumstances that may be urged upon them for consideration could not fail to be invidious and unsatisfactory; and if exercised it would exempt from the obligation of school attendance precisely those who most need some amount of pressure to bring them to school.

76. The only principle approaching the nature of compulsion in regard to the education of the young of the labouring class above the grade of paupers that has, up to this time, been admitted into the legislation of the country, with the exception above noticed, and which has been shown not to be applicable as a guide to the case before us, is that of connecting the obligation of school attendance with wages-earning employment. The only sound principle is that already sanctioned of coupling the obligation of school attendance with wages-earning employment.

77. This principle rests on a just view of the extent to which parental obligation may be enforced, and permits the Legislature to say that if a parent benefits by the labour of his child he shall be compelled to apply a portion of the child's earnings in the fulfilment of his duty to his child, and for his child's advantage, namely, in procuring for it a certain amount of education.

78. Public opinion in this country justly sanctions the enforcement of such an obligation upon the parent by fine or imprisonment. The Workshop Regulation Act (30 & 31

Vict. c. 146.) which embraces all kinds of handicrafts not included in the Factory Acts, in defining "employment" to mean occupation in any handicraft, whether for wages or not, under a master or *under a parent*, thus describes the liability of the parent in case of a child being employed in contravention of the Act. (s. 7.)

"The parent of or the person deriving any direct benefit from the labour of or having the control over the child * * shall be liable to a penalty of not more than 20*s*., unless it appears to the court before whom the complaint is heard that the offence has been committed without the consent, connivance, or wilful default of the parent or person so benefited, or having such control."

79. And by s. 12, this penalty is recoverable summarily in the manner directed by the Act 11 & 12 Vict. c. 43., which gives the power of imprisonment if the penalty is not paid.

The contrary principle adopted in Prussia would not be tolerated in this country.

80. But public opinion would, I fully believe, be far from sanctioning the imposition of a fine or imprisonment upon a labourer in agriculture for not sending his child to school, and not keeping it there for the prescribed periods of attendance, before such child went to work. That is the principle adopted in the legislation of Prussia. It is thus described by Mr. Pattison in his Report to the Education Commission (1861) vol. 1, p. 194.

"The police commissary of the district (*Bezirk*) sends in to the Commission the list of the *Schulpflichtig* children.* The members of the Commission are expected individually to visit the parents to urge upon them the moral obligation of seeing that their children attend regularly; only when this private influence is ineffectual an official admonition is given to the parent or guardian. If within a month from this monition a second 'inexcused' absence occurs a written notice issues from the Commission reminding the defaulting party that he makes himself liable to a penalty; this notice is registered. If a third 'inexcused' absence occurs within a month the Commission sends notice to the school delegacy, adding from the record a copy of the previous notice; this notice is handed to another committee of the school delegacy which is charged with the enforcement of the fines. This committee inquires into the case, assesses the fine, and orders payment within eight days. It is open to the condemned party to appeal during these eight days to the *Magistrat*. The sentence of the *Magistrat* is final. The fine may be levied by execution. If there are no effects the offender is punished by imprisonment." [* "Schulpflichtig," "under the legal obligation to attend school."]

Prussian principle fails where poverty of parents interposes an obstacle.

81. But even with such an organization as above described for carrying the law into effect Mr. Pattison reports that difficulties interpose to prevent the attendance being uniform and punctual, and the first of these difficulties he states to be "the poverty of the parents," the second being the unsatisfactory condition of some of the schools (*ibid.* P. 198), and this "poverty" of so many of the parents engaged in agriculture in this country Mr. Fraser states to be, in relation to the question of enforcing a measure of school attendance, "the most formidable difficulty of all;" (A. 66, 78) and on this topic Mr. Fraser thus enlarges in a following paragraph:—

"It is, then, to the poverty of the parents, far more frequently than to their apathy or low moral tone, though there is an undefinable connection between the two, and people's moral tone is very much raised or lowered by the elevation or depression of their outward circumstances, still it is to their poverty mainly that we are to trace that irregular attendance during children's nominal school-life, and the premature termination of that life, which constitute the two great obstacles to the education of the farm labourer. With the value of every sixpence so appreciably brought home to their intelligence and with odd jobs of all kinds which children can do, and by which sixpences can be earned, so continually presenting themselves, it is a matter of regret rather than of surprise that parents of this, humble rank should not be superior to a temptation, the power of which no other class of parents can so fully feel. Here and there, one meets a parent who resists and conquers the temptation, and though the effort is made in a lowly sphere, the steadfastness of purpose it implies rises almost to the height of heroism; but the majority, it must be confessed, yield to it. And the natural result is the comparative failure of our schools." A. 78.)

Mode of securing due amount of education considered. Statistics of agricultural children below 12 years of age.

82. With these principles and clear facts before me I approach the consideration of what measure for securing a due amount of education for the children of the labourers in agriculture will best suit the peculiarities and the necessities of the case. The numbers to be dealt with may be judged of approximately from the figures of the census of 1861. There were at that date, of agricultural children engaged in out-door labour, males between 5 and 10 years of age, 6,996; between 10 and 12, 32,576, total males, 39,570; females between 5 and 10 years, 256; between 10 and 12 years, 1,264; total 1,520; total of both sexes employed under 12 years of age 41,090.

Half-day system and alternate day system both inapplicable

83. The question of the compatibility of the half day system, or the alternate day system, with the exigencies of agricultural employment, has been fully entered into by all our Assistant Commissioners. They have discussed it with a great variety of persons of great ability and competent experience, very many of whom are disposed to favour any means by which the education of the young in the rural districts might be most effectually promoted. But the uniform and unhesitating conclusion is that neither of those systems is applicable to the circumstances with which we have to deal. The following remarks of the Rev. John Wilkinson, "a zealous educationist," in his prize essay published in the journal of the Royal Agricultural Society on the farming of Hampshire, quoted by

Mr. Fraser state the reasons against both systems with conclusive effect:—

"Night schools," he says, "seems to have arisen naturally out of the necessities of the case, as the "best means of supplementing the inevitable deficiency consequent either on the early age at which "the day school is left for labour, or on an irregular attendance, or on no attendance there. They "may be taken to be one mode of proved efficacy for solving that difficult problem in the elementary "education of the labouring poor, viz., how to combine instruction with the demand for juvenile labour. "No other plan, such as half-day or alternate day schools, has yet been devised which is not open to "grave objections. A half-day system will not answer, because the boy has a whole day's work set "him, and that very possibly at a distance from home; alternate days will not answer, because every "workman's usefulness depends on his acquaintance with his work, and if he be away half his time he "is just twice as long learning his business; neither will master, bailiff, or headman be bothered with "teaching two sets of boys; they say one is trouble enough. Besides, where are the relays to come "from? At pressing times every boy and girl is wanted; and even for constant places, in parishes of "ordinary density of population, the supply of boys is not beyond the demand. There is no juvenile "reserve. The application of these schemes to an agricultural district is an impracticable theory. "They proceed on a mistaken analogy between manufacturing and agricultural operations. In the "one there is concentration of uniform work, under cover, in one spot, independent of season and "weather: in the other the work is spread over some square miles, is exposed to wet above and mud "below, varies with every season, and is dependent on every atmospheric change. From circumstances "so different the same practical conclusion cannot be deduced." (A. 86.)

84. A modification of the principle of the Printworks Act is as uniformly suggested as the only solution of the difficulty (A. 92, B. 221, C. 176, D. 78, E. 29, 30, F. 54, 66.)

A modification of the Printworks Act the only solution possible.

85. The particular modifications recommended by various witnesses and presented to us with more or less approval in the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners are of the following kind:—

86. Mr. Fraser thinks that,—

"The best mode of promoting the education of children in agricultural districts would be (1) to prohibit their employment on the land under the age of 10; (2,) to make provision for securing their regular attendance at school for the five years preceding that age, and in several cases the suggestion was added that (3), to prevent the possible loss by disuse of what they had attained, the children when emancipated from entire restriction should still be required to fulfil a certain amount of winter attendance, say 150 hours either at day or night school for two years more" (A. 94).

87. Mr. Henley states, regarding Northumberland and Durham, that,—

"If, on general grounds, it is thought necessary to lay down a rule on the subject it must be provided (in order to avoid injury to the district) that each child shall make a certain number of school attendances (say 150) in the winter months" (B. 221).

88. Mr. Stanhope is of opinion that,—

"To require 100 days school attendance in each year, from 8 to 13, would be to deprive the families of very little money and hardly to interfere for a single day with the requirements of the farmer." (C. 176, 179.)

But in a subsequent paragraph Mr. Stanhope states that,—

"12 would probably be a better age at which restriction should cease." (G. 147; C. 179).

89. Mr. Portman thinks the most feasible plan would be exclusion from work up to a certain age, and a certain amount of compulsory school attendance from that age to 13 or 14, together with the production of a school certificate of such attendance previous to hiring (D. 77); the periods of attendance to be made "elastic" enough to meet the necessities and irregularities of agricultural operations." (D. 78). Mr. Norman (E. 29) and Mr. Culley (F. 68, J. 71) take substantially the same view.

90. Individual recommendations received by the Assistant Commissioners are well represented by the following (J. 72.):—

"Rev. W. J. Dry, Chairman of the Bicester union, says,—

"I would restrict the age to 10, but as it often happens that a boy of 9 is physically stronger than one of 10, I would allow a boy of 9 to go to work if he could read and write fairly."

And the following is the opinion given to Mr. Culley by the Bishop of Oxford, on the application of the Factory Acts' principle to children employed in farm labour:—

"I think that, if the Factory Act principle is to be applied to farm labour, a child should be allowed to work half time at 8, whole time at 9 (if it can produce a certificate that it can read and write well), and whole time at 10 under any circumstances. Such a modification of the principle of the Act would quicken the sense of parental responsibility, and tend less than merely fixing an age (such as 10 years) under which no child should work to make parents depend on State aid, and would cause less necessity for an educational rate, which, I think, would at once stop voluntary aid, and put an end to religious teaching in our schools." (*Ibid.*)

91. Mr. Culley adds that these opinions are closely followed by the resolutions of the Hungerford, Bicester, and Bradfield boards of guardians. (*Ibid.*)

92. I have stated my reasons above (§ 69–75,) for the conclusion that the principle of excluding children from work below any age is inadmissible. I think that, in the numerous cases in which either the wages are low and precarious, or the children of a family all young, or the labour of children at an early age of great importance both to

the employer and the parent, I have shown it to be inexpedient and unnecessary that the Legislature should interfere with existing habits.

93. But allowing the employment of children in agriculture to proceed as at present (with the exceptions above indicated) I would endeavour to arrive at a satisfactory mode of securing a due amount of elementary education for these children by enlisting in its favour the interests both of the parents and the employer.

The particular modifications suggested.

94. The solution I beg leave to suggest is the following:—

First. That every child employed in agriculture should be under the obligation to complete 160 school attendances in each year from the end of its first period of employment until it attains the age of 12 years.

"Employment" should be defined to mean employment in any species of agricultural labour for a period or periods amounting on the whole to 72 week days (12 weeks) in any twelve months.

Secondly. The obligation of school attendances should be reduced to 60 for any child of the age of 9 years and upwards who passes an examination in the 4th Standard.

Thirdly. The obligation of school attendance should cease altogether for any child who at the age of 11 or at any time between that age and the completing of its 12th year can pass in the 5th Standard.

I beg to offer the following observations on this proposed arrangement:—

95. The number of 160 school attendances would require for their completi on 80 days There being five school days per week, the attendance would be completed in 16 weeks or four months.

96. The number of hours of instruction in these 80 days would, at five hours a day amount to 400 hours, or 100 more than are required in the year by the Printworks Act.

97. The number of 80 days is 20 days less than the number suggested in the evidence in some districts as capable of being given to schooling by the children of agricultural labourers during the intervals of their work in the course of the year. But in other important districts where the demand for children's labour is great, a larger amount of compulsory attendance at school would seriously interfere with agricultural operations (C. 139–143). In some, the children are employed six, seven, and even eight months in the year (A. 42 note, C. 176, D, 27, E. 12). In Mr. Fraser's district "the farmers "themselves constantly assert that though one part of the year may be busier than "another, it is very difficult to find an actually 'slack time.'" It appears to me, therefore, important not to exact an amount of school attendance which might be felt in many cases to be inconvenient or excessive.

98. But although the period of 80 days is less than many persons desire, the object held out of reducing the school attendance on passing an examination in the 4th Standard may be regarded as an equivalent, and more than an equivalent, for a greater prescribed amount of attendance. A larger amount without the prospect of an examination is obviously likely to be less effectual than a smaller amount with an examination in view, which will forward the interests both of the child and the parent. The prospect of such an examination of the child attended with such a result, may reasonably be expected to induce the parent to take every opportunity of sending the child to school during the intervals of its work, thus "utilizing" in the words of Mr. Fraser, "small scraps of time" (A. 43); perhaps causing the child to exceed the prescribed amount of attendances for the sake of passing the examination at the age of 9 or as soon after as possible.

99. I propose that these 80 days of school attendance should be taken at any time or times of the year, when the child is free from work. This permission undoubtedly opens the door to varying and uncertain periods of attendance, and therefore to that irregularity which has always been objected to as a defect in the Printworks Act, and it would certainly be desirable that the required attendance should be as much as possible regular within defined periods of the year; but the varying exigencies of agricultural work in all parts of the kingdom prevent this. In some districts the winter is a busy time of the year for children (A. 91; C. 13, 14, 49). In other districts, a part of the winter (A. 27, 42, note; C. 30; E. 13;) spring, summer, and autumn divide in most parts of the country with winter their demands upon the occasional labour of the young. It would be impossible without interfering in some districts with the natural and imperious demand for children's labour in agriculture to lay down a rigid rule that the school attendance of all below a certain age should be taken within certain prescribed months. But the absence of such a regulation will be compensated for by the proposed examination, and the end of any compulsory attendance will be to a great degree attained if at some period before the age of 12 a child shall be able to pass in the 4th Standard.

100. Supposing a child of 9 years of age to pass in the 4th Standard it will, according

to my proposal, be liable to a continuance of 60 school attendances per annum up to the age of 12 years.

101. These 60 school attendances in each year I contemplate may, since the child will have already passed in the 4th Standard, be safely allowed to be taken, if more convenient to the child or its employer, in the night school; and as night schools are seldom open more than three nights in the week, the attendance might possibly be spread over five months. If, on the other hand, they were taken in the day school at 10 attendances per week, the time occupied would be six weeks. But the required number should be allowed to be made up of attendances at both.

102. Had not such a child already passed in the 4th Standard, this amount of after attendance yearly would be but small. But it is acknowledged, on all hands, that when once a child has been able to satisfy the requirements of the 4th Standard, it does not readily forget what it has learnt, and that a moderate amount of after application is sufficient to keep up and extend it. Mr. Fraser thus expresses himself on this point:—

"I may add as the almost universal opinion of the most competent teachers, repeated to me again and again in the course of this inquiry, that a child who leaves school with a *smaller* stock of elementary knowledge than is denoted by the ability to pass an examination in the 4th Standard is not likely unless he has used some effective contrivance for retaining it, to be found in possession of much of that stock after two years working life in the fields" (A., note in p. 19). Mr. Culley also expresses his opinion to the same effect (F. 67, 68).

103. But as a premium on extending the amount of acquirement beyond the 4th Standard, I propose that any child who at the age of 11, or at any time between the age of 11 and 12 years, passes in the 5th Standard, shall be discharged from further liability to school attendance.

104. As the age of 11 is about the time when in most parts of the country the farmers want to take boys into continuous employment (even to go with horses in the counties where they are employed very early for that work, *supra* § 37) it will be to the interest of the employer to favour and encourage the early progress of boys at school, in order that, as soon as they have passed in the 5th Standard, they may be no more interrupted in their course of work (C. 174, F. 66, J. 70); and with regard to girls the 5th Standard is one which, if their attendance at school in their early years has not been neglected, they can, as a rule, have no difficulty in reaching by their 11th year, if it is any object to them to be released from the obligation of school attendance previously to the completion of their 12th year.

105. The 5th Standard implies an amount of elementary instruction which, when once acquired, may be looked to with confidence as fulfilling the object of early education, namely, that of imparting the power of reading, writing, and the use of arithmetic to the extent to enable and encourage the process of after instruction to be carried on by voluntary effort, and thus, in the words of Mr. Culley, "to put the career of every "child in his own hands" (F. 102.) The well-known results of all the efforts and all the expenditure on behalf of the education of children in the agricultural districts up to the present time is, that the great majority, on leaving school, do not pass in a higher Standard than the 3rd, large numbers only in the 2nd, and that consequently the little that has been learnt is soon forgotten, or not retained for much practical purpose.

106. By the Revised Code (Report for 1868–9, p. xxi.) the 4th Standard is intended to be passed by children between the ages of 9 and 10; the 5th between the ages of 10 and 11. My proposal therefore coincides with the expectations of the Revised Code. And the motives held out for beginning school attendance at an earlier age, and for greater effort while at school may be considered as equivalents for the number of attendances required by the Code.

Pecuniary effect as regards the parent.

107. It is desirable to state the pecuniary effect, as regards the parent, of requiring 160 school attendances for a child from the earliest age at which it is employed at agricultural work, "employment" being defined as "a period or periods amounting in the "whole to 72 week days, or 12 weeks in any one period of 12 months," in order to exclude the occasional work, for a very brief period, of very young children.

108. A very young child who has been employed as much as 72 week days, or 12 weeks in the course of a period of 12 months, will have been paid, say the minimum wage of 3*d.* per day, and will consequently have earned in those 72 days 18*s.*

109. It then falls under the obligation of attending day school for 160 attendances, or 80 school days, during the 12 months succeeding the completion of the 72 days above named.

110. At five school days per week these 80 school days will be given in 16 weeks, and at the usual school fee of 2*d.* per week, will cost the parent 32 pence or 2*s.* 8*d.*, leaving a balance in favour of the parent of 15*s.* 8*d.*

111. If in the first portion of the year next ensuing, 12 weeks only are occupied with work, and 16 weeks with the obligatory attendance at school, in all 26 weeks, there

125. If schools receiving annual grants were co-extensive with the educational wants of the country it might be easy to say that examinations might be held in them once in every [six] months, to give to children wishing to pass in the 4th Standard, in order to enable them to reduce their liability to school attendance to 60 attendances in the year, the opportunity to do so.

126. But as large numbers of schools are not even under simple inspection, and as examinations even twice a year, held under sufficient sanction, would not satisfy the necessities of the case, a more ready mode of obtaining such certificate must be resorted to.

127. It will be requisite to provide some such means as the following for the granting of certificates other than those granted after examination by inspectors of schools, namely, that in schools under certificated teachers, the certificate of the master or mistress, and of one of the school managers; in schools under simple inspection the certificate of the master or mistress and two school managers, or two responsible persons; and in the case of any other kind of elementary school the certificate of the master or mistress and two resident householders, rated at not less than *l.* per annum; may be granted at any time when any child may be able to pass such examination, and when the persons above designated may meet at the school for the purpose of examining such child, or children, and granting, if they see fit, such certificate. And to meet any possible difficulty interposed in the way of any child obtaining such certificate, by the reluctance of any of the persons designated above voluntarily to undertake the duty, it should be a condition with every certificated schoolmaster or mistress, that they should examine provisionally any child presented by its parent for examination (subject to re-examination at the next visit of the inspector of schools), on payment by the parent of a small fee, if there is any such school within four miles of the residence of such parent. This provision is analogous to that of the Workshops' Act, which exempts the parent from liability for the child's school attendance if there is no school within one mile.

128. The principle of allowing the teacher and managers of a school to hold an examination at any time has already been sanctioned by the Revised Code (Articles 142—9) in the case of evening schools. By Article 143 the applicants for permission to hold such an examination must pledge themselves that (exclusively of all the teachers of the candidates) at least two managers; or if only one manager, then such manager and at least one other responsible person, shall be present during the whole of the examination.

129. The form and substance of the certificate must be that of a thick card, of a size to permit its being enclosed in a large letter envelope (five inches by three and a quarter). It should contain printed words to the following effect:—

WE HEREBY CERTIFY
that
A . . . . . B . . . . .
has this day passed a satisfactory examination before us
in
the 4th Standard,
and that { he / she } wrote { his / her } name and the accompanying particulars in our presence.

Signed (see back) . . . . . .

(Signed)
A . . . . . B . . . . . aged years and months,
{ Son / Daughter } of . . . . and . . . . . of
This day of 186 .

130. On the back should be printed the instructions following:—

This certificate is to be signed,—
In schools under certificated teachers,
By the principal teacher and one of the school managers.
In schools subject to simple inspection,—
By the principal teacher, and by two school managers, or two responsible persons.
In all other schools,—
By the principal teacher and two resident householders rated at not less than *l.* per annum.

Standard 4 consists, by Article 45 of the Revised Code (1869) in:—1. Reading. A short paragraph from a reading book used [in the second class]* in the school. 2. Writing. A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time, from the same book, but not from the paragraph read. 3. Arithmetic. A sum in compound rules (money.) *["A more advanced book" than the "elementary book" referred to in the previous Standard.]

Standard 5 consists, by Article 48 of the Revised Code (1869) in:—1. Reading. A few lines of poetry from a reading book used in the first class of the school. 2. Writing. A sentence slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time from a reading book used in the first class of the school. 3. Arithmetic. A sum in compound rules (common weights and measures).

131. I have ascertained from the Comptroller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office that such cards, with a moderately ornamented border and a device, could be furnished to the Education Department at a cost, including a strong envelope with printed device, for 72 pence per 100, or if several thousand were ordered at once, at 64 pence per 100.

132. It might be made an acceptable privilege to all certificated teachers to be the medium of distributing those cards to all who required them. On the application of a certificated teacher the cards might be supplied to him or her by the Department of Education at cost price, on the condition that they should be sold to all applicants at a moderate stated profit. They would thus be readily brought within the reach of every person in the country.

133. The teachers of schools not under certificated teachers, the parents of the children requiring certificates, or the clergy, or employers who might desire to have the certificates at hand for the use of the children of whose labour they wished to avail themselves, would have an easy mode of obtaining the certificates on application to one of the large body of certificated teachers now widely distributed over all parts of the country. If the teachers were empowered to sell them at 2*d.* each (the cost to the parent of one week's schooling) the profit to the teacher would afford some remuneration for the trouble.

134. I have said above that examinations held twice a year for the purpose of granting these certificates would not satisfy the necessities of the case, and it does not appear probable that public formal examinations could be held in schools under the Education Department even as often as twice a year. In all schools not under the Education Department there is no security that any formal public examination would be held at all. But even more frequent examinations at set times in elementary schools of any kind would not meet the requirements in this matter either of the parent or the employer. A child may not be ready for examination, or may not pass, at the periodical examination, yet may be ready and able to pass within a short time after. It may be a matter of importance, in reference to the seasons for particular kinds of work, that a child should, by passing in the 4th Standard as soon as it is ready to pass, be freed from the liability of the longer period of 160 school attendances in the ensuing year. These are my reasons for proposing to keep open the door for a child to pass an examination, under the guarantee against abuse designated in the terms of the certificate, at any time when the persons named to be entrusted with the power of granting it can be got together. An employer anxious to effect this would have no difficulty in doing so. The parent probably would have as little, and in the last resort would always, as proposed, be able to present his child for examination before a certificated teacher, if there should be one within four miles of his residence. He would be under a strong inducement to cause his child to attend the best accessible school, and the system would greatly increase the demand for schools of the best kind.

135. To prevent a collision of interests between the teacher receiving the capitation grant and the parent, some arrangement would be necessary to insure the teacher against loss in the event of a child passing in the 4th or 5th Standard before completing the number of attendances required by the Education Department to entitle the teacher to his grant.

136. My third suggestion above (§ 94) was, that the obligation of school attendance should cease altogether at the age of 11 for any child who at that age, or at any time between that age and the completion of its 12th year, can pass in the 5th Standard.

137. The mode of obtaining the certificate of this amount of acquirement would be the same as that above described for passing in the 4th Standard. The certificate should be printed with a sufficient amount of coloured ornament to add an additional value to it as pleasing the eye, and causing it to be prized and exhibited as a satisfactory record of the child's progress on leaving school. I have ascertained, as above, that the cost of the certificate for the 5th Standard, printed in two colours, would be a very small fraction only beyond the cost of those of the 4th Standard. They might therefore be permitted to be sold by the teachers at 3*d.* each. On obtaining this certificate the child would be entitled to accept permanent employment free from all further obligation to school attendance, to the benefit of the farmer as well as to that of the parent.

138. "Permanent employment" should be held to mean employment for any period or periods amounting on the whole to six months in any 12 months. In this case it would be just that the penalty attaching to the employment of a child under the age of 12 years without the certificate of having completed 160 school attendances, or, having passed

On child being continuously employed, penalty for

employment without certificate should attach to employer as well as parent.

in the 4th Standard 60 school attendances, within the period of 12 months, or that such child had passed in the 5th Standard, should fall upon the employer as well as upon the parent. The age of 11 is that at which it has been shown that in most counties boys are taken into permanent employment, "to go with horses," and for other purposes. When permanent employment once begins the farmer is very urgent that there should be no further obligation to attendance at school. This being so, the employer will be desirous that the child should pass at the age of 11, and may reasonably be called upon to prove, by the production of the certificate, that he is not violating the law.

Probable satisfactory results.

139. I am of opinion that if the plan I have ventured to sketch out should be embodied in legislation it would be found to act in a manner satisfactory both to the parent and to the employer, and that a generation would not pass before it had greatly contributed towards conferring on the children of the labourers in agriculture the inestimable blessing of a sound elementary education.

This anticipation depends on the passing of a general measure for supplying schools where now wanted.

140. This anticipation necessarily depends for its realization on the fulfilment of the expectation of the country that some measure will shortly be adopted by Parliament for causing the want of good schools to be supplied wherever they are now deficient.

141. Mr. Fraser's conclusions from his inquiries under the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, and from the facts presented to him in the districts which he visited under this Commission in the counties of Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester, are that there is "a paramount pressing immediate necessity for improving the condition of two-thirds "of our existing schools" (A. 54). This opinion is to a great extent confirmed by the inquiries of our other Assistant Commissioners in the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicestershire, Rutland (C. 117–19; G. 101), Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire, (D. 53–4.) Beds and Bucks (F. 43–50), Chester, Salop, Stafford (G. 102), and Hants, Devon, and Cornwall (H. 77–86). But in all these counties there are parishes and whole districts fairly supplied with schools, both in respect to number and quality.

Reasons why Government should have power to cause such schools to be provided after due notice.

142. The counties reported to us to be best supplied with schools both as to number and quality are Northumberland and Durham (B. 103–121), Dorset and Kent (G. 101), Northamptonshire (E. 25), Oxford and Berks (J. 56–9), portions of Somerset (K. 29), Surrey, Wilts, Warwick, Worcester, and Hereford (I. 68), and Cumberland, and Westmorland (L. 89). But in all these counties there are, in some localities, schools of inferior quality greatly needing some external action to bring them into a state of efficiency.

143. The circumstance to which this inefficiency of existing schools and their frequent absence altogether is attributed is "the inadequate support that schools too often receive "from the landowning class" (A. 55). On this subject Mr. Fraser makes the following observations:—

"The influence that most powerfully depresses the condition of the inferior schools is their poverty —poverty arising not so much from want of means as from illiberality in the use of means, and an indisposition to apply them to this particular object. In my report to the Education Commissioners of 1861 I thought it my duty to call public attention both to the general fact of such indisposition and also to some flagrant individual instances, and I published a table, which attracted some notice and which the Commissioners used as a basis for some emphatic remarks on the inadequate support that schools too often receive from the landowning class, showing the sources of the income arising from voluntary contributions of the schools in 168 rural parishes. I could easily accumulate, were not the task invidious and unwelcome, fresh instances of the same kind; and no language can be too strong to describe the straits to which schools that ought to be flourishing in affluence are frequently reduced, and the efforts that have to be made by zealous managers, struggling against their circumstances, to keep them afloat at all.

144. Mr. Culley's remarks are to the same effect. Noticing the fact that "great progress "has evidently been made within the last few years in the supply of schools," in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, and that "in this respect these counties contrast favourably" with those he had already reported upon, Mr. Culley proceeds to say that he found in those counties "the same inequality in the efficiency of the schools and the same "unequal pressure on the resources of their supporters" which he had observed elsewhere, and of which he gives the following instances:—

As a rule, a heavy share of the burden of the school falls upon the clergyman, who, if he possibly can, bears it without complaint rather than give any occasion for such State interference as might deprive him of the authority in the management of the school which he now possesses. In a few cases, especially of parishes owned by non-resident landowners, the burden is so great as to drive even the clergyman to ask for some legislative action, which may compel the owners of property to bear a fair share of the expense of supporting the school.

In some cases one resident landowner is obliged to do duty for his absent brethren, even though his pecuniary interest in the parish is much smaller than theirs.

I beg, for instance, to draw your attention to the state of matters educational in Bampton Aston parish, as described by the Rev. G. S. Griffiths (see Oxon evidence 27). This parish, which has, or had at the last census, 968 inhabitants, contains 3,760 acres, whose rateable value is about 5,000*l.* a

year; and the following are the contributions to the National schools given by the chief landowners for some years past:—

St. John's College, Oxford owns 410 acres, rateable value 991*l.*, has given nothing for 11 years.

A non-resident landowner owns 800 acres, rateable value 1,000*l.*, has given 5*l.* during 11 years.

A non-resident landowner owns 1,869 acres, rateable value 2,531*l.*, has given nothing for many years.

A non-resident landowner owns 356 acres, rateable value 506*l.*, has given nothing for many years.

From Mr. Griffiths' account there appears to be about 14*l.* a year from charity funds and available for educational purposes.

As another example of what an absent or peculiar proprietorship sometimes entails on the clergyman, take Steventon parish, in Berks, of which the Dean and Chapter of Westminster are lords of the manor, the property being, I believe now in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. An excellent school was erected in 1864, which with its surroundings cost 1,066*l.* 8*s.*; towards this sum the Dean and Chapter of Westminster gave 100*l.*, and the vicar 433*l.*, the other subscriptions chiefly from individuals resident in the parish amounted to 130*l.* 10*s.*, and the rest of the money was supplied by sale of old school, Government grant, &c. (see Berks evidence 46a). In fact, the vicar gave twice as much as the absent landowners and all the other residents in the parish put together. This parish has about 900 inhabitants and contains about 2,400 acres of rich land. (J. 69.)

145. The fact adverted to above (s. 142), that fifteen counties are fairly supplied with schools, and that good progress has been made in the rest (s. 141), appears to afford ground for expecting that the deficiencies would in most cases be supplied by voluntary effort if, as has been already proposed to Parliament, power were vested in the Government to compel, after due notice, a satisfactory provision of the means of elementary education in each parish or district proved to be in want of it.

Action of such plan of enforcing school attendance would be facilitated if labourers' resources improved.

146. The action of the above described plan of enforcing upon the children employed in agriculture a certain amount of attendance at school previously to the age of 12 years would be greatly facilitated and strengthened by any means which improved the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourer. Improved pecuniary resources would enable the parents to send their children to infant schools where accessible, and to keep them longer and more regularly at the ordinary day schools.

147. The evidence shows that in many localities there is an increasing appreciation among the parents of the blessings of education for their children, and an increasing desire, even occasionally among the poorest, to make self-denying efforts to procure it for them. Where the school is good, and where also zealous personal influences are brought to bear on education, the labouring poor are found willing to respond. In such cases there is, among all parties, "activity, interest, co-operation, progress" (A. 64, 65). In Northumberland and Durham, Mr. Henley found that the parents "felt it to be their sacred duty to secure for their children the best instruction in "their power, and *that* they are determined they shall have" (B. 28), and even the poorest are "sent to pick up a bit of schooling where they can" (B. 66). Mr. Stanhope, speaking of certain districts, says that indifference of parents does not appear to be as common as might be supposed. "* * Few poor families do not profess at any rate to see the "advantage of education, and the promotion of private adventure schools in the poorest "districts, and the eagerness of the poor to avail themselves of any opportunities afforded, "prove that in many districts they do set a value upon it. They have known cases "where some in their own station of life have raised themselves by means of it, and this "in itself is a strong inducement to them to seek it for their children" (C. 150). Mr. Portman speaks of "an increased desire for education" (D. 55). Similar opinions are expressed in other portions of the evidence. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that increased pecuniary resources on the part of the parent would be widely taken advantage of by him to procure a larger amount of education for his child.

Means by which their resources might be improved.

148. That being our impression, we devoted a considerable portion of our First Report to directing attention to some of the principal means by which the pecuniary resources of the labourers in agriculture might be legitimately increased, and by which their general condition, both physical and moral, might be improved, and as a consequence, the salutary progress of education among them might, as appears probable, be greatly promoted.

149. After touching upon the importance to the employer, as much as to the labourer, of "a high rate of remuneration as the best means of obtaining a good day's work;" upon the effects of a good nourishing diet upon the physical strength of the labourer, and its economical results (First Report, s. 147); and upon the beneficial consequences of enlarging the field of employment by the application of more capital to the land, and the consequent power imparted to the labourer, under proper direction, of fairly earning the higher rate of wages (*ibid.*, ss. 148–9), we showed by a great mass of testimony what a valuable auxiliary toward improving both the physical and moral condition of the labourer

existed in the practice which, though much increased of late years, is still far from being as general as it ought to be, of attaching good-sized gardens to agricultural labourers' cottages, or, in default of gardens, assigning field allotments to them as near to the cottages as possible.

The value of good-sized cottage gardens and of field allotments.

150. The value of this boon to the labourer, in a moral quite as much as in a pecuniary point of view was exhibited by us on irrefragable evidence, derived from a great variety of sources, from the end of the last century to the present time. Among other documents we referred to the evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Waste Lands in 1795; to the action, in its favour, of the Board of Agriculture in the year 1800; to that of the "Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor," shortly after that date, and the active exertions of Mr. Wilberforce and Sir Thomas Barnard; to the evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on emigration in 1827; to that of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1843 on the results of the allotment system, and on the inclosure of waste lands; and to much that has been laid before us by our Assistant Commissioners in the course of the present Inquiry.

Public allotments out of waste lands under General Inclosure Act.

151. As it was upon the Report of the Select Committee of 1843 that the General Inclosure Act of 1845 (8 & 9 Vict. c. 118.) was passed, and as that Act, following the recommendations of the Committee, empowered the Commissioners (by ss. 31 and 108) to apportion, in all cases coming within their discretion, a public allotment, out of the waste lands to be inclosed, for the labouring poor, and directed them, in all cases where they have not made such allotment, to state in their annual report the grounds on which they have abstained from requiring the appropriation of such an allotment, we were led by our knowledge derived from the evidence above adverted to, of the great value to the labouring poor of such allotments, to consult the reports of the Inclosure Commissioners, in order to ascertain the quantity of land so appropriated under that Act since it became law in 1845. There being no summary of the quantity of land so appropriated in the reports of the Inclosure Commissioners, I constructed the table given at s. 296 of our First Report, which, on its being submitted to the Inclosure Commissioners, they considered substantially correct.

Reference to in our First Report.

152. We called attention in s. 247 of our Report to the apparently small proportion which the amount of land assigned in public allotments bore to the total amount inclosed. We gave reasons, drawn from the debates in Parliament and from the terms of the Act, why it appeared to us that in assigning public allotments to the labouring poor, the wants not only of the present labouring population should be considered, but those of the future population which would be called into existence to cultivate the land when inclosed. We suggested that, "it would be highly desirable that a return of the quantity of land "throughout the country occupied in cottage gardens and field allotments, should be "made from each agricultural parish," and that "such a return would probably be "attainable with very little additional trouble at the same time that the annual agricul- "tural returns are collected by the officers of the Inland Revenue Department, under "direction of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade." And we stated that as "the officers of the Inland Revenue Department now issue forms to every occupier "of land for obtaining the acreage under agricultural crops, one more form would enable "them to collect the information required; and that the total for each county would "find an appropriate place in Table No. 5 of the returns as given for 1867, under a "heading of 'Acreage in Cottage Gardens and Field Allotments.'"

153. We intimated also (ss. 298, 299 of our first Report) that inasmuch as among the reasons assigned by the Inclosure Commissioners in their annual reports for not making allotments in certain cases to the labouring poor, one was that, "the poor had gardens "already," such "a statement of the total acreage in each county occupied by cottage "gardens and in field allotments would enable any person to see, by reference to the "column in Table No. 3 of the Agricultural Returns, giving the total area in statute acres "under farm cultivation in each county, whether or not the proportion occupied by "cottage gardens and field allotments was satisfactory, regard being had to the total "number of heads of families engaged in agriculture in the county (which is approxi- "mately ascertainable from the census) and to the proper average size for a cottage "garden and field allotment."—1st Report, s. 236.

154. We intimated further, that although Parliament had (by ss. 108 and 109 of the Inclosure Act), provided the machinery for securing land as allotments for the labouring poor, both the public and Parliament is in ignorance as to whether the allotment wardens are acting or not, and whether consequently the Act has been properly carried into effect. (s. 318.)

155. These statements having attracted the attention of the House of Commons, the Annual Inclosure Bill of this year was referred to a Select Committee. Having been called before that Committee and examined, I had the honour of submitting the several points which the investigation of the subject in our Report had suggested as worthy of the consideration of the Committee, with reference to enlarging the powers of the Act in the interest of the labouring poor. The Annual Inclosure Bill of year referred to a Select Committee.

156. The Report of the Committee embodies the following recommendations in reference to six of the points adverted to. (1.) That the reports of the Commissioners should contain more precise and minute statements of information on various matters in which the interests of the labouring poor are concerned. (s. 8.) (2.) That the maximum quantity of land which may be allotted by the allotment wardens should be extended to half an acre (from one quarter of an acre) in certain cases. (s. 11.) (3.) That the Inclosure Commissioners should be authorized to require the allotment wardens to furnish every three or five years reports of the state of the land, and the rents paid by the tenants under their management. (s. 15.) (4.) That a power of sale should be given to the allotment wardens to enable them to sell allotment land when inconveniently situated, in order to purchase land more convenient. (s. 17.) (5.) That a column should be added to the third table of the Agricultural Returns of Great Britain, compiled by the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, showing the acreage employed in cottage gardens and allotments; this information, the Committee state, "would be useful in many ways and would render the Statistical Table "more complete." (s. 20.) (6.) The Committee also express their opinion that in considering, in any case, whether the extent of public allotment proposed by the Inclosure Commissioners to be appropriated is sufficient, among the elements to be taken into account should be the number of persons coming under the designation of labouring poor not only now residing, but "likely hereafter to reside at convenient distances" from the land about to be inclosed, and consequently the "future capacities of the land "after it has been broken up." (s. 3.) Result.

157. These conclusions of the Select Committee afford the justification to us for having, in the discharge of the duty imposed upon us by our Commission, which raises the entire question of the condition of the labourers in agriculture in all its aspects, thought it incumbent upon us to draw the attention of Parliament to the question of the manner in which the waste lands of the country had been, and were being, disposed of. That the matter is one of great importance to the labouring population is manifest from the facts which we have stated in our 1st Report, s. 264, namely, that although between the date of the first Inclosure Act in the year 1710 and the year 1867, 7,325,439 acres have been inclosed (all but the mountain portion of it being inclosed for the purpose of cultivation), there still remained, according to the evidence laid before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration in 1827, and according to estimates furnished by the Tithe Commissioners to the Select Committee on Commons Inclosure in 1844, about 4,000,000 acres in England and Wales capable at the latter date of being brought into cultivation. The total inclosed, cultivable and uncultivable, between 1845 and 1869, has been, according to the Return of the Inclosure Commissioners made to the House of Commons dated 9th April of this year, 507,700 acres.

158. Among the points submitted by me to the consideration of the Committee, were :—(1.) That the total results of the operation of the General Inclosure Act, since the commencement of the Act in 1845, should be tabulated from the Reports of the Inclosure Commissioners in a certain form, which was laid before the Committee (Evidence, p. 80). The total results given in the return of April 9th, adverted to in the last paragraph, is under three heads only, "Total acres allotted," "Acres reserved "for exercise and recreation," "Acres reserved for the labouring poor." Upon this return the Committee remark that the estimate that three-fifths only of the acreage inclosed was subject to the discretion of the Commissioners, in reference to their power of making allotments to the labouring poor, is based upon an assumption, and "must "therefore be regarded as merely a rough estimate" (s. 1). It would manifestly be a satisfaction to the public to know precisely, if possible, the ratio between the total acreage inclosed and the total number of acres appropriated to the labouring poor. (2.) That the constitution of the board of allotment wardens should be altered from that of the clergyman, one nominee, and one elected member, to the clergyman, two nominees, and an elected member. The suggestion was founded on the fact that, in many cases, the allotment wardens do not act, and in others exceed their powers (s. 14 of Report of Committee). The object in view was to secure to the clergyman the assistance in the management of the allotments of two gentlemen of influence and independence in the parish (Evidence,

p. 82). The recommendation of the Committee in s. 15 of their Report, that the allotment wardens should be required to furnish, every three or five years, reports of the state of the land, and the rents paid by the tenants under their management, will enable Parliament to see whether their duties are henceforward properly discharged. (3.) That the Act should permit the allotment land to be let at a higher rent than that prescribed by it (namely, "such a rent as it would bring for farming purposes"), and that the proceeds should not, as now, be necessarily applied in aid of the rates, but might be applied in hiring or purchasing more land to be let to the labouring poor (Evidence, pp. 80 and 82), as that been suggested by Mr. Bailey Denton. The Committee expressed the opinion (ss. 16 and 17) that the proceeds "might in some cases be employed "in improving or fencing the ground, or in hiring or purchasing land, either larger in "extent or more conveniently situated."

159. The Committee have added several other recommendations arising out of the evidence, which will doubtless tend to protect and promote the interests of the large portion of the labouring classes concerned in the results of the inclosure of waste lands.

But even if pecuniary resources increased, and education consequently extended, its results liable to be counteracted by state of labourer's dwelling.

160. But greatly as any legitimate increase of the pecuniary resources of that large proportion of the labourers in agriculture throughout the country which is in the receipt of the lower rates of wages might be expected to further the progress of effectual education among their children, the good results of such education must be liable to be counteracted in all the, unhappily, still very numerous ceses in which the labourers' dwelling is of such a kind as to cause great and serious discomfort, and to make the decencies of life all but impossible.

161. In our First Report (ss. 319–332), we referred to the fact that the evidence collected by our Assistant Commissioners proved that in every county visited by them up to that time many landowners, both large and small, had within the last 30 years expended in the aggregate immense sums in improving and enlarging old, and providing new cottages on their estates, and that great efforts had been made by individuals and societies in all parts of the country to direct the most serious attention to what remained to be done towards placing the agricultural population generally in a satisfactory state in regard to their dwellings.

162. The evidence laid before us by the Assistant Commissioners this year from the remaining half of England is to the same effect.

163. The picture indeed of the wants of the country in this respect presented by the whole of the reports of the Assistant Commissioners for both years is, notwithstanding all that has been done, of a very serious nature.

State of labourers' dwellings as described by all the Assistant Commissioners.

164. It is impossible to do justice to this subject except by bringing together and presenting to the eye at once the general conclusions of each Assistant Commissioner in each Report.

165. Mr. Fraser thus describes the condition of the cottages in the counties, and parts of the counties, he visited, namely, Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucestershire :—

"It will be observed, upon reference not only to my notes of meetings, but to the special body of evidence upon this subject collected out of my returns, that nothing can be more wide-spread than the feeling entertained, nothing can be stronger than the language used, about the general condition of the cottages of the peasantry, certainly in every one of the agricultural districts, almost in every one of the parishes, which I have visited. In one return they are described as "miserable;" in a second as "deplorable" in a third as "detestable;" in a fourth as "a disgrace to a Christian community." Even where they are spoken of in favourable terms, it will generally be found that if adequate in quality they are inadequate in quantity; and that some rich landowner, "lord of all he surveys," and having exercised his lordship by evicting so much of his population as were an eyesore or were likely to become a burden to him—still employing their labour but holding himself irresponsible for their domicile—has, by a most imperfect system of compensation, built a limited number of ornamental, roomy cottages, which he fills with his own immediate dependents. Out of the 300 parishes which I visited, I can only remember two—Donnington, in Sussex, and Down Amney, in Gloucestershire—where the cottage provision appeared to be both admirable in quality and sufficient in quantity; and I mention these cases with the greater pleasure, because in each the landowner, though not resident, is as willing to recognize and as careful to discharge his responsibilities as though he were.

"The majority of the cottages that exist in rural parishes are deficient in almost every requisite that should constitute a home for a Christian family in a civilized community. They are deficient in bedroom accommodation, very few having three chambers, and in some parishes the larger proportion only one; they are deficient in drainage and sanitary arrangements; they are imperfectly supplied with water; such conveniences as they have are often so situated as to become nuisances; they are full enough of drafts to generate any amount of rheumatism; and in many instances are lamentably dilapidated and out of repair.

"The natural history, so to call it, of these miserable, ruinous dwellings is very various. Some of the worst are parish cottages, either erected in the time of the old poor law or bequeathed to the

parish as a last home for its aged paupers, which there are no funds to repair. Another almost uniformly bad class are the cottages run up by squatters on the waste, or held upon a lifehold or copyhold tenure, and which have not yet fallen in to the lord of the manor. Others have been put up by speculative builders of the flimsiest materials. Others are converted stables or farmhouses, attesting in the one case the conquest of the railway over the road, in the other the change in the phase of agricultural life which has merged half a dozen petty occupations into one large holding. Some belong to small proprietors too indigent to have any money to spare for their improvement; some to absentee or embarassed landowners, the former of whom are unwilling to improve an estate which they never see, the letter, in addition to being unable, are equally unwilling to improve a property from which they get no advantage.

"It is impossible to exaggerate the ill effects of such a state of things in every aspect—physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual." (A. 113–116.)

166. The great expenditure on cottage improvement in Northumberland and Durham of late years enables Mr. Henley to say that although "some of the worst in England" are still to be found there, all deficiencies will "soon be supplied." (B. 147, 161, 176.)

167. Mr. Stanhope states that in Lincolnshire, although the number of cottages built on many estates within the last few years has been very large, yet "on some few of the "large properties" which he visited "hardly any improvement has taken place." * * "Some few of the villages in the east of Notts are still full of bad cots." * * In "Leicestershire the cottages must be described as generally bad. Their average state "is far below that of Lincolnshire." (C. 186, 188, 189.)

168. Mr. Portman states that—

"The feeling expressed at meetings of boards of guardians and others, both in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire, on the subject of cottage accommodation shows that there is great need for improvement, and that it is a question towards which landlords should, without delay, turn their attention." (D. 88.)

169. In Northamptonshire Mr. Norman states that although in the close parishes "a "great number of new cottages are being, or have recently been built" of excellent material, and of suitable accommodation, their number is still "frequently, if not generally, "quite insufficient." On the other hand, in the open parishes, where the cottages belong principally to small owners, "cottages of every description may be found, but rarely, if "ever is the accommodation sufficient to provide for the health, comfort, and morals of "the inhabitants." (E. 41, 42, 47.)

170. Mr. Culley gives the following description of the cottages in a considerable number of parishes in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire:—

"In about half of 55 parishes the cottages are described as good, fairly good, or generally good; in all of these, except one, the cottage property belongs either altogether or in part to the chief landowners; in the remaining half of these parishes the cottages are described as either mixed, bad and good, or generally bad, and in these cases the ownership is usually described as 'various' or 'chiefly small proprietors,' or it is said that many cottages are built on the waste and belong to the occupiers, in which last case they are always described as bad.

"Except where they belong to chief landowners, and in some cases even then, the cottages are generally described as lacking accommodation necessary for a family. Where cottages belong to chief landowners sufficient outhouses are generally, but not always, provided. The cottages built on speculation are very deficient in outhouses. (F. 70.)

"In 30 of 79 parishes in Bucks of which the cottages are described they are said to belong altogether or chiefly to the principal landowners, and of these 30 cases 14 may be said to have the cottages described as generally good, 11 as fairly good, 4 as mixed good and bad, and 1 as generally bad.

"In 42 cases the ownership is described as various; in 6 of these cases the cottages may be said to be described as fairly good, in 28 cases they are described as mixed good and bad, and in 8 cases as generally bad. (*Ibid.*)

"The above evidence will, I think, justify an opinion which I hold very strongly, that it is a great misfortune for the agricultural labourers in these counties that so small a proportion of their cottages belong to the chief landowners; when they do there is somebody to care for the manner in which the poor are housed, somebody to be ashamed of a bad state of things, somebody upon whom the pressure of public opinion may be brought to bear; when they do not the labourer has either to rickle up a miserable hut for himself or pay an exorbitant rent for a house in which the ordinary decencies of life become a dead letter." (F. 72.)

171. In his Report of this year, Mr. Stanhope, while recording the fact that in Dorset the greatest improvement had taken place within the last 27 years, and that "the great "majority of landowners had effected great changes on their estates," nevertheless adds that,—

"In spite of these changes the cottages of this county are more ruinous and contain worse accommodation than those in any other county I have visited, except Shropshire; and it must be remembered that the system of hiring adopted here would especially seem to require a sufficiency of bed-room accommodation. The estate of Lord Rivers, having been long held by life tenants, is notorious for its bad cottages. And such villages as Bere Regis, Fordington, Winfrith, Cranbourne, or Charminster (in

which there is an average of 7 persons to a house), together with others described in the evidence, are a disgrace to the owners of the land, and contain many cottages unfit for human habitation. Nor can this condemnation be confined to large open villages. The parish of Batcombe for instance (with an acreage of 1,109) has within its limits 23 cottages occupied by agricultural labourers, of which 11 have one bedroom only, and in five of these families with three or more children are sleeping (Evid. 59). In the 42 parishes comprised within the unions of Cerne and Wimborne, no less than 314, or 16 per cent. of the cottages had one bedroom only, and 113 of these contained a family with three or more children (Evid. 59). What is called a second bedroom is often too a mere apology for it, and is sometimes described as "a closet not closed" from the bedroom. One special difficulty in the way of improvement in this county should, however, be mentioned. It is the number of cottages let on lease for lives, and until these fall in, the landlord has no control, and no power of effecting such improvement. It is to be regretted that some are still being let on these terms." (G. s. 18).

172. Of the cottages in Kent, Mr. Stanhope thus speaks:—

"'Cottages,' says one witness at Maidstone, 'are bad generally, and insufficient in number' (Evid. 81), and yet it appeared to me that they were better than in any county that I have visited. In very many villages some landowner is resident, who is anxious to see the cottages present an agreeable appearance, and the flowers, which it is the common custom of the cottagers in this fruitful county to cultivate, render many of them especially attractive. On one estate the appearance of the village, in which the residence of the owner is situated, creates universal admiration, but (as often happens), his whole attention appears to have been concentrated on this one place, and on the rest of the estate the complaints are loud of the want of sufficient cottages." (G. s. 30.)

"In East Kent, in some cases I noticed that the great want of cottages had caused tenants to put up temporary wooden huts on their farms, in which the accommodation was most indifferent." (*Ibid.*)

173. The cottages of Cheshire are thus described:—

"The cottages, as I have already stated, are too few in number, and not very well distributed. The old black and white materials of which many are constructed present a picturesque appearance, but such cottages generally are in very indifferent repair. In respect of bedroom accommodation considerable changes are wanted, for though on some estates (such as that of Lord Westminster) very great progress has been made, on others no improvement has taken place, and must unfortunately be further postponed by the terrible calamity of the cattle plague." (G. s. 57.)

174. Shropshire, unhappily, stands conspicuous for the badness of its cottages. Mr. Stanhope says (ss. 60, 61),—

"The point especially deserving of attention in this county is the infamous character of the cottages. In the majority of the parishes that I visited they may be described as tumble-down and ruinous, not water-tight, very deficient in bed-room accommodation, and in decent sanitary arrangements. On the whole they are more uniformly bad, and are being less altered for the better, than in any other county visited by me. Two at least of the principal landowners in the north of the county have cleared themselves of the reproach of owning bad cottages by pulling them down, without adequately replacing them by others. On these estates the labourers herd in the open villages, while on many others cottages are to be found, belonging to the owner of the soil, which are a disgrace to any civilized country. In one parish, out of 62 cottages owned by large landowners, 29 have one bedroom only, while out of 36 owned by railway and small proprietors only seven have this limited accommodation. (Evid. 196.) I would call your especial attention to the detailed account of the cottages in the villages visited by me.

"With this state of things it is very difficult for those charged with the education of the poor to contend. 'I find from questioning the boys to-day,' says the schoolmaster at Clun, 'that all but one half of them belong to families living in cottages with one sleeping room.' (Evid. 174.) 'It is an insuperable obstacle,' says another witness, 'to a proper education.'"

175. The state of Staffordshire is thus described:—

"The exhaustive return contained in the appendix (Evid. 215.) gives a complete account of the state of the cottage accommodation. In the 63 parishes from which returns were received no less than 25 per cent. of the cottages had only one bed-room, and 9 per cent. contained a family with three children or more living in that one bed-room. I found, however, that considerable improvement is taking place, and on some of the larger estates good cottages are now the rule." (G. s. 67.)

176. Respecting the cottages in Hampshire, Cornwall, and Devon, Mr. Portman thus speaks (H. 128–130):—

"It appears from the above extracts from the evidence, that in Hampshire there is not much cause for complaint as to the state of the cottages, but that much has of late been done towards their improvement. The probable reason for this satisfactory state is, that there are many large resident landowners in the county who devote their attention to the welfare of the labouring class living on their properties, and that in many parts of the county there is a class of farmers holding a great number of acres, and willing to aid in the march of improvement.

"On the other hand, the accounts of cottages in Cornwall and Devon are not, with some exceptions, at all satisfactory. In the first-named county it would seem that the tenure by leases on lives does not conduce to a good state of dwellings, neither the lessee nor the landlord being interested in repairing them.

"In Devon with the exception of the estates of a few landowners, the cottages are in a deplorable state, more especially in the Honiton Union, and in the district near to Holsworthy. The farms are for the most part very small, the occupiers men of no capital, and last, but not least, the possessors of the land are too often absentees, so that the profit of the land is spent elsewhere, and bestows no benefit on the district from which it is drawn."

177. With regard to Surrey, Wilts, Warwick, Worcester, and Hereford, Mr. Norman classifies the cottages as belonging: 1st to landlords, 2nd to speculators, 3rd to labourers, and built by themselves. A great deal has been done and is doing by the first-named class, both in building new and very commodious cottages, and improving old ones. The cottages built by speculators are described as greatly inferior in accommodation in very respect, to those above-named. The 3rd class of cottages, Mr. Norman says, were "decidedly the "worst." They are "generally constructed of wattle and dab, and thatched, and con- "tain only a bedroom and one sitting room" * * totally destitute of drainage, and in very bad repair (I. 123). Mr. Norman's general conclusion is, "that it is very "seldom there is a sufficient supply of cottages with two or three bedrooms, and cases of "serious overcrowding may be found if looked for in almost every parish." Also that the medical men to whom he spoke on the subject, "are with three exceptions unanimous "in condemning the cottage accommodation as totally inadequate to secure the health "of the inmates." (I. 125.)

178. Of the counties of Oxfordshire and Berkshire Mr. Culley gives a full and particular account of the cottage accommodation in proportion to the wants of the land for the purpose of cultivation, showing both a considerable deficiency in quantity and a very unequal distribution. (J. 76–78.) Of his inquiries in Oxfordshire, Mr. Culley thus states the result:—

"What I have said above of the proportion of cottages belonging to the landowners in Woodstock and Wantage unions may, I think, be taken as a fair sample of the two counties, and shows how far the landowners are from fulfilling the condition of providing cottage accommodation sufficient for the labour required on their estates, making no such deduction as, I think, should be made where the cottages are not attached to the farms, as is the case in these counties." (J. 79.)

179. In his address to tenant farmers and occupiers (see Berks Evidence 89), Mr. H. R. Eyre says:—

"In a return which I have of the number of cottages in the Newbury union, it appears that of 2,155 cottages in the rural districts, 622 only are the property of the landowners; and as many of these 622 are occupied by gamekeepers, gardeners, and other servants of the landowners, the proportion of those occupied by the agricultural labourers is proportionately reduced."

180. Of the parishes which Mr. Culley visited in Berkshire he gives a list of 11, "in "which the cottages were good, and provided with all necessary conveniences."

"In all of them the cottages belong to the landowners, and except in West Challow and Farnborough, are immediately under the eye of the owner. Farnborough is not far from the residence of the owner and belongs to an estate which is better supplied with cottages than any other in the union of Wantage. West Challow presents a case where an absent landowner attends to the home comfort of his labouring tenant. In this village the cottages are old, but roomy and comfortable, and are particularly well kept by the inhabitants, showing a very marked contrast, both inside and out, to the cottages in the neighbouring open village of East Challow, though the same active pastoral care is constantly at work in both parishes." (J. 80.)

181. In the 10 open, or quasi-open, parishes which Mr. Culley visited, he saw "the "largest proportion of bad cottages." (*Ibid.*)

182. Of the county of Somerset Mr. Boyle says that—

"A special complaint that he found urged by all classes alike was 'on the deficiency of cottage accommodation throughout the whole of the west of England.' * * * The worst cottages are generally the small freeholds, inhabited by the persons who own them, and who being unable to make more money than absolutely necessary for their immediate wants are too poor to afford repairs of any kind. Next to these the worst class of buildings are generally those belonging to small proprietors, such as tradesmen in towns, who have invested in them as a money-speculation, and to make it pay are forced to charge a high rent and spend little in repairs. The best cottages are usually those belonging to the larger proprietors, most of whom, from a wish either to see the estate present a flourishing appearance or to see their people well off, charge a rent far too small to repay them for their outlay; but it must be remembered that it is only a rich man who can afford such munificence." (K. 36.)

183. In his description of the state of things in the counties of Westmorland and Cumberland, Mr. Henry Tremenheere states as the general results of his observations and inquiries, that the cottage accommodation, notwithstanding all that has been done by the comparatively few large landowners in those counties, is still very defective.

"In 18 parishes of Cumberland, the cottages in the returns are described as more or less deficient in proper sanitary arrangements, with little attention paid to ventilation, often without the accommodation required for a decent family. From Westmorland the reports are equally unfavourable." (L. 80.)

184. Mr. Henry Tremenheere adds—

"Cottage improvement was often impressed upon me by the clergy as the question of the day, for 'how,' they justly reasoned, 'can we influence a class by schools when the houses they live in are overcrowded, dirty, and often without the requisites of decency and comfort." (L. 81.)

Influences of good cottages said sometimes to be overrated. External circumstances may counterbalance their injurious influences.

185. It is indeed sometimes argued that the influence of a good and commodious dwelling is overrated; that the Northumberland peasantry, as described by Mr. Henley, are shown to possess high and admirable qualities notwithstanding the very unsatisfactory condition of their dwellings until a very recent period; that education and intelligence has made great progress among the Scotch, and yet their cottages are, as a rule, small and deficient in proper accommodation, and that none of the immorality said to arise in England from the small and crowded cottages is visible among the Irish cottagers. The habit of early marriage in the latter case, and external circumstances in the two former may be acknowledged as capable of arresting or mitigating influences tending in themselves to evil; but if health and decency and delicacy of mind are liable to be impaired by the habits forced upon the occupants of small and crowded dwellings, and if the absence of the possibility of privacy and quiet must necessarily obstruct the progress of home culture, the instances in which populations have, more or less slowly, triumphed over those obstacles to moral and intellectual improvement afford no solid ground for continuing such obstacles in other cases if they are capable of removal.

186. An opinion analogous to the one combated above, exists in some quarters, to which expression is given by Mr. Norman (I. 131–2), that the improvement of the labourer must precede the improvement of the cottage; that otherwise improved cottage accommodation will not be considered by the labourer a boon to him, and he will make no effort to occupy a better cottage than the one he has been brought up in, or abstain from overcrowding it with lodgers if he is placed in one. On the other hand it is said that when he can command higher wages he will demand and pay for a good cottage.

187. The far more general opinion is, that it is not to be expected of the existing class of labourers that they should shake off at once the feelings and the habits that have been contracted in the crowded hovels in which they have themselves been reared (J. ss. 80, 81); but that it is of the utmost importance to their children that they should not grow up under the same circumstances. (K. 38). But it may be safely asserted that a large proportion even of the existing adult labourers are sufficiently enlightened to appreciate the comfort to themselves, and the value to their children, of better dwellings, and that if put into them, their habits will improve, while their children will have been saved from the contaminating influences which depress their moral sense, and counteract the effects of education.

Legislative action invoked to cause improvement.

188. And so strong is that opinion in many quarters that the action of the legislature is loudly invoked to facilitate and hasten such a change.

189. On these points I beg to refer to the following statement of opinion from persons in every respect qualified to pronounce one. The Rev. H. T. Young states,—

"I do not think that the moral and physical condition of the labourer can be raised and improved until proper dwellings are provided for him; the overcrowded state of many of the present cottages is injurious to health and the constitution, and the intermixture of sexes which it causes prevents the nurture of the proper feelings of decency, and where these are wanting, chastity will be wanting too. I am satisfied from observations which I have made during a period of 35 years passed in the ministry of the church, that before our teaching and preaching can have the effect we look for we must house the labourers in a better manner."—(J. 86, note.)

190. Mr. J. L. Goodlake, chairman of the Farringdon union, says,—

"I fear school and church are utterly powerless in the presence of the complete disregard of decency to which the poor are exposed; indeed the practice of modesty in the case of females is scarcely practicable. Where a third sleeping room is provided it is usually let, if the poor are left to themselves. This is prevented in the case of villages belonging to single owners. In the four parishes I have named there is nothing to be desired in the way of water or ventilation; the remaining parishes vary in the supply of water and as to ventilation, from indifferent to very bad. I should like to add that, in my opinion, the provisions of the Common Lodging Houses Act might advantageously be applied to the best interests of the poor by compelling all houses under 6*l.* a year rental to come within its ambit. The erection of proper cottages is simply a luxury in which the more wealthy alone can indulge, the capital sunk in their erection being completely unremunerative." (*Ibid.*)

191. Mr. H. Tucker, high sheriff of Berks, says:—

"In 1859 I obtained, at my own cost, a return of all the cottages in the Farringdon union, showing the number of rooms in each, and the number, ages, and sexes of their inhabitants. From these returns I sent a digest to 'The Times,' which was published and produced a great sensation at the time."

"I urged several members of parliament to bring the matter before the House of Commons, with a view to obtain a similar return for the whole of England, believing, as I still do, that there is no other way of getting at the real state of misery and degradation in which a large proportion of our agricultural labourers and artizans are housed, and this opinion is confirmed by all that has been done by government and is still being done to obtain information upon this subject. The means adopted can never secure the desired end." (*Ibid.*)

192. Mr. W. Menzies, deputy-surveyor of Windsor Forest, says:—

"It is quite evident to every one that much of the unhealthiness and immorality, both in cottages and villages, arises from the bad condition of the dwelling-houses of the labouring classes, and as the effects of these evils fall upon the community generally, the Legislature is entitled to deal with the matter. . . . . .

"As the law stands at present, it is the duty of no one specifically to interfere with these matters and say where they are wrong; but however difficult and formidable a work it is, every one who sees the effects is, I believe, convinced that some change for the better must be attempted." (*Ibid.*)

193. Mr. H. R. Eyre, chairman of the Newbury union, in his address to landowners, entitled "A Voice from Berks," says:—

"Some general and extensive plan of housing the labouring poor must be devised, and the private rights of landowners must not be an obstruction to it—some plan which shall not depend upon the indulgence or the accidental benevolence and liberality of individuals — some plan which shall recognize the personal liability of proprietors of all classes for the state and condition of their house property.

". . . . . Let us urge upon the government and our legislature to take parliamentary action in the business and duty of housing the people, that the resistance of ignorance, indifference, and self-interest may be overcome, and that the partial efforts which have already produced an instalment of what is due to the requirements of the people, may be aided and supplemented by a general movement in the same direction." (*Ibid.*)

194. In his "Address to Tenant Farmers and Occupiers of Land in Berks," the same gentleman says:—

. . . . . "Some say, indeed, that this matter (the supply of proper cottage accommodation) is better left to the operation of the principles of political economy. I am surprised at the suggestion, and more surprised at the source of it, because it not only seems to ignore all moral and social duty in the matter, but it seems to ignore a fact which a little thought and a little inquiry would disclose: that the system of land tenure in this country, and the difficulties connected with the transfer of land, render the principles of political economy practically inoperative. If it were not so, we should not now be deploring the want of cottages; we should not have to complain that the supply does not keep pace with the demand. . . . . .

"What, I would ask, has made the present but the past, and what is to make the future but the present? If we would not hand down to posterity an evil which we deplore ourselves; if we would not perpetuate a system which helps to corrupt and demoralize our people; if we would not forfeit the blessings we enjoy, we must at once put our hands to a work which will be twice blessed, blessed to him who engages in it, and to him who has the benefit of it.

"I am very well aware that there are landowners in Berkshire who have been long engaged in remedying the evil which is complained of, but the problem to be solved is not who is building and who is not building cottages, but how far the work ought to be optional and discretionary, whether any safeguard should be established against a public evil, partly arising from the right of ownership, and what security the tenant farmer and the people should have that the agricultural labourers should be well and sufficiently housed.

". . . . . I propose, then, that we petition parliament to promote by further public measures the necessary work of providing additional habitations and homes for the people, and to find a national remedy for a national grievance." (*Ibid.*)

Different classes of estates on which bad cottages are found.

195. Our Assistant Commissioners distinguish the following classes of estates on which bad cottages are found. They are thus more particularly described by Mr. Portman, Mr. Culley, and Mr. Norman. (H. 135, I. 121–3, J. 82.)

1. The most favourable class of estates is the one free from incumbrances and unentailed, but still not yielding an income sufficiently large to enable the possessor to spend more than a small sum annually in improvements.
2. The large and scattered estates that have been entailed for generations and considerably incumbered.
3. The small estates, in good order, but incapable of bearing such extra charges as would be required under the existing law, enabling money to be raised for improvements.
4. The neglected estates of absentee landlords.
5. The properties of small owners who have built cottages on speculation in the "open" parishes and villages.
6. The properties of small freeholders, usually labourers, who have built their own cottages.

196. On the first four cases described above Mr. Portman and Mr. Culley make the following important observations. Mr. Portman says:—

"It has been suggested to me that not only should the present regulations as to the borrowing of money be altered and made less expensive, but that in some form more enlarged powers should be given to owners of life estates to charge their property within certain specified limits for improvements and for cottages.

"I would venture to suggest for your consideration whether it is not expedient that legislation should take place in such a direction as to bring into the market these large tracts of incumbered land, enabling those who have capital to acquire such land if they desire so to do, and conferring

a boon on those who now possess them by giving them money to spend on such an amount of territory as they wish to concentrate round their homes, while at the same time the curse of poverty and misery will be removed from those districts whence all the profit is drawn, and to which none returns. Bad cottages would, I think, then become more rare; a portion, at any rate, of the profits would be spent upon the spot; a more contented race of farmers and of labourers would be found; and the education of the people, now flagging for want of funds, would progress.

"Some may say that this question of the dwellings of the poor in agricultural districts is a passing question of the hour, and that it is not really so great an evil as is represented. I would answer, 'Go into the country and see for yourself. Use your common sense, and call to mind the effect of absenteeism on Ireland; and then say whether or not in those portions of England where poverty and misery arising from the same cause meet you at every step, there is not urgent reason for dealing with the evils now existing, by some legislative enactment, which shall put an end to a state of apathy and indifference in many holders of incumbered estates, and open the doors for the spending of capital on land by those who *are* able, in the place of those who are now unable to do so." (H. 136–8.)

197. Mr. Culley states the grave questions that arise under this head for consideration, as follows:—

"There constantly arises to me, and I doubt not to my colleagues, the feeling that in speaking of the state of cottages I am exhibiting a dark picture, as if it was the fault of a class, many of whom are powerless to change it, and few of whom are answerable for it.

"We are calling upon the landowners of to-day to remedy the evil growth of many past generations, and nine-tenths of those who reside in the four counties which I have visited under your orders are already busy at the work as far as their means will allow.

"I could point out to you two very large estates in these counties, upon the general improvement of which, cottages having a large share, the whole income has been spent for many years past, and will probably, if the present owners live, be spent for many years to come. What can a landowner do more? How many landowners are in a position to do as much? And above all, what must have been the condition of these estates to demand such a sacrifice from the present owners?

"What then has led to the state of labourers' dwellings being such as to justify men in speaking of it as a national disgrace? And why are so many landowners now powerless to deal with it?

"If I were to answer these questions, judging from the history of the estates I have visited, I would answer at once, the encouragement given by law to the creation of limited interests in land and the power of entailing burdened estates.

"What can the poor life-tenant, especially if his estate be burdened, do towards providing good cottages for his labourers? Nine times out of ten he strives to do his duty and suffers fully as much as the ill-housed labourers on his estate.

"The unhappy propensity to create limited interests and entail burdened estates tells hardest against the smaller properties, where, if the owner lives as all the world expects him to live, there is no margin left for estate improvement, especially cottage improvement; even on a large estate, by the time all is done for which farm tenants most loudly call, unless the burdens be light, or the owner unusually self-denying, there is very little left to expend in the expensive luxury of cottage building.

"The case of the small estates, however, is the worst, and in spite of the supposed protection of the law of entail, they are being swallowed up by their larger neighbours, or are passing into the hands of men whose whole means are not invested in land. Would it not be better that they should be allowed so to pass before they have inflicted undeserved suffering on everybody connected with them?

"If, however, the labourers on the estate of an ordinary life-tenant are, as far as their cottages are concerned, in a bad way, the labourers on the estates of collegiate and ecclesiastical bodies, and all corporate bodies, whose members manage and divide the income of the estate, are in a much worse; the life-tenant has a conscience, but the corporate landowner has none, and the system of beneficial leases, to which some of them still cling, is simply an abomination.

"It may be said that by the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. authorizing the Inclosure Commissioners to advance public money for the improvement of land, including the erection of labourers' cottages, and to sanction such loans from public companies, the legislature has acknowledged the evils arising from the settlement of estates, and has already provided means, as far as it prudently can, by which a life-tenant can execute all desirable improvements on his estate without altogether sacrificing his own interest or that of his successor.

"With regard to general estate improvement, especially drainage, which was the motive power for this legislative action, I think this provision, as far as the action of the legislature is concerned, is sufficient, and that 25 years, the usual time allowed for the repayment of such loans, is not too narrow a limit. The rapidity with which the first Government loan was consumed, and the large sums now yearly advanced by public companies under sanction of the Inclosure Commissioners is enough to prove this, as well as to prove how great an impetus this legislative action has given to the productive power of the country.

"With regard to cottage improvement the case is altogether different, the rent of a cottage (even adding an estimated pecuniary value for the indirect advantages arising from good cottages, which as you say in your first report "are not appreciable by all persons,") is so far below the rent-charge necessary to repay in 25 years the loan contracted for its erection, that few life-tenants can be expected to take advantage of the Act to which I am referring." (J., 82–84.)

Scope of Act giving power to charge settled estates should be enlarged.

198. We called the attention of the Assistant Commissioners to the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., giving power to charge settled estates for the improvement and building of cottages, in order that they might invite information as to whether any additional facilities were required, or any reduction of cost practicable, by which greater progress might be made in supplying the want of good cottages. Mr. Culley shows in detail why the powers of

the Act are not as extensively used as is desirable, and he adds two valuable suggestions for meeting the difficulty; first by extending the duration of the rent charge, secondly by allowing the tenant for life to borrow as owner in fee for cottage building. Similar suggestions are also made in the reports of Mr. Portman, Mr. Stanhope, and Mr. Norman. G. 160, H. 136, J. 84, K. 39.)

Question of extending principle of Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act to rural districts.

199. Two other Acts are also adverted to by our Assistant Commissioners, as likely, at a future time, to be brought to bear, by an extension of their powers, upon the correction of overcrowding, and upon the provision of proper cottage accommodation. A widely expressed desire that the powers of the officers under The Nuisance Removal Act should be enlarged, and their independence secured, has led to the appointment of the commission now investigating that subject. The Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act of 1868 (31 & 32 Vict. c. 130.) has established a precedent which, although confined at present to towns having upwards of 10,000 inhabitants, is likely, after some experience has been gained of its working, to be gradually extended until, if successful, it embraces the whole country. The preamble of this Act is as follows:

"Whereas it is expedient to make provision for taking down and improving dwellings occupied by working men and their families which are unfit for human habitations, and for the building and maintenance of better dwellings for such persons instead thereof."

200. By this Act the expression "owner" in addition to the definition given in the Lands Clauses Act, "shall include all lessees or mortgagees of any premises required to "be dealt with under this Act, except persons holding or entitled to the rents and profits of "such premises for a term of years of which twenty-one years do not remain unexpired."

201. By s. 13 power is given to the local authority to enforce the Act. If the local authority neglects to enforce the Act the Secretary of State has power to compel it. By ss. 18 and 19 if the owner neglects to execute the work required of him the local authority may do so and obtain from a court of quarter sessions an order charging the premises with the amount of the cost, which charge has priority "over all other estates, "incumbrances, and interests whatsoever," with certain exceptions mentioned in s. 26, such as quit-rents incident to tenure, tithe commutations, rent-charges, and other charges created under Acts of Parliament.

202. The very grave questions relating to settled and incumbered estates which Mr. Portman, Mr. Culley, and others of the Assistant Commissioners have felt it their duty to raise for the consideration of Parliament and the public, cannot be rightly approached by any one who is not able to embrace in one view the whole course of legislation upon this subject.

203. I therefore venture to present this view in the briefest terms possible.

Origin of "strict settlements." View of the course of legislation in regard to entailed and incumbered estates.

204. The origin of "strict settlements" out of which has grown the habit of incumbering estates is described by Professor Stephen in his Commentaries, vol. i., p. 237. The method of limiting legal estates according to the modern system was invented by Sir Orlando Bridgeman and other eminent lawyers during the civil wars "to secure "family settlements from the wrongful acts of tenants for life during those disturbed "times." The device was adopted by those lawyers of appointing a trustee to support the contingent remainders and thereby "to secure in family settlements a provision for "future children of an intended marriage, who before were usually at the mercy of the "tenant for life"; and when, after the restoration, those eminent men came to fill the "first offices of the law they supported this invention *within reasonable and proper* "*bounds* and introduced it into general use." Settlements in this form were termed "strict settlements."

205. In the event of its being considered by Parliament that the disadvantages to the public interests arising out of this system require its modification, such modification would be in entire harmony with the whole course of legislation on the subject of entailed estates from the times nearest to those of the first statute that favoured them—the statute de Donis, in the year 1285,—to the present day.

206. Sergeant Stephen in his Commentaries points out that entails were "ever looked "upon with much disfavour," and that the whole course of the statute law since A.D. 1285 has been "towards their relaxation," of which he enumerates the proofs.

The 12 Edw. 4 (1472) abridged their duration;
The 4th Hy. 7th allowed the inheritance to be cut off by a fine;
The 26th Hy. 8th deprived them of their freedom from forfeiture;
The 33rd Hy. 8th rendered estates tail liable for debts due to the Crown;

The 21st James 1st rendered them subject to sale in case of bankruptcy;
The 3rd & 4th Wm. 4th c. 74. enabled the tenant in tail to aliene in fee simple absolute without the old process of fine and recovery;
The 1st & 2nd Vict. c. 70. rendered an estate tail liable for ordinary debts.

207. A relaxation of the law as to strict settlement would only follow up this course of policy.

208. The bonds under which the tenant for life of a settled and incumbered estate is often placed have, in point of fact, been to a certain extent relaxed on various points by the legislation of the last 30 years.

209. In the year 1840 the Act 3 & 4 Vict. c. 55, passed "to enable the owners of settled "estates to defray the expenses of draining the same by way of mortgage." This Act established the important principle that "the owners of settled estates might charge "them for a certain number of years with the cost of durable improvements though "the owners creating the charge might not live to see the borrowed money repaid."

210. In the year 1847 "The West of England Land Drainage and Inclosure Act" (11 & 12 Vict. c. 142.) enabled the owners of settled estates to charge them in perpetuity,—*i.e.*, without any obligation to repay the principal, and consequently without any cost to themselves.

211. The "Public Money Drainage Act" (1846), "The Private Money Drainage Act" (1849), "The General Land Drainage and Improvement Act" (1849), "The Lands Improvement Company's Act" (1854), and "The Land Loan and Enfranchisement Company" (1861), have powers to charge the inheritance for terms varying from 22 to 50 years.

212. "The Lands Improvement Act" (1864) adds the important privilege of enabling the owners of limited estates to subscribe to railways and canals, the construction of which may benefit their estates.

213. Finally the Act "to facilitate the leases and sales of settled estates" (19 & 20 Vict. c. 120.) enables the Court of Chancery in certain cases to empower leases, including mining, building leases, &c. as well as agricultural, to be granted for terms of years that may extend beyond the life of the tenant for life, and under certain circumstances to empower a portion of the inheritance to be sold to pay off the incumbrances on the remainder.

214. But, as our Assistant Commissioners have noticed, these Acts fall short of the requirements of the case.

215. As regards their effect upon the building of cottages by money borrowed under any of these Acts, it appears, by a return forwarded to us by the Inclosure Commissioners of those built under their sanction as required in such cases, that their number, between 1863, when the system commenced, and 1867, amounted to 509 only, or at the rate of 127 a year.

216. And as regards general improvements the total expended under all these Acts since 1840 is calculated by Mr. Baillie Denton as averaging for England and Wales not more than £300,000 a year (on Land Improvements by Mr. B. Denton, London, 1868).

217. Also as to the Act last adverted to, for the sale of a portion of a settled estate to pay off incumbrances on the remainder, it is liable to be obstructed in its operation by two of its sections; 1st, by section 17, which provides that "the refusal of any one" of numerous parties, having any beneficial estate or interest "however remote under the "settlement" shall prevent any thing being done under the Act; and 2ndly, by section 36, which enacts that "no powers given by the Act shall be exercised if an express "declaration or manifest intention that they shall not be exercised is contained in the "settlement or may reasonably be inferred therefrom or from extrinsic circumstances or "evidence."

218. The provisions of these sections are in harmony with feelings and opinions still widely prevailing on the subject of the disposal of property, and largely influencing legislation up to a very recent date, as was seen during the discussion in the House of Lords when the Bill on which "the Leases and Sales of Landed Estates Act" was founded was under consideration. These feelings and opinions still lead the legislature, in the words of Professor Stephen, (Commentaries, vol. i., p. 247,) "to pay greater regard to the "private will and intentions of the donor than to the propriety of such intentions or to "*any public consideration whatsoever.*"

219. These were in effect the words of the Lord Chancellor (Cranworth) and of Lords Campbell, St. Leonards, and Derby, during the discussion of that Bill in 1855. They all placed the will of the donor above all considerations of private interest or public policy. The Lord Chancellor defended the Bill on the express grounds that "the Court "of Chancery would have the power of authorizing the sale of an estate only when it "did not appear on the face of the settlement that such a sale was contrary to the wish "of the settlor." Lord Campbell although recognising the fact that the Bill "would "tend to the better cultivation of the soil and add to the general prosperity of the "community," justified it only on the condition of its not interfering with the will of a testator or settlor as expressed in the settlements.

220. The evil results of the practice of heavily burdening settled estates were adverted to by Lord Cranworth during the debate above referred to (May, 1855). Affirming that the law of settlement had "on the whole been conducive to the welfare of "individuals and beneficial to the community," Lord Cranworth said that "he was not "blind to the evil results that were connected with them. He desired their Lordships "to contemplate what those results had been. In consequence of the owner not being "the absolute owner, he was not able to deal with his property in the most beneficial "manner, sometimes for himself and his family, and in other instances for the community "at large." And Lord St. Leonards, in March 1856, on that Bill being re-introduced expressed a strong opinion to the same effect, namely as to the great tendency in the present day on the part of tenants for life (on re-settling estates) to throw prospective burdens on the remainder men, than which nothing could be more injurious to the objects which it was the end of settlements to accomplish. His words were,—

"There was a great tendency in the present day on the part of tenants for life, and persons having limited interests, to throw all expenses of improvements upon the remainder men, and nothing could be more injurious to the objects which it was the end of settlements to accomplish. The result of such a system, if permitted and realized, would be as was the case in Ireland, that no man would succeed to an unincumbered estate, and there would arise the necessity of selling settled estates in order to pay off the charges upon them." (Hansard.)

221. It has been shown (ss. 165–197) that a large proportion of the great and flagrant defects still existing in the manner in which the agricultural labourers of this country are housed is traceable to this system of "strict settlements," and the consequent habit of incumbering settled estates. It has been shown (s. 204) that this system is of comparatively recent origin, dating only from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the last century. If Parliament should now recognize it as in a serious degree injurious to the public interests, its comparatively recent origin would make it less difficult to bring it back "*within the reasonable and proper bounds*" contemplated by its inventors, as stated in the passage already quoted from Stephen's Commentaries. (*Supra*, s. 204.)

222. An absolute power given to every one who succeeds to an incumbered estate to sell as much of it as is required to pay off the incumbrances would have a strong tendency to keep settlements within those bounds, and would prevent their being exceeded for any length of time to the injury of the public.

223. The example of what has been done in Ireland is very suggestive of what might be done in this country. The Landed Estates Court. (Ireland.)

224. In the year 1848 the Act was passed "to facilitate the sale of incumbered estates "in Ireland."

225. In 1855, in the course of the discussions in the House of Lords on the "Leases "and Sales of Settled Estates Bill" (England and Ireland) opinions were expressed that "the Irish Incumbered Estates Court must either be abolished or extended to other "estates whether incumbered or not." Such a Bill was soon after introduced and became law in 1858.

226. In March 1856, during the discussion upon the Bill, Lord St. Leonards gave it as his opinion that if a Bill of that nature passed for Ireland "it must be adopted in "England, otherwise the great boon of a parliamentary title would give Irish property "a greater value, and place English property at a disadvantage."

227. In 1858 the Act "to facilitate the sale and transfer of land in Ireland" passed, applying to all estates whether incumbered or not, and constituting a permanent court (the Landed Estates Court,) from which, among other great boons, a parliamentary title can be obtained.

228. The result of the working of this Act in the first four years after it came into operation is given in a return to Parliament of 1st May 1862. I do not find that any later return has been made.

229. According to the return of 1862 the amount of business brought up and transacted by the "*Landed Estates Court*," was as follows:—

(From 1st November 1858 to 31st December 1862.)

Petitions for Sale by Incumbrancers.	Orders made thereon.	Petitions for Sale by Owners of Incumbered Estates.	Orders made thereon.	Petitions for Sale by Owners of Unincumbered Estates.	Orders made thereon.	Petitions for Declarations of Title.	Orders made thereon.
673	654	433	416	97	95	20	19

230. And by a return of the same date "of purchase money paid or to be paid into "the *Landed Estates Court* from the date of its institution (1st November 1858) to the "present time" (31st December 1862), it appears that the total amount of purchase money amounted to 5,940,989*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

231. I have been favoured by the Registrar of the Court with the information that the purchase money from June 1860 up to the present time amounts to 12,577,598*l.*

Probable effect of similar or equivalent measures for England.

232. If it should please Parliament to adopt a similar or some equivalent measure for England, it cannot be doubted that a very large amount of fresh capital would immediately be applied to the land, supplying proper buildings of all kinds where required, improving the cultivation of the soil, adding, in the words of Lord Campbell (s. 219) "to the general prosperity of the community," and, in particular, raising the condition of the agricultural labourers by creating a greater demand for more effective and intelligent services at higher wages.

233. Should the result of the inquiries of the recently appointed sanitary commission be that it should be found practicable to establish in each county or union a highly qualified sanitary authority, in communication with the Secretary of State, whose combined action may cause the want of proper cottage accommodation to be everywhere supplied, on the principle of the Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act, such an authority would be practically powerless in regard to incumbered estates as long as the owner is able to plead that the state of the law prevents his relieving himself of his incumbrances.

234. The action of such an authority would be of great value also in respect to other than incumbered estates only. It is much wanted in reference to the outlying portions of the large estates of wealthy landowners, who in relation to those outlying and often widely scattered portions (scattered often over several counties) are absentees, and seldom witnesses of the defects requiring to be remedied; also in reference to the estates of collegiate, and ecclesiastical and other corporate bodies. (*Suprà*, s. 197.)

A return as to houses, similar to that of the Scotch census, desirable for England and Wales.

235. It would probably tend still further to fix public attention to the state of the labourer's dwelling if a return for England and Wales were made in the next census similar to that which was made for Scotland in the census of 1861.

236. In the English census the number only of houses is given—a return interesting and important in itself in showing that the inhabited houses in England and Wales had increased from 1,575,923 in 1801 to 3,278,039 in 1851, and to 3,739,505 in 1861, being an increase in the interval between 1851 and 1861 of 461,466. But of the nature of these houses there is in the English census no information.

237. In the census of Scotland, on the contrary, the following most striking facts appear:—

There were in Scotland, in 1861, 7,964 families (or 1 per cent.), living in single rooms which contained no window.

There were 226,723 families who lived each in one room, being 34 per cent. of the whole.

There were 246,601 families, equal to 37 per cent. of the whole, who lived each in houses of two rooms.

A similar return in the next census for England and Wales would show to what extent cottage accommodation was still deficient; and in what counties there still remained the largest amount of deficiency to be supplied.

Benefit Societies.

238. We directed the attention of the Assistant Commissioners to the question of benefit societies in their bearing upon the habits of providence of the labourers in agriculture. Mr. Culley, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Portman, and Mr. Norman have contributed a very valuable amount of information upon the subject; but it is one of far too wide a nature, embracing as it does the town as well as the country populations, to be capable of being exhaustively dealt with in the course of our inquiries.

239. The facts and opinions brought together by our Assistant Commissioners only confirm what has long since been widely known, that the labouring poor suffer to an enormous extent by the unsound basis on which, as a general rule, their benefit societies are founded, and by the mismanagement and fraud with which they are so often conducted.

240. The consequence is that, in the words of Mr. Stanhope (G. 201):—

"The confidence of the poor has been to a great extent shaken by the failure of the club on which they or their father have relied. In hundreds of cases, after years of patient self denial, and saving against a day of trouble, the poor labourer has been sent on the parish, because there is nothing 'in 'the box of his club,' or because, as he and others were getting old and were likely soon to come upon its funds, the younger members of his club have dissolved it, and reconstituted it without him. More often again he is the victim of mismanagement. The money is carried off by a treasurer, whom the law in many cases cannot touch; or that which ought solely to be kept for the future requirements of sick pay is spent upon the temporary enjoyments of the annual feast. Still more constantly the poor ignorant man is ruined by a miscalculation. How is he to know that the monthly sum he is called upon to contribute is utterly inadequate to enable the society to fulfil the expectations it holds out? There is no one to tell him so, his neighbours are joining, and he is led to begin a sacrifice which from the first is certain to prove useless." (G. 201.)

241. To this Mr. Stanhope adds that—

"If the value of the friendly society in raising the moral and social condition of the labouring class, and in effecting a most important reduction in the poor rate, be remembered, no one can doubt that every encouragement should be given to men who are anxious to join them, and to their formation on a trustworthy system." (G. 203.)

242. With respect to what a trustworthy system is, and to the actual state of untrustworthiness of nearly the whole of the enrolled benefit societies, and of the whole of the unenrolled, the following opinion of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, Mr. Tidd Pratt, is thus given in the Report of the Western Provident Association for 1868:—

In referring to causes retarding the progress of a sound and enduring system, by which the great masses of the working class may make adequate provision against the evils attendant on sickness and death, the Board think it desirable to call the attention of the members on the present occasion to some of the prominent facts made public by the annual reports of Mr. Tidd Pratt, the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

IN THESE REPORTS THE REGISTRAR HAS CLEARLY SHOWN THAT THE ESSENTIALS OF A SAFE SYSTEM ARE:—

1. Rates of contribution adequate to provide the benefits promised, and to accumulate the funds necessary to meet the growing liabilities incident to the constantly increasing ages of the members; and adjusted to the risk incident to the different ages at which members join.
2. Distinct funds for each benefit.
3. Periodical examinations by competent and independent actuaries.
4. Sufficient numbers of members, and extent of area, to ensure the natural average of sickness and mortality.
5. The safe investment of its funds.

And he shows that the prominent evils in the prevailing systems of clubs and societies arise not only from the want of some or all of these requirements, but also from the absence of any real unity in the apparently large institutions which, notwithstanding their profession to the contrary, are really only a number of small clubs, with distinct funds and interests, united only in name; and he further points out the evils caused by the public-house habits, too often originated and fostered by such societies.

On a recent occasion the Registrar publicly stated his opinion "that out of 25,000 enrolled societies, "large numbers of which fail and disappear every year, he did not consider that 20 of them were "absolutely safe;" whilst of the unenrolled societies, the severe and searching actuarial examination we hold to be essential to safety, has proved that there is not one in a sound and healthy condition. The thousands of societies that have become extinct, and the thousands that, based on the same fallacious principles that brought ruin and destruction to their predecessors, still continue to hold out delusive and flattering promises never to be realised, only afford too melancholy evidence of the extent to which the industrial classes are defrauded of their hard-earned and ill-spared savings for the time of sickness and trouble.

243. Mr. Culley gives a full account of the suggestions which a considerable amount of experience has enabled Captain Dashwood to make for the formation of benefit societies on a sound basis (J. 92). Mr. Norman calls attention to the admirable constitution and working of the Wiltshire Society, established in 1827, under the presidency of the Right Hon. T. H. Sotheron Estcourt. The Hampshire Society, founded on the same principles as those of the Wiltshire and Surrey, is described by Mr. Portman, together with the Western Provident Association, whose reports show that it embraces in its operation upwards of 80 towns and parishes in the west of England. Mr. Norman refers also to the North Warwickshire Friendly Society, founded about 25 years ago by Sir Charles Adderley, on rules substantially similar to those of the Wilts Society; also to some excellent societies in Northamptonshire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire. Mr. Stanhope

also mentions the societies of Kent, Dorset, Shropshire, and Rutland, as founded on a sound basis.

244. The difficulties in the way of forming sound benefit clubs in the agricultural districts are noticed by Mr. Stanhope as involving the following questions:—1. Higher rate of payment. 2. The discontinuance of the meetings at public houses, and the annual display and the annual feast. 3. The uncertain way in which boards of guardians deal with the fact of a man belonging to a club or not.

"Some never recognize, in giving relief, the fact of a man belonging to a club; others do take it into consideration, and some refuse relief altogether. More often they are guided by no fixed or uniform rule. In some parts the labourers are said actually 'to have framed their clubs with special 'reference to additional help from the rate.'" (G. 206.)

245. Mr. Stanhope justly remarks that,—

"It is most surprising that the question, which yields to no other in importance, What is the best way of administering out-door relief so as to give encouragement to provident habits? is not only not answered by an authoritative interpretation of the principle which should govern such cases, but is actually left to be answered by each board of guardians for itself." (*Ibid.*)

246. Upon this, Mr. Stanhope proceeds to add his opinion that further inquiry is necessary:—

"All the evidence appears to me to lead to the conclusion that to ascertain the principle which ought to be recognized in such cases, and the most effective means of offering encouragement to the formation of sound clubs an inquiry is imperatively needed. And on the present question a no less important benefit would be conferred by a consideration of the condition of existing friendly societies. Rotten clubs are sheltering themselves under the protection of Mr. Tidd Pratt's certificate of registration, and availing themselves of the attraction with which this sham security invests them. But besides these certified clubs, it must be remembered that there is an enormous number utterly unrecognized by law, under no restrictions as to management, and whose financial condition is unknown. In the parishes in Kent, where I made special inquiry on the subject, I found the proportion of uncertified to certified societies to be as three to two. And there is a further question well deserving consideration, which is most ably advocated by the Rev. J. G. Stratton (Evid. 228), whether a system of friendly societies might not be organized through the agency of the Post Office, just as annuities and sums payable at death can now be secured by it. For all these purposes a more searching inquiry than was possible under my present instructions appears most desirable." (G. 207.)

247. Mr. Tidd Pratt, in his "Observations on Friendly Societies for Payments at "Death, commonly called Burial Societies" (1868), thus describes generally the objects which benefit societies should have in view, and the proper manner of attaining them:—

"The benefits for which the working classes should insure are,—

1. Medical attendance.
2. Payment in sickness until the age of 60 or 65.
3. An annuity, or old-age pay after 60 or 65.
4. A payment at death.

"The two last, viz., the old-age pay and payment at death, may be secured with the guarantee of the Government by insurances at the Post Office.

"With respect to medical attendance and sick pay, these benefits may be secured by local friendly societies legally established for those purposes." (pp. 7, 8.)

248. At a meeting of the central board of the Hampshire Friendly Society, held at Winchester on the 17th March 1869, Wyndham S. Portal, Esq., Vice-President in the chair, it was unanimously resolved,—

"That the establishment of good county friendly societies throughout the kingdom would be a great encouragement to industry and frugality, especially in small country parishes."

249. I have no doubt that further inquiry, as Mr. Stanhope suggests, would greatly contribute to that desirable object:—1. By bringing into full light, on competent authority, the present system and management of those most numerous existing societies which entail certain loss and disappointment. 2. By diffusing a knowledge of the principles and management of the few clubs which are in a sound and satisfactory state, and which consequently may be depended upon by the labouring poor to fulfil their obligations. 3. By aiding in the solution of the difficult problem adverted to by Mr. Stanhope, namely, "What is the best way of administering out-door relief so as to give "encouragement to provident habits."

Other questions mentioned in Reports of Assistant Commissioners which will

250. In addition to this question of friendly societies, there are many other topics of the highest interest included in the Reports of our Assistant Commissioners' disclosing defects and abuses connected with agricultural employments and arrangements, the remedies for which must be looked for more from an enlightened public opinion than from legislation. The bad results, both to the labourer and the employer, of the modes of hiring prevalent in the south as contrasted with those of North Northumberland, parts of Durham and Yorkshire, and a few other localities, where the

labourers, male and female, wanted on the farm are housed on or near the farm, and all are hired by the year, are widely exemplified in the Assistant Commissioners' Reports, especially in those of Mr. Culley, who has brought his experience as a landowner, and also as a practical agriculturist, to bear with great weight upon the subject. The practice of statute hiring has been exhibited as it exists both in its unimproved and its improved state in several districts. The very important question of the labourer's dietary has received much illustration showing that a low dietary necessarily produces inefficient labour (B. 8, 56–59; F. 10, 104), while the contrary gives that marked physical superiority which distinguishes the northern as compared with the southern labourers. (Appendix to 1st Report, Part 1, p. 158; J. 79, 98; j. p. 411–12; k. 123.) These subjects, together with the mode of lodging farm labourers in some districts, the comparative effects of small farms, both on the farmer and the labourer, and other matters of interest, will doubtless receive further illustration in the Reports of our Assistant Commissioners on Wales, our Report upon which will, we anticipate, be ready for presentation to Parliament at the commencement of the next Session, and also in the course of the inquiry in Scotland, which will immediately follow it.

be further illustrated in subsequent Reports.

All this I humbly certify to Your Majesty.

Given under my hand and seal this 22nd day of October 1869.

H. SEYMOUR TREMENHEERE.

2, Victoria Street, Westminster.

MR. TUFNELL'S SEPARATE REPORT.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

1. PREVIOUS to entering into the question as to how far the principle of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of the employment of children, young persons and women in agriculture, I think it desirable to lay down the rules that, in my opinion, ought to guide us in interfering with the means by which the labouring classes get their living. It seems to me a necessary preliminary to come to some decision on the difficult question as to what are the limits of the province of Government, and how far the *laissez faire*, or non-interference principle, ought to prevail. I may be permitted to quote on this point the words of Burke, who says in his "Thoughts on Scarcity":—

"It is one of the finest problems in legislation, and which has often engaged my thoughts "whilst I followed that profession,—what the State ought to take upon itself to direct "by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave with as little interference as possible "to individual discretion."

Limits of the province of Government.

2. I think it necessary to make these prefatory remarks, because a very large proportion of the witnesses, who have been examined under this Commission, seem to have entirely forgotten the necessity of some consideration of the problem so clearly stated by Burke, and to have imagined that every evil they have observed among the agricultural population ought to be cured by the direct interference of Government.

Proposals to cure every evil among the agricultural population by direct Government interference.

3. Thus we are asked to prohibit girls from working in the fields up to the age of 13, that they should be allowed to work up to that age, but not afterwards; that they should be prohibited from working under the age of 16; that no female should be allowed to work in the fields at all; that she should be allowed to work, but always two hours less than a man; that girls should only be employed in summer; that they should not be employed at all, unless married; that no child be taken to work on foot beyond one mile; that no woman be employed on thrashing machines, or allowed to drive a cart; that no labour on Sunday be allowed; that the sexes shall never be permitted to work together, or more than 20 in a gang; that Government should build cottages for the poor.

4. Now, it appears to me that the above proposals, with some few exceptions which I shall presently define, wholly overstep the proper boundaries of legislation, and that

Proposals that wholly overstep the

proper boundaries of legislation.

the greatest confusion would result from any attempt to carry them out. I do not deny that they refer to serious evils that ought to be cured; but I deny that the cure is to be sought for by Acts of Parliament, and, further, I am of opinion that any attempt to cure them by direct legislation, would either result in passing laws that would be broken by general consent, and so bring the legislature into contempt, or superinduce other evils of greater magnitude.

Past legislation full of futile attempts to cure, by Acts of Parliament, evils that had been observed to affect labourers. Present legislation in respect of milliners injures those it was intended to benefit.

5. The history of past legislation is full of attempts to remedy evils that affected labourers, by methods that seem opposed to every principle of political economy and even of common sense. Wages of a carter and shepherd, by an Act of 1444, were ordered not to exceed 20*s.* in money and 4*s.* for clothing. By an Act passed in 1487, no one was allowed to take more than one farm, the value of which was not to exceed 10 marks yearly. An Act of 1562 empowered the magistrates to fix the rate of wages, and ordered that four acres of land should be allotted to every cottage, which was repealed in 1775, because it had the effect, which we should now predict to be inevitable, of restricting the number of cottages. I am not sure whether some of our modern Acts of Parliament, passed with the same benevolent motives as, doubtless, dictated the Acts above quoted, are not liable to the charge of injuring those they were intended to benefit. The law, forbidding milliners to work after 4 o'clock on Saturday, has, in some cases, made the classes, it was intended to benefit, worse off than they were before. When the hours fixed by law arrives for closing the workshops, the milliners and others must go home and toil, or the half day they lose is deducted from their wages. "I find," writes a mantle-maker of her work, "I cannot get it done, consequently I must take it "home and find light, and in winter fire, which I should save if it were not for the "law."[1]

Principles which it is justifiable by legal measures to enforce with respect to the employment of children.

6. The principle which, as it appears to me it is justifiable by legal measures to enforce, is that no child should be cruelly treated or mentally neglected, or to put the proposition in another form, that no child should be overworked or under-educated, and to these points my recommendations will be confined.

Mill's opinion on the limits of the province of Government.

7. In defence of this principle I must take leave to quote the opinion of Mill, who gives, in the last edition of his Political Economy, a chapter on the "Limits of the "Province of Government." He says:—

"Whatever it can be clearly seen that parents ought to do or forbear for the interest of children, the law is warranted, if it is able, in compelling to be done or forborne. It is right that children and young persons, not yet arrived at maturity, should be protected, so far as the eye and hand of the State can reach, from being overworked. Labouring for too many hours in the day, or on work beyond their strength, should not be permitted to them. Education also, the best which circumstances admit of their receiving, is not a thing which parents or relatives, from indifference, jealousy, or avarice, should have it in their power to withhold."[2]

Is the health of children injured by agricultural work?

8. Pursuing the inquiry on the above principle, the first point to discover is whether children are cruelly treated or their health injured by agricultural operations.

9. There is a small amount of evidence showing the hurtfulness of some species of agricultural work to children. Thus W. H. Vipan, Esq., M.R.C.S., says, "To expose "a boy 10 or 12 years of age, even for 12 hours a day, to the cutting easterly winds "that prevail in the eastern counties, in the months of March, April, and May, must "not only be detrimental to his physical growth, but is nearly sure to develop the seeds "of any disease that may be latent in his constitution." And Dr. Borham, of Halstead, considers that "eight hours a day is as long a time as any boy of 10 ought to be "employed. If kept longer on his legs, the cartilages of his joints become disorganized "and produce stunted growth, curvature of the spine, and often that scrofulous diathesis "prevails to such an extent among the English poor."[3]

10. But the greatly preponderating opinion among medical men goes to prove that the health of children is nowise impaired by field labour. Mr. Norman says on this point:—

"18. It is the almost unanimous opinion of all classes that the labour performed by women and children in the fields is not injurious to them. The evidence of Dr. Paley is peculiarly valuable upon this point. Dr. Paley has been physician to the hospital at Peterboro' for 26 years, where nearly 2,000 cases pass through his hands each year, chiefly from the agricultural districts. He gives it as his opinion that the diseases which attack the agricultural population most frequently are rheumatism, inflammation of the air tubes, and asthma (with bronchitis). A record has been kept at the hospital of the ages of all the patients who suffered from these diseases; and from a reference to the record (Evid. 14) it may be seen that the ages between 5 and 20 (which may be taken as the limits of the

[1] Pall Mall Gazette, May 31st, 1869.
[2] Principles of Political Economy, by J. S. Mill, book 5, c. 11.
[3] Fraser, p. 15.

ages within which children and young persons are employed in the fields) are particularly healthy. No doubt old men are subject to rheumatism (Evid. 47); but Dr. Paley gives it as his opinion that rheumatism occurring late in life cannot be said to be the result of exposure in early life when the patient has been healthy during the intervening years.

"As regards surgical cases, Dr. Walker (App. 15) says that a certain number of cases of accidents are brought into the hospital at Peterboro' every year; that horse accidents are not so frequent as accidents arising from machinery, and that the latter usually occur to children about the farmyard carelessly playing with machinery. On the whole he thinks that field labour is rather healthy than otherwise. Dr. Francis, of Northampton, writes to me as follows:—'My medical experience of the 'poor has been derived from my connexion with the Northampton Infirmary, to which I have been 'physician 13 years. Nearly 5,000 patients, derived mostly from within a radius of 20 miles, annually 'enter the infirmary either as out or in patients. Of these the majority are women and children, and 'among them only an insignificant number work in the fields. I cannot call to mind a single instance 'in which any physical injury can be said to have arisen from such labour. The experience of the 'senior surgeon of the infirmary, who has held office there upwards of 30 years, and of the house 'surgeon, who has known it during the last 6 years, is similar to my own on this point.' (See too Evid. 16)."[1]

11. James Palmer, Esq., surgeon, at Flaxton, Yorkshire, says:—"I do not think that "the health of the children is at all damaged by field work."[2] H. Veasy, Esq., medical officer of the Woburn Union, says, "In a physical point of view, early field labour "conduces to natural growth and general development, by expanding the chest, exer- "cising the muscles, bone, and ligament to their proper use; quickening all vital action "with free supply of its best support in pure air; inuring to hardness, and the compen- "satory blessings of ready digestion, and sound sleep by constant exposure and moderate "fatigue."[3] Mr. Boyle reports of Huntingdonshire, "With the exception of children "overworked in gangs under 10 years of age, it appears that field work is not only not "detrimental to the health, but is by some witnesses pronounced highly beneficial."[4] The Rev. J. W. Hayward, of Grandborough, Bucks, writes, "I wish to express a "decided opinion in favour of field work for the occasional employment of the young "of both sexes; I have never known any injury to arise from it to health or morals; "upon small farms, under the superintendence of the farmer or some trustworthy man, "the employment of young children with others of the same age, is to be preferred to "the common custom of the father of a family performing a piece of work which he "has taken, by the united labour of his family, inasmuch as the younger children are "sure to be strained to keep up with the elder."[5]

12. Dr. White, medical officer in the Woodstock Union, Oxfordshire, says, "There "is no reason to suppose that agricultural labour in this district is injurious to the "health of those engaged in it. . . . It is a rare event to find a sick child whose "illness can be ascribed to its being employed in field labour at too tender an age."[6]

13. W. Lightfoot, Esq., surgeon in the Wantage Union, Berkshire, writes, "I beg "to say, as far as my experience of 21 years goes, that a healthier set of women and "girls are seldom to be met with, which I consider owing to field work."[7]

14. Mr. Stanhope, alluding to the employment of girls in field work, says that the objections are in Lincolnshire:—

"First, that it is injurious to their physical health. Upon this point there is much difference of opinion. The cold and exposure inseparable from field work are said to produce rheumatism and consumption. Others say that it is particularly injurious to them just after the age of puberty. In the fens especially they are exposed to a great deal of wet, by being taken to weed corn or green crops in rainy weather. But Dr. Mackintosh, after 20 years' experience, says, 'Girls employed in the fields 'enjoy more robust health, and a greater immunity from the complaints incident to the age of puberty, 'than girls who are employed in in-door service.' (Evid. 25.) They are rarely put to winter work, and the more general opinion as to summer work is, that it is rather favourable to their physical health than otherwise."[8]

15. But as respects boys he concludes, "Whatever therefore may be the case with "reference to the necessity of requiring some better school attendance from boys, there "is no reason on the ground of health for fixing any limit before which they shall not "be allowed to work different from that of the Factory Acts."[9]

Are children cruelly treated?

16. As respects the question of cruelty to children, there is almost a total lack of proof that any cruelty exists. Mr. Stanhope, reporting on Nottinghamshire and the fens of Lincolnshire where, in a few instances, cases are mentioned of children going five or six miles to work, says:—

"101. Cases of injury to the children from going these long distances to work appear to be rare. The main sufferer is the farmer himself. Children, unless absolutely forced, will only do a certain

[1] Norman, p. 112.
[2] Portman, App., p. 408.
[3] Culley App., p. 510.
[4] App., p. 549.
[5] Culley, p. 125.
[6] Culley, 2 Rep., p. 84.
[7] Culley, Evidence, p. 406.
[8] Stanhope, Rep., p. 80.
[9] Stanhope, Rep., p. 79.

amount of labour in the day, and the fatigue produced by going a long distance to work diminishes, if not their actual working hours, at any rate the amount of energy that they put into their employment. 'I have never observed,' says one witness, 'any signs of over-fatigue in children, though many 'of them walk two miles, or rather more, to work.' (Evid. 281.) The case is very different from that of men, who are called upon to exert their utmost strength at work. Young children are rarely put to any employment requiring the exertion of strength. Nimbleness and quickness of hand are the especial qualities required. With women it is rather different. Dragging turnips out of the ground and some similar employments do involve the use of force, but grown up women with their shorter hours of work are pretty nearly as well able to go long distance as men.

"102. But as to this and many other practices, the best test after all is that of experience. These children do not grow up to be unhealthy or deformed, or unfit for work; but, on the contrary, they become labourers who can compare in strength and working ability with any in England. And if this is the case, can it be expected that any absolute prohibitions as to distance would be rigidly enforced? If any regulation should be thought advisable, some simple rule forbidding all children from being taken to work *on foot* beyond a distance of two miles would appear to be the readiest mode of effecting the object with least interference to the labour of the children."[1]

No restriction on child labour required in Northumberland.

17. And Mr. Henley, in his Report on Northumberland, in answer to the question, "Are the females or the young subject to any ill-treatment;" writes, "The evidence "on this point is overwhelming; no ill-treatment is attempted and none would be "possible."[2] And he sums up his conclusions in the following pithy sentences:—

"210. I beg leave now to state shortly the views which I have been led to form on those points which are described in your instructions as 'the principal points of the general question.'

"211. Legislation is not required in Northumberland for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys and girls should not be employed in farm labour, as the parents never send their children out to work at an age which is physically and morally injurious. There is a general concurrence of opinion that no child should be employed before 10 years of age.

"212. There is no necessity for limiting the hours of work of boys or girls, &c., as in the words of Mr. Fife, the eminent surgeon in Newcastle,—'The duration of the hours of labour, depending as they do on the season of the year, the condition of the crops, and the state of the weather, must vary; but periods of great activity are usually followed by comparative rest; upon this subject any legislative enactment must be vexatious and obstructive.'

"213. It is not necessary to secure by legislation proper meal times for the young and females engaged in farm labour; the time allowed is ample.

"214. It is not necessary to limit by legislation the distance to which children should be taken to work, as no abuse exists.

"215. It is not necessary to provide by legislation that females should be protected from unhealthy or unsuitable employment in agriculture, as the medical testimony is conclusive as to the healthy nature of their employment, and there is no evidence that such employment is morally injurious. On the contrary, it tends to rear a fine race of women, who make the best wives for labourers, and are invaluable in a national point of view as producing and rearing a fine population.

"216. Mr. Thomas Lawson, of Longhirst, who attaches great value to the employment of women in field work, in answer to the question whether any restriction should be placed upon it, replies:—'Most certainly not; I would sooner recommend that every young female should, on physical and 'national grounds, be obliged to work a certain number of days for a certain number of years at field-'work of all classes.'"

Are children employed in agriculture under-educated?

18. Hence, it being established that children are not cruelly treated or overworked in agricultural employment, the next point to consider is whether they are under-educated, and on this question such abundant evidence has so frequently been laid before Parliament and the public to the effect that there is a great deficiency of education among the labouring classes, that it is almost superfluous to quote evidence in support of it. Therefore, I shall only refer to a few facts on this topic, though evidence leading to the same conclusion could be multiplied to any extent.

19. Mr. Fraser says:—

The maximum school age has been lessening.

"The maximum school age has been steadily and almost continuously lessening for the last 10 years. In agricultural districts it has become a rare thing to find a labourer's son in the schools above the age of 10. Many of the schools are filled with babies. When we compare the standard we have reached with that which seems to be attained without effort in Prussia, and assert in a triumphant tone that our 1 in 7·7 of the population at school is not so very far behind their 1 in 6·21, we ignore or find it convenient to keep out of sight the difference *qua* results implied in the fact that our school life is between 3 and 10, or at the best 3 and 12, while the Prussian school life is between 5 and 14." "He thought he was guilty of no exaggeration in saying that 50 per cent. of the adult agricultural labourers could not read or write. He had talked to several labourers he had met, and one could not read, another could not write, and almost every case he came across was unsatisfactory."[4]

20. The above is an extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Fraser at a large public meeting at Halstead, Essex, in which Dr. Borham said that 9 out of 12 could not sign their own declaration in clubs, and the following motion was agreed to:—"That it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that the education of the agricultural labourer in this district is not satisfactory."

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[1] Stanhope, Rep., p. 82.
[2] Henley, Rep., p. 58.
[3] Henley, Rep., p. 70.
[4] Fraser, p. 18.
[5] App., p. 191.

21. The Rev. C. B. Wollaston, rector of Felpham, Sussex, writes:—

"I have already, as a school inspector, reported to our bishop to the effect that the employment of very young boys in the place of men, principally as horse boys, is having a most damaging effect upon our parish schools. The average age of the first class in our National schools has fallen 11 months in the last 10 years, mainly owing to the demand for boy labour."[1]

22. And Mr. Arkcoll, a magistrate at Hailsham, mentioned his surprise at finding so many young lads in his district unable to write. He had tested their ability in the case of the boys who had been sent to him for licences to remove cattle under the cattle plague restrictions. In one case, which he was led to inquire into, he discovered that out of a nominal school life of five years the boy had actually attended school less than one.[2]

Difference between the nominal and real school life of children.

23. This difference between the nominal and real school life is further shown by Mr. Beckett, of Ingoldisthorpe, a school inspector of Norwich, who furnished Mr. Fraser with some tables proving that the five years of nominal school life, when tested by the entries in the register, are constantly found to dwindle down to less than three, and those three not years of uninterrupted attendance, but distributed at intervals, growing more and more intermittent as the boy grows older, and every year becomes of higher value, over the five.[3]

Numbers of the agricultural class growing up without education.

24. Mr. Culley, after examining a mass of educational returns from Bedfordshire and Bucks, comes to the conclusion that—

"There can be no reasonable doubt that there are a great many young people of the agricultural labouring class growing up without sufficient education, meaning by sufficient education the power of reading and writing, and using for ordinary purposes the first four rules of arithmetic; and that not a few are growing up without any education whatever in both of the counties to which these returns apply."[4]

25. Mr. Norman, reporting on Northamptonshire, says:—

"24. In order to test the sufficiency of the education it was necessary for me to lay down some standard of what amount of education was sufficient. I usually stated that I considered the children of the agricultural poor sufficiently educated if they could read a newspaper with ease and fluency, write a letter, and understand a tradesman's bill. Judged by this standard, it was the opinion of five out of the six Boards of Guardians which I visited that the state of education was defective. (Evid. 1.) The only place where the Board of Guardians considered the education sufficient was Oundle; and I regret to say that even in this instance my personal inquiries led me to the conclusion that the opinion of the Board was not well founded. I also examined the roll of the Northampton Militia, and the result of my examination was to show that from the year 1860 to the present time between 39 and 49 per cent. of the recruits enlisted each year could neither read nor write."[5]

26. Mr. Stanhope, reporting on Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, says:—

"145. With respect to the larger villages, the evidence is almost unanimous as to the state of education among the young agricultural population. The Rev. Prebendary Perry, of Waddington, says:—'Taking the lowest standard of a sufficient education for an agricultural labourer, I believe that more 'than one-half of the population is growing up without it. There are probably very few who grow up 'without some knowledge of the above subjects.' (Evid. 86.)"

"At Langtoft, the Rev. J. S. Warren says of the candidates for confirmation, 'This year, out of 20 'boys that came to me averaging sixteen years old, seven could not read at all, and 10 could not write 'at all. With others the power was too small to be of any practical use. The girls were better. Out 'of 14, three could not read, and eight could not write.' (Evid. 250.)"

"At Long Sutton, 'Out of a night school averaging 40, only 15 can read thoroughly, write fairly, 'and work the compound rules.' (Evid. 166.)"

"146. The result of my own inquiries leads me to the same conclusion. Out of 180 children in Lincolnshire over 10, and actually engaged in field work on the day on which I examined them, 42 could not read or write, 36 could read only, 60 could read and write a little, while only 42 had received a really satisfactory education in these respects; but no less than 31 out of the 42 who were educated came from towns or large open villages. On one farm between Retford and Worksop, out of 15 lads between 12 and 16, four could neither read nor write (three of them coming from large towns), and two could read only; five were well educated. One employer at Deeping St. James says:—'I have '10 boys only; of these four cannot read or write. I asked them to-day, and I was much surprised, 'because I knew two of those who could not read to have been at school a great deal.' (Evid. 252.)"[6]

Modes by which the deficiency of education can be supplied.

27. The question that next comes in order is how best to supply this deficiency of education among the agricultural population.

28. In the circular that was distributed by the Assistant Commissioners opinions were asked on the three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained. These are, first, half-day at school and half-day at work; secondly, by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work; thirdly, by school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

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[1] App., p. 193.
[2] App., p. 206.
[3] Fraser, p. 25.
[4] Culley, p. 129.
[5] Norman, p. 113.
[6] Stanhope, p. 87.

The half-time or alternate day system.

29. As respects the half-day or alternate day system, the evidence is so strongly and almost unanimously against it, that I believe it would be utterly impossible to put in force any enactment having this object in view. On this point I will only quote the opinion of the Rev. John Wilkinson, a zealous educationist, who is his prize essay on the farming of Hampshire, published in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, speaks of it as follows, and his conclusions are sanctioned by an overwhelming weight of evidence :—

"A half-day system will not answer, because the boy has a whole day's work set him, and that very possibly at a distance from home ; alternate days will not answer, because every workman's usefulness depends on his acquaintance with his work, and if he be away half his time he is just twice as long learning his business ; neither will master, bailiff, or headman be bothered with teaching two sets of boys ; they say one is trouble enough. Besides, where are the relays to come from ? At pressing times every boy and girl is wanted ; and even for constant places, in parishes of ordinary density of population, the supply of boys is not beyond the demand. There is no juvenile reserve. The application of these schemes to an agricultural district is an impracticable theory. They proceed on a mistaken analogy between manufacturing and agricultural operations. In the one there is concentration of uniform work, under cover, in one spot, independent of season and weather ; in the other the work is spread over some square miles, is exposed to wet above and mud below, varies with every season, and is dependent on every atmospheric change. From circumstances so different the same practical conclusion cannot be deduced."

Instances in which the half-time system has succeeded.

30. It is true that there are a few instances on record in which gentlemen farmers have tried a half-time system with apparent success. Lord Rayleigh, in Essex, tried it for 10 years on a considerable scale, and it is thus described in Mr. Fraser's Report :—

"*Lord Rayleigh*, of Terling Place, Essex, used to have a gang of boys between the ages of 10 and 12, varying in number according to circumstances from 10 to 40, whom he employed upon the half-day principle. He paid them at the rate of 3*d.* a day for the first year, and 4*d.* a day for the second year. He did not advance beyond 4*d.* a day, because he did not wish to interfere with the farmers' labour-supply. He was induced to form the gang, which was placed under the superintendence of an old experienced workman (who got an extra shilling a week for the duty), in consequence of seeing such a number of idle boys about the village. A condition of employment was that the boys went to school. They attended school every day from 9 to 12 ; then had their dinner and assembled in the playground ; were then marched, under their old commander, from the playground to the scene of their work, and were employed from 1 o'clock to the ordinary leaving-off time. The experiment was continued for about 10 years, and in Lord Rayleigh's opinion worked successfully. The school never was so full of boys, and the master said that the half-timers learnt as much in three hours as they used to do in five. The plan, however, has been discontinued about four years, in consequence of the supply of boys in the parish falling short."[1]

Half-time as practised by Sir P. Grey Egerton.

31. Sir P. Grey Egerton also tried it in Cheshire, and it is thus described by him in a letter to the Commissioners :—

"In reply to your communication received this morning with reference to the conversation I had with Mr. Tufnell, on the subject of the half-time system, I beg to say that I have tried it on a very small scale, but have found it answer admirably. Finding the boys leaving my school as soon as they could get employment with the farmers, viz., at about 12 years of age, I arranged to take six of them on to the farm and garden for half days at sixpence each, this being about the equivalent of what they would earn from a farmer for the whole day. They are divided into two gangs. One goes to school in the morning and to work after dinner, the other goes to work in the morning and to school in the evening. This arrangement continues for one week, and the next week they change places. I find the system very popular and the result is what I chiefly desired, namely, having the control over them till they are 14 years of age. They thus get a certain amount of schooling, and are also learning the trade they will follow in after life. The work they do is I think equivalent to the wages I pay them, and if they go into service they get higher wages than if they were ignorant of field work. I am about to take one boy into the stables on the same plan, and probably one into the house. I have now had three or four year's experience of the system, and find the results so satisfactory that I should be glad to see it tried on a larger scale."[2]

The experiment of Mr. Paget in Nottinghamshire.

Failure of the half-time system.

32. The experiment by Mr. Paget in Nottinghamshire is widely known, and is described by him in a letter to Mr. Stanhope, but in every case, the plan seems to have been tried in exceptionally favourable circumstances.[3] A large landowner can carry out any favourite scheme, that would be utterly unsuited to the ordinary conditions under which the tenant farmer occupies his land. In many parts of the country, as is shown in the evidence, the agricultural population is not equal to the demand for it, and every boy, who is capable of working, is employed. How then could a system work that requires a double number of boys ? Mr. Fraser rightly observes, "What Mr. Paget can do with "eight boys at Ruddington in a population of 2,300, it might be found impossible to do "even there, if every farmer in the parish attempted the same thing ; it would certainly "be found impossible in the thinly peopled parishes of the south of England, where "boy labour is in great demand, and there is asserted to be no redundancy of the "article."[4] Lord Rayleigh's experiment was considered by the neighbouring farmers a

[1] App., p. 192. [2] App., p. 147. [3] App., p. 148. [4] Fraser, p. 28.

failure, and has been given up for four years, as Lord Rayleigh asserts "in consequence "of the supply of boys in the parish falling short."

Success of the half-time system in pauper schools.

33. I am personally extremely favourable to the half-time system, and perhaps have had more opportunities of witnessing its success in a particular line than any other person. It is enforced by order of the Poor Law Board in every pauper school, and I am well acquainted by actual inspection with its working in every pauper school in Middlesex, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, and Berkshire. Nothing can be more successful. The children, though only occupied half as long in book work, as those in village schools, learn far more. Mr. Fraser, in his Report to the Newcastle Commission, speaks of them thus:—

"It struck me that the condition of the workhouse schools very nearly approached the ideal of what elementary education in this country ought to be; perfectly in keeping with what the children's future career is likely to be."

34. This opinion is confirmed by the Rev. Thos. Headly in his Report to the same Commission, where he says:—

"The boys, though spending only half the day in the school, made excellent progress. Indeed of all the schools I examined the workhouse schools seemed to me much the best."

35. The real secret of their success is that they are boarding schools, the attendance is consequently strictly compulsory, and regularity of attendance, the absence of which is the supreme difficulty that has to be encountered in all day schools, is enforced without a murmur. None of these conditions apply to the education of independent children.[1]

Half-time system as enforced by Parliament in factories of doubtful educational value.

36. There is, however, considerable doubt, whether the half-time system, when made obligatory by Act of Parliament, and not enforced by the wishes of the parents, is of much educational value. The number of half-timers in the inspected schools is surprisingly small, and the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, in moving the supplies for the Education vote on 19th July,[2] remarked "He had been "surprised to find that the half-timers, who were obliged by law to remain at school till "13 years of age, made so little difference (in the number of children over 10), and he "believed, that in debates upon the subject, there must have been a tendency to exaggerate the effect of legislation, for not more than 55,000 half-timers altogether were to "be found in the Government school."[3] It is asserted in the Report of the Commissioners on Endowed Schools, that the prospect of a free admission to an endowed school, induces the parents to neglect the education of their children till the time of admission arrives. This effect has been observed in the Greenwich Hospital Schools, where boys were only admitted at 9 years of age, and of which the Rev. Canon Moseley reported in 1850:—

"Some of the boys when asked why their parents had neglected to send them to school before, answered that they saw no use in it, because they knew they would have plenty of schooling at Greenwich. Their parents were accustomed to consider it unnecessary that they should be taught anything before they went to Greenwich, because they would be taught so well afterwards."[4]

37. Mr. Fraser says on this point:—

"The unfavourable influence is, that parents knowing that they will be obliged to send their children to school as soon as they begin to earn wages till they attain the age of 13, often let them run wild in the streets till the wage-earning period arrives."

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[1] I, however, must not be supposed as assenting to the opinion given by Messrs. Fraser and Headly as to the excellence of the education given in workhouse schools. The education given in these schools, if regarded only in its intellectual aspect, is doubtless excellent. But boarding schools for the lower classes require something more than intellectual education to fit the children for the business of life. The schools so praised by Messrs. Fraser and Headly may have been very bad ones, as the children may have been morally bad by contact with adult paupers, and not able to turn their hands to hard work from the want of industrial training. These two defects—the absence of moral and industrial training,—do not come under the cognizance of an inspector of village day schools, but they are well known to persons who, like myself, have had experience of pauper education, as the source of deadly evils in many workhouse schools.

[2] "Times," July 20.

[3] In Glasgow the half-time system seems wholly to have failed, according to the Second Report of the Scotch Commissioners of Education, p. 135, where they say:—"'The half-time system proper is almost wholly 'ignored in Glasgow.' It appears that there is only one manufactory in Bridgeton where the system is tried. But the evidence shows that the school to which the children go is quite inefficient. 'The master, an elderly 'man, was not trained as a teacher. He betook himself to the work more from necessity than choice, and 'considers himself sufficiently remunerated with 12*s.* a week for teaching some sixty factory children.' Messrs. Harvey and Greig declare that the mill-owners are opposed to the system as 'vexatious,' and would rather employ no children under thirteen than have half-timers. Again, the manufacturers insist that 'after 'they have submitted to the drudgery of its operation, the children leave for other occupations.' In Glasgow it seems that there are large works which are not within the Factory Acts, and where children are employed without any restriction as to age, hours of work, or education. The result is, that the children leave the works which are regulated by law, and betake themselves to those which are free from legal restrictions."

[4] Report on Greenwich Schools, 1850.

38. Mr. Assistant Commissioner Winder says :—

"I satisfied myself by repeated questions to individual children, and by an inspection of school registers, both at Rochdale and Bradford, that on the average, half-time children at the commencement of their work have been a shorter time previously at school than day scholars of the same age. I am afraid that it is the prospect of compulsory education, that is at the bottom of this exceptional neglect, and this I found to be the opinion of those best qualified to judge. The knowledge that a child must go to school at a later period of life makes its parents more careless during its earlier years." Canon Girdlestone also, speaking from an experience of 25 years in Lancashire, states that great numbers of children do not attend school, till the age arrives at which they are compelled by the Factory Act to do so."[1]

Undesigned evil effect of the compulsory half-time system.

39. This undesigned effect of the compulsory half-time system is further established in the last Report of the Committee of Council on Education, where the Rev. G. Steele, Government Inspector in Lancashire, says :—

"It is a very common practice for parents in manufacturing districts, altogether to neglect the education of their children until they commence work, *i.e.*, until they are eight years old at least. The idea is, that when they are compelled to go to school they will get schooling enough. It results, that if a child does not happen to get work at a factory, it has no education at all ; if he does, his whole time is taken up in mastering rudiments, which ought to have been acquired long before ; and he never probably acquires enough to be of real service. The first standard in factory schools is constantly filled with great boys and girls whose work and schooling recently commenced together. Thus a sort of encouragement is indirectly and undesignedly given to parental negligence ; for probably many of these children, but for the prospect of future enforced education, would have been sent in school in earlier years."[2]

Effects of such a system in encouraging parental negligence.

40. Mr. Stokes also, the Roman Catholic Inspector in the north-west of England, reports to exactly the same effect. He says :—

"Upon parents of careless habits, the prospect that at 8 years of age their children will be sent to school as half-timers without fee from them, produces the very same effect as the hope of free admission to an endowed school in the class above them. In both classes, parents shirk the duty of paying fees for the early education of their children, and await the time when schooling will come without a drain upon their pocket. In the labouring class, with which I am concerned, this delay is ruinous. In too many cases, children brought up in the streets, their only playground, have at 8 years of age acquired habits, which, added to their ignorance of the elements of learning, and to the exhausting nature of their work, obstruct the educating influence of the primary school."[3]

Method of enforcing education by the Printworks Act wholly nugatory.

41. The third method of enforcing the school attendance of children is that prescribed by the Printworks Act (8 & 9 Vict. c. 29, 10 & 11 Vict. c. 70), which enacts that every child under 13 shall attend school for 150 hours distributed over 30 days, in each half-year, during any part of which it is employed in a printwork ; no attendance beyond five hours in any one day being reckoned as part of the 150 hours.

Mr. Horner's opinion on the Printworks as respects education.

42. I believe this plan to be entirely in-operative. The Newcastle Commission reported strongly against it, and the late Mr. Leonard Horner, a factory inspector for 25 years, denounced it in the following strong expressions : "Of all the mockeries of "education, which the Legislature intended that children employed in factories and "printworks should receive, by the enactments for that end, none is so great as in the "case of a large proportion of the children employed in printworks."[4]

43. This criticism is confirmed by the Rev. D. V. Hadley, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in Lancashire, who says in his report of 1866 :—"I must record my convic-"tion that the provision made by the educational clauses of the Printworks Act are "little better than useless. The children employed in these works are the worst educated, "as a class, of any in my district."[5] And in the report of Mr. White, the commissioner appointed to enquire into the operation of the Printworks Act, published last June, Mr. M'Adam, the manager of a large printwork, says :—"I do not consider the educational "part of this Act worth anything."[6]

Employers of children willing that all children should be prohibited from working up to the age of 10.

44. But in conjunction with the absolute prohibition of all children from working under a certain age, many of the witnesses propose some approach to the system of the Printworks Act, and it may be useful to mention some of them. Mr. Fraser says,—

"It is the almost unanimous opinion of every person and body of persons who have expressed opinions upon the subject, that the best mode of promoting the education of children in agricultural districts would be (1) to prohibit their employment on the land under the age of 10 ; (2), to make provisions for securing their regular attendance at school for the five years preceding that age; and in several cases the suggestion was added that (3) to prevent the possible loss, by disuse, of what they had attained, the children, when emancipated from entire restriction, should still be required to fulfil a certain amount of winter attendance—say 150 hours—either at day or night school, for two years more.

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[1] Fraser, p. 26.
[2] Report of Committee of Council on Education, p. 228.
[3] Report of Committee of Council on Education, p. 318.
[4] Newcastle Commission Report, p. 211.
[5] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1866, p. 106.
[6] Report on Printworks Act, p. 48.

I should add that not only do farmers think that this mode of dealing with the subject would be the mode least embarrassing to them in the cultivation of their land; but that managers and teachers of schools declare that they could do more for the children's education in this way than they could hope to do if regular attendance ceased at 8, and intermittent attendance took its place till 13. My own opinion, formed upon an experience of 20 years as manager and (to a considerable extent) teacher of a rural school, entirely coincides with theirs."[1]

45. Mr. Stanhope gives the following schemes from Nottinghamshire:— Proposed schemes for educating agricultural children.

"168. The plan suggested by Mr. Paget as calculated to meet the requirements of agriculture in his neighbourhood is to hold a test examination in reading at 9 years of age, and from that till 13, to require 90 days' school attendance in each year. Eight of these days are to be in each of nine months, and the remainder at any time that suits the convenience of the farmer. (Evid. 276.)

"169. A somewhat more elastic scheme is suggested by the Rev. J. M. Lakin as applicable to Leicestershire, namely, that the attendance should be all completed during three summer months and three winter months, leaving the other half-year free. (Evid. 326.) That the attendance should be permitted to be made at any time during the year is proposed by several witnesses. Thus the Rev. J. S. Warren says:—'I do not see that any inconvenience would arise from a child being obliged, before 'employment in labour, to produce a certificate that he has made a certain number of attendances at 'some school during the 12 months last past. This would enable employers to avail themselves of 'child labour when most required, and would allow parents to select the times of year and the kinds of 'employment best suited to their children's health and power.' (Evid. 250.)"[2]

46. Another elaborate plan is proposed by the Rev. E. Willes, Secretary to the Diocesan Board of Education in Leicestershire:—

"I. No child shall be employed in agricultural labour till he reach the age of 9 years.

"II. No child shall be employed in such labour between the ages of 9 and 13 unless he,

"*a*, have a certificate of having passed Her Majesty's inspector in the fourth standard at least.

"Such certificate to be renewed each year.

"Or, *b*, have attended school 100 days, or 200 times, or 500 hours in the preceding year.

"1. A school term to consist of not more than three consecutive hours, or (in the case of night schools) less than 1½ hours.

"2. Attendance at the night school to count as school 'time,' but not in addition to two previous attendances on the same day.

"III. In case Her Majesty's inspector do not visit any particular parish, children may be sent for examination to another parish.

"330. In a letter accompanying the preceding, and dated March 4, 1868, Mr. Willes says:—'This 'plan has, I find, commended itself to a number of farmers. I urge for them that no two counties, 'parishes, or even farms stand in precisely the same position as regards the demand for children's 'labour; that they ought not to be fixed rigidly to any given months or even days; that if the 'children have the inducement to learn afforded by the prospect of being free after 9 years of age, 'conditional on passing the Government inspector, and passing him every year (thus sending them to 'to night school to keep up their learning), a great number will be free at 10, if not at 9, that all 'classes in a parish will have a direct object in keeping up the efficiency of the elementary schools, and 'also of the regularity of attendance of all children under 9, as well as in forwarding those over 9 'who have not yet passed the inspector.'

"*Explanations.*—The renewal of the certificate from year to year would secure the attendance of the boy at a night school, to keep up to the standard; otherwise he would soon lose what he had learnt."[3]

47. Mr. Portman, writing from Yorkshire, says,—

"77. The most feasible plan for obtaining continuous education appears to be to fix an age below which no child shall go to work for hire, with or without compulsory attendance at school, to require a certain amount of school attendance from that age to 13 or 14 years of age, and perhaps, in addition, the production of a certificate of such school attendance before hiring. Very few objections will be found to this plan, with the exception of the certificate, but I think that when a good system of registering, which might be combined with a register for farm servants, is once established, the supposed difficulties and inconveniences will soon vanish.

"78. The evidence I think fairly justifies me in saying that of the three modes of securing school attendance proposed in your circular one founded on the model of the Printworks Act, modified and made 'elastic' enough to meet the necessities and vicissitudes of agricultural operations, would be found most practicable and most acceptable to the employer and the employed."[4]

48. Mr. Norman, writing from Northamptonshire, says,—

"The Rev. A. J. Empson proposed that all boys over 8 and up to 13 years of age should be compelled to attend an evening school at least 40 nights a year, and produce a certificate of such attendance every spring before they are allowed to be employed the ensuing year."[5]

49. Mr. Culley gives the following evidence from Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire:—

"54. Archdeacon Bickersteth, in his answer to Question III. 26, expresses the view of most of the clergy, where he says:—'I doubt much whether either of the plans 1 or 2 (the half-day and alternate 'day modes would answer in agricultural districts. The principal of the Printworks Act (plan 3) 'might, I think, be applied with advantage with some modifications, such as the substitution of 12 'months for six;' *i. e.*, that as he had in answer to an earlier question recommended a total prohibi-

[1] Fraser, p. 29. [2] Stanhope, p. 89. [3] App., p. 327. [4] Portman, p. 102. [5] Norman, p. 116.

tion up to 10 years, he thinks that for children between 10 and 13 it would be most convenient to demand a certain number of hours attendance at school during the preceding 12 months, thus allowing the parents to choose the time of year when work is slack, probably the winter months, in which to se d their children who are between 10 and 13 years of age to school.

" 55. The Woburn Bench of Magistrates say:—' If the Factory Acts' principles are to be applied ' to children employed in farm labour, we think that school attendance for four winter month would be ' much better suited to such employment than either a half-day or alternate day system.' (See Beds evidence, 53.)

" 56. The Bedford Bench of Magistrates, after recommending 9 as the age under which children should not be permitted to be employed for agricultural purposes, say:—' Of the Factory Acts' modes of ' interference with children actually at work we think the 3rd, or Printworks' Act plan, of demanding a ' certain number of hours of school attendance during the preceding six months, most applicable to ' farm labour, substituting 12 for 6 months.' (See Beds evidence, 54.)

" 57. The Luton Bench, after recommending 10 as the age under which children should not be employed, express an opinion similar to that of the Bedford Bench in favour of the Printworks Act mode of interference substituting 12 for 6 months, provided that any interference after 10 years of age is deemed necessary. (See Beds evidence, 55.)"[1]

None of the above schemes feasible, except that which relate to the age of children.

50. I have thought it right to enumerate the above proposals for solving the important problem, how to educate agricultural children, and the evidence supplies many more schemes, but it is my decided opinion, for which I shall give my reasons subsequently, that none of them are feasible at present, except that which relates to the age, below which no child should be allowed to work.

51. It will be observed that the majority incline to the opinion that 10 is the lowest age which a child should attain before it is permitted to be employed, and as this point is so extremely important I will adduce more authorities in favour of a restriction up to that age.

The North Riding Chamber of Agriculture, farmers, and several Boards of Guardians think that children ought not to be employed under 10 years of age.

52. The North Riding Chamber of Agriculture resolved that "no child ought to be " sent out to work under the age of 10 years, harvest time excepted." Mr. Lomas, a large farmer near Thirsk, says,—" Very few boys are engaged below the age of 13. It " would not interfere with the convenience of the farmers to limit the age of boys for " work in the field to 12 years, excepting at harvest."[2]

53. Mr. Booth, a farmer at Warlaby, North Riding, says,—" Placing the limit for " children's work at 10 would hardly affect this district." Mr. Conway, a farmer in Bucks, says,—" Children are of no use to us in this neighbourhood under 10."[3] Mr. Carter, secretary to the South Bucks Friendly Society, says,—" It would be very little " hardship to the parents to compel school attendance up to 10 years of age." Mr. Treacher, a landowner in Bucks, says,—" I think that a boy beginning at 13 labours " under no disadvantages compared with a boy beginning at 10, except what may be " got over in a few weeks."[4] Sir H. Verney says,—" If it were decided to fix an age " below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm work, I would suggest " 10 years; but that would bear hard on a large young family, when a boy of 9 might " earn 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week by bird-keeping."[5] The Boards of Guardians of the Woodstock Union, the Witney Union, and the Henley Union, all passed resolutions to the effect that children should not be employed under 10 years of age.[6] The Bishop of Oxford says,—" I think that if the Factory Act principle is to be applied to farm labour, " a child should be allowed to work half-time at 8, whole time at 9, if it can pro- " duce a certificate that it can read and write well, and whole time at 10 under any " circumstances."[7]

54. Mr. Norman reports from Northamptonshire:—

" 31. It is very important to ascertain up to what age children could be spared from field labour. First, as to the requirements of farmers; it appears that in the 19 parishes (mentioned above), with a population of 8,975, 8 boys under 8, 80 between 8 and 10, and 10 girls between 8 and 10, are employed in field work (Evid. 5). The principal employment of young boys is scaring birds; but it is the opinion of some gentlemen well acquainted with agriculture, that this operation can be more economically performed by other agencies, as by a big boy who, if supplied with a hoe, could always employ himself advantageously, or by a man with a gun (Evid. 20, 21, 37, 71, 177). Weeding can be done more effectively and possibly more economically by men than by children (Evid. 67). Some farmers think that children might be spared until the age of 12 (Evid. 21 and 35); others, and probably the majority, think they could be spared up to the age of 10; this was the age fixed upon by the Northampton Chamber of Agriculture (Evid. 4); while the ages fixed by the Boards of Guardians were 10, 9, and at Towcester 8 and in winter 9 (Evid. 1). The restriction of labour up to the age of 10 could hardly, I think, involve any serious additional expenditure on the farmers; as pointed out to me by one farmer, ' at the worst it would only cost a farmer 6*d.* a week more to get a boy over 10 to do ' the work now done by a boy under 10,' and I don't think that this additional expenditure can be considered as serious, especially as it would necessarily purchase more efficient labour."[8]

[1] Culley, p. 130. [2] App., pp. 408, 419. [3] App., pp. 420, 528. [4] App., pp. 533, 537. [5] App., p. 543. [6] Oxford Evidence, pp. 356, 357. [7] Oxford Evidence, p. 360. [8] Norman, p. 114.

Mr. Norman's final conclusion is,—"Upon the whole it seems that the labour of children "may fairly be dispensed with up to the age of 10 years, without interfering too much "with the demands of the farmer on the one hand, or with the earnings of the family on "the other; and I think it desirable that the labour of children under 10 years of age "should be prohibited by law, except during the regular school holidays."[1]

55. Mr. Hughes, who has farmed in Norfolk, the Isle of Wight, and Northamptonshire, and now occupies 800 acres in the latter country, writes,— Children ought not to be employed under 12.

"From my own observation, and from evidence taken from the most reliable sources, I believe that, be the necessities of the family what they may, or the demand for labourers ever so great, that there is in the end, or in fact, no real economy in employing boys in farm work under 12 years; they eat more, wear more, tear more, learn nothing, and earn next to nothing. Take for instance the case of 'scaring;' a lad paid 1*s.* a day, with a gun at 3*d.*, will keep the birds off a large farm as effectually as possible, whereas two little boys at 6*d.* a day would certainly do no such thing; after the age of 12 the boy will walk to his work as far as the man can or ought to walk, say one mile."[2]

56. Mr. Stanhope, writing from Lincolnshire, says,—

"Farmers are almost universally anxious that boys at any rate should be free for field work at 10, if not at 9 years of age. One witness expresses their feeling clearly. 'After 10 it would not be 'desirable to compel attendance, for when once a boy has commenced farm work the employment is 'pretty constant, and unless his whole time were given to it the feeling would be strong that he can 'never become a good farm servant.' (Evid. 9.) When pressed with the objection that this does not meet one of the principal defects in the present system, namely, that boys are leaving school too early, a variety of expedients are suggested. Some propose compulsory attendance at a night school. The Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture proposes that a certificate of attendance from 7 to 9 years of age should be required, and that no restrictions should be put upon children after that age. (Evid. 1.) More commonly the simple prohibition from field labour up to 9 or 10 is thought sufficient. (Evid. 325.) 'They would then have time to obtain sufficient instruction to suit their circumstances in life.' (Evid. 63, 81.) But one of these witnesses adds, 'Before 10, with nothing but memory to rub at, and 'no reason,' a boy forgets all he learns in a few weeks."

57. In Norfolk:— The Earl of Leicester would prohibit the employment of boys under the age of 10.

"1. *The Earl of Leicester* would prohibit the employment of boys in field-labour under the age of 10. His bailiff, who began life as a working man, thinks no boy ought to go out to work before that age, and that, except in the case of very large young families, parents, at the present rate of wages, ought to be able to maintain them. At 10, boys ought to go to work; and he would not interfere restrictively with their labour, when they have once commenced work. He has a private gang of boys, ten or a dozen in number, under the superintendence of a steady labourer, who are employed all the summer 'stubbing' thistles in the park. Some of them are under 10, and earn only 4*d.* a day, which he is sure can't pay the parents for the extra wear and tear of clothes and shoes, and consumption of vituals, while the boys themselves suffer educationally and physically. He would rather not employ them, and would be glad to be relieved from the solicitation of the parents by a prohibition on their employment."[4]

58. In Northumberland, Mr. Henley reports that children seldom, if ever, go to work in the Glendale Union before 11 or 12 years of age, and then merely for summer work.[5]

59. It is clear from the above extracts that, from the employers' point of view, there would be no difficulty in prohibiting all field work to children who had not attained the age of 10. But it is important to discover what the labouring classes themselves would think of such a prohibition.

60. On this point Mr. Fraser, judging from the evidence collected by him in the counties of Essex, Norfolk, Sussex, and Gloucester, says, "The almost unanimous opinion of the "labouring men whom I have questioned on the subject is, that there is no need for a "boy to turn his hand to farm work till he is 12 or 13 years of age, if only his parents "can afford to keep him at school and dispense with his earnings."[6] *A fortiori* they would make little or no objection if the prohibition did not extend beyond the age of 10. Henry White, a labourer at Starston, who earns 12*s.* a week, and has had 12 children, says, "He is sure there is no profit in a boy's earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; it does not pay "for the clothes he tears."[7] Robert Webb, a farm labourer at Ingoldesthorp, Norfolk, the father of nine children, says, "He kept his youngest son at school till he was 13. "As far as making a good labourer goes, it's quite time enough for a boy to go to work "at 12, but perhaps 10 is a better age."[8] Elizabeth Green, whose husband earns 13*s.* a week, and has had 12 children, "has kept her boys at school till they were 10, 11, and "12. Children that go to work wear out more shoes and clothes, and they eat a lot "more food, and there isn't much gain in their earnings." Mrs. Wicks, in the Swaffham Union, who has brought up six children, and whose husband earns 12*s.* a week, says, "Boys ought to be kept to school till 10. Knows there is no gain in their earning Labourers mostly concur in the opinion that 10 is quite early enough to send children to work.

[1] Norman, p. 121. [3] Stanhope, p. 90. [5] Henley, p. 54. [7] App., p. 197.
[2] App., p. 432. [4] App., p. 165. [6] Fraser, p. 13. [8] App., p. 199.

" 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week; it is a loss; their shoes cost more, and so do their victuals." Ann Jackson, wife of a labourer at Sudborough, Northamptonshire, who has had four sons, says, " Some of them went to work at 8, and all before 10. They earned 2*s.* or " 2*s.* 6*d.* at first. If I was going to have my time over again I would not send them so " young to work. I think it is money in pocket for a parent to keep small boys at " home; it costs so much to keep them at work. They ought not to go to work until " they are 10 at least. I think it ruins children to go to work too young; they don't " grow as they should." [2] Mrs. Griffin, a labourer's wife, with four children, says, " Most boys under 10 would never be able to earn more than 40*s.* a year. If my son " earned only 40*s.* a year I would send him to school regularly, and sacrifice his wages. " If he were to get a good education he might get on the railway, or get a foreman's " place, or some work other than that of a farm labourer. I think no boy ought to " go to work until he is 10 years old, or can read and write. I think it costs 20*s.* a " year more to keep a boy when he goes to work than when he goes to school." [3]

61. The following is a striking remark by Mr. Portman, (paragraph 65, 2nd Report):— " I give one piece of evidence taken from the lips of a girl, Sarah Roe, 11 years old, in " Chevithorne school, near Tiverton. ' I went out stone-picking with mother at 8 years " ' old. I was out a month, and earned 6*s.* I wore out a pair of *new* boots in the time; " ' they cost 6*s.* 6*d.*' "

62. Mr. Norman, writing from Northamptonshire, says,—

"I found great difficulty in getting any precise information from the labourers as to the advantage they derived from the labour of their children. Few labouring men can say exactly how long any one of their children has been at work in any given year, or how much he or she has earned. However, I learned from one witness (App. 90) that children between the ages of 8 and 10 years are employed from 10 to 12 weeks a year and earn 2*s.* a week; another says that no child under 9 earns more than 15*s.* a year (App. 25); another, ' that most boys under 10 would never be able to earn more than 40*s.* ' a year.' (App. 162.) However this may be, all are agreed that a boy has to be far better fed when at work than when at school; thus, one woman told me that it cost her 20*s.* a year more to keep a boy when he went to work than when he went to school (App. 162); another says that it costs 1*s.* a week more (App. 53); another that she saved 6*d.* a week out of her boy's wages of 2*s.* a week (App. 42).

"Upon this point the Rev. W. Clarkson writes, 'It is thought by some well competent to judge ' that the children's working in the fields does not really make a difference of 1*s.* in their week's ' expenses, for the reason that though they want and ought to have a shilling'sworth more food, they ' do not in fact get it; it is not given them by their parents.'

"I doubt whether the children are usually insufficiently fed when at work. If this were the case, I think the fact must have been noticed by medical men. Then the additional outlay for clothes must be added in the estimate of the expenditure of a poor man's family, the clothes of the father who was an invalid are put at 1*l.* per annum, and those of a boy of 15 who was at work at 4*l.* (App. 12). It is quite clear, therefore, that the net gain arising from a boy's labour up to the age of 10 must be exceedingly small." [4]

Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne would prohibit boys working under 10 and girls under 16.

63. The Rev. Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne says:—" In my opinion no male child " should go to farm work before the age of 10 years; it would be more wise to make " the age 11;" and he subsequently adds, that no female under 16 years should be allowed by law to work regularly at out-door farm work. App., 2nd Report, p. 1.

64. The Reports of the Assistant Commissioners contain some evidence apparently showing that the labour of very young children is of importance towards the support of a labourer's family. But the almost universal testimony of employers that children under 10 may be readily dispensed with in farm work is a pretty plain proof that there can be little profit on either side in employing them. Labourers are bad calculators; and it is not surprising that many of them imagine that any addition, however small, to the earnings of the family, is of importance; not observing, that outgoings in clothes or food often exceed the value of the child's labour. The 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly received is a tangible advantage, while the cost of the additional loaf or clothing passes unobserved amidst the general expenses of the family. The most intelligent labourers, and, what is perhaps more reliable evidence, the wives of the labourers, have stated (see above) that there is no profit in putting their children to farm work before the age of 10. Hence I think that the fair conclusion from the above evidence would be that neither employers nor employed would have any material objection to the prohibition of all labour to children under 10 years of age; but before we come to this decision there are some other points which it is necessary to discuss.

System of indirect compulsory education by requiring a certificate

65. It will be remarked that the evidence contains frequent recommendations of a system of indirect compulsory education, by which a certain amount of schooling is made a condition of employment for hire up to a certain age. This principle has been put forward in the strongest way by the Rev. Canon Norris, who brings to the subject the experience of 15 years as a Government inspector of schools, and whose words I will

[1] App., p. 203. [2] App., p. 441. [3] App., p. 457. [4] Norman, p. 115.

quote from some able essays lately published by him, entitled "The Education of the "People." He says:—

that the child has passed the fourth standard before it is allowed to work.

"I see no reasonable objection to a law requiring that no boys or girls under 15 years should be hired for farm service of any kind, unless they could produce certificates, signed by a teacher and countersigned by a Government inspector, that they had passed an examination in the fourth standard of the Revised Code. . . . The school attendance requisite to enable a child to pass in the fourth standard might be taken at times least inconvenient to the parent. A couple of years of steady attendance in the infants' school, and then an alternate day attendance, or an attendance during the six winter months for three or four more years, would be sufficient to qualify most children to pass in the fourth standard by the time they were 10 or 11 years old. An example, made here and there, of a child being deprived of a situation for non-fulfilment of this simple condition, would soon teach all the parents of the neighbourhood to look carefully to the early schooling of their children; and in a few years no parent would like his child to leave school without his certificate. I am sure, from my knowledge of our rural parishes, that such a simple law as this would soon work without any friction whatever, would become in short, after 8 or 10 years, the custom of the country, carrying with it the feeling and approval of both employers and employed."[1]

Advantages of this system.

66. There would indubitably be many advantages in this scheme. It gets rid in great measure of the question relating to the age at which children should begin to work, and it supplies, what is so much wanting, a motive to all parents to send their children to school till they can pass the required test. Thus an excellent influence would be brought to bear on them, not only to send their children to school, but to send them regularly. The sooner the children could be brought to undergo the test, the sooner would the parents be enabled to profit by their labour; and thus what is well known to be the chief obstacle to all successful schooling, irregularity of attendance, would be powerfully counteracted.

The system is plausible, but unsound. Who is to grant the certificate?

67. These reasons are extremely plausible, but after giving them every consideration in my power, I am unable to concur in their soundness. In the first place, who is to grant the certificate? If the Government inspector could do it the difficulty would be overcome; but there are already 80 Government inspectors, their number is now yearly increasing with the increase of aided schools, they are unable to visit any school oftener than once a year; and they were released from the personal examination of evening schools by a Minute of February 1865, because it was found impossible that they could have time to inspect them. If no child is to be allowed to work without having passed the test, every school, and nearly every parish ought to be visited at least four times a year in justice to the children. To cause a poor child to be taken several miles to meet the inspector at any central position would be an unendurable hardship. And what an outcry would be raised if the examination day were fixed, as it often must be, just after the time when work was most plentiful, and the wages of the child most desired by the parents, and its services by the employer. Even if no more schools were inspected than at present, the number of inspectors must be quadrupled to allow of four visits each year. Thus the expence of inspection, which last year amounted to 53,703*l.* (Committee of Council Report, p. 87), would have to be quadrupled. But if a system of universal schools and inspections were established, as this scheme requires, the number of schools and consequent inspections would have to be trebled at least, and the labour imposed on the central office increased in the same proportion, *i.e.*, there would be twelve times as much work to do as at present. What an army of officials would not this require?

Effect of the system on a stupid child.

68. Again, what is to be done with the stupid child, who cannot pass the test? Is it to be sent back to the school till the age of 15, or allowed to pass as incapable of being taught, with a certificate of foolishness. To keep the child at school till 15 will appear out of the question to all who read the foregoing evidence, and hence the latter alternative must be allowed. But it is clear that, with such a door of escape, the pressure on the examiner to pass every child, the parent declaring that the plucked child laboured under a natural deficiency, would lead to a general success in the examination, and so bring it into contempt.

Effect on a clever child.

69. But the condition of the clever child would be harder still. A bright child of 7 or 8 would pass a test that another less gifted child could not pass before 10 or 11. Yet it is to be deprived of all further instruction in consequence of its early ability. Such children, if allowed to continue at school, form the *élite* of the future labourers. This plan, as it seems to me, would end by eliminating all high intelligence from the labouring classes.

Effect of giving a local authority power to grant the certificate.

70. It may, perhaps, be maintained that the power of granting the certificate might be given to some local authority. The effect of committing the examination of night schools to local authorities is not always satisfactory. The Rev. C. D. Dupont, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, states in his last report that, while these local examiners passed in reading 90 per cent. of those presented, he could only pass 75 per cent. of

[1] The Education of the People, by J. P. Norris, p. 26.

those presented in day schools, and attributes this difference to the lax methods of the local examiners.[1]

71. The clergyman or the schoolmaster might be empowered to grant the certificate. But, as Mr. Norman observes on this point,[2] the examiners would be exposed to great unpopularity, which would probably induce the ministers of religion to refuse so dangerous an authority, while the schoolmasters would be still more exposed to the pressure of undue influence both from employers and parents to pass every child brought before them, and thus the test might become a mere farce.

Plan of a test examination tried in the Mining Act and failed.

72. The plan of a test examination has been tried by the Mining Act, 23 & 24 Vict. c. 151., in a very mild way, as no male under 12 can be employed in any mine or colliery without a certificate from a competent schoolmaster that he can read and write, and the law seems quite nugatory.[3]

Further objections to pass examinations.

73. The following extract, which I take from the Second Report of the Scotch Commissioners of Education in Scotland, page 137, shows how the certificate system of the Mining Act works in that country :—

"When that Act was passed, says Mr. Sellar (p. 27)—'Providing that children under 12 years of 'age should produce certificates of school attendance, it created a considerable sensation among the 'miners. In one coal-mining school the teacher complained that the colliers had been in the habit 'at first of coming to him, brow-beating him, and threatening to maltreat him, if he ever refused a 'certificate. Of course a weak-minded schoolmaster would succumb at once, and sacrifice his con-'science to his safety. At another school, we were told that just at first certificates were given, '"but none had been demanded for a long time." At another, none had been given for 14 months; 'and in one pit in Annbank Colliery, in Ayrshire, we found that 46 per cent. of the young people 'employed could neither read nor write; and that 8 per cent. could read a little, but could not write 'a letter.

'Lamentable accounts were given on all sides of the state of brutish ignorance in which the people 'connected with this colliery were living. Every one asserted that the children were taken down 'before the statutory age. "I know they used to be taken down very young," one informant said, 'a teacher who had once taught a school in the neighbourhood, "because I kept a night school for '"the mining children, and very young ones, poor, white, stunted things, came to it unable to read '"a word or write a letter."

"Mr. Sellar went down into the pit, and investigated matters for himself. He found 13 boys. 'None of them,' he adds, '*looked* much more than 12 or 13, and some had been five years in the pit.' The result of the investigation was this:—'Of the 13, six could both read and write; one could read 'a little; and six could neither read nor write. Of the six who could read and write, four were 'Scotch and two Irish. Of the seven who could not write, five were Scotch and two Irish. Five 'of these seven children had never been at school at all, and did not know a letter. The other two 'had been at school, one for four or five years, but they had forgotten all they had ever learned.'"

74. But there is, in my opinion, a still stronger objection to any pass examination. It is well known that the effect of a competitive examination is not only to keep the examinees up to the prescribed standard, but to induce them to go beyond it. Every one subjected to a competitive examination is aware that without exertion he is sure to fail in the contest, and therefore has every motive to put forth all his strength in preparing for the trial. A pass examination has an exactly contrary effect. As every one must go through it, the standard must be fixed below the general average ability of the examinees, or an unendurable amount of failures would occur. Mr. Norris proposes that Standard 4 of the Revised Code should be the test required of every child, and the Rev. C. F. Routledge, Her Majesty's Inspector, in his last report proposes that Standard 2 only should be required to be passed by any child 10 years old before it is permitted to begin work.[4]

75. But assuming Standard 4 as the authorized test, this simply requires that a child be required to read "a short paragraph from a more advanced reading-book (than in "Standard 3) used in the school; to write a sentence slowly dictated once by a few "words at a time from the same book, but not from the paragraph read; to work a "sum in the compound rules."

Arithmetical test in Standard 4.

76. What the arithmetic amounts to is shown in the last report of Mr. Bellairs, Her Majesty's Inspector, where he gives as a specimen the following three sums[5]:—

£	*s.*	*d.*
708	17	$6\frac{3}{4} \times 28$
537	15	$8 \div 9$
630	14	$7 \div 8$

and states that he passes every child who works correctly one of these three sums. Now can this be said to be an adequate amount of education to offer to English

[1] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, p. 80.
[2] Norman, p. 114.
[3] Newcastle Commission, p. 216.
[4] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, p. 184.
[5] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, p. 25.

children? A common effect would probably be that many children 8 years of age would be able to pass it, that they would be then sent forth to labour, and having, as it were, "taken their degrees" would never enter a school again. I fear that the result would be to set up a number of schools throughout the country, whose sole object would be to give the mere mechanical instruction sufficient to enable a child to pass this test, mildly applied as it would be, and so to put a complete stop to all high and advanced instruction.

Mechanical effect of pass examinations, as shown by the Revised Code examinations.

77. The mechanical effect of pass examinations is one of the chief objections that have been urged against the Revised Code, and was foreseen by the Committee of Council on Education, who, in their Report of 1862–63, say, "the examination of individual "children, according to a fixed standard, must always be to a considerable extent "mechanical;"[1] and, in their Report of 1866–67, say, "throughout the schools, the "minimum which each child must learn, in order to pass for a grant under Article 48, "is apt to be of a mechanical character, and to efface that more intellectual aspect "which under the old system struck a visitor looking at one of the best schools as a "whole, rather than at each of its scholars." Mr. Matthew Arnold, Her Majesty's Inspector, in his Report for 1868, complains of the want of "intellectual life" in a school, in consequence of these standard examinations, and laments that "In the game "of mechanical contrivances, the teachers will in the end beat us; and it is now found "possible by ingenious preparation to get children through the Revised Code examina-"tion in reading, writing, and ciphering, without their really knowing how to read, "write, and cipher."[2] Hence my final conclusion, with regard to the proposal for prohibiting the employment of children who do not go through a pass examination, is that it would be a retrograde movement in the educational condition of the country. I am not aware that it has been adopted by any foreign nation.

The certificate system would be a retrograde step in legislation.

Minute and vexatious factory legislation. Impossibility of manufacturers to understand what regulations are enforced upon them by Act of Parliament.

78. Before coming to any conclusion as to the expediency of applying the principles of the Factory Acts to agriculture, I must make a remark with respect to those Acts. They appear to me to require revision; in many points to violate every sound principle of legislation, and to interfere in matters which legislation has no business to touch. I do not believe that it is the province of Parliament to decide how long young persons shall sit at their meals, or the sort of room in which they shall dine, or how many half-holidays they shall have in a year; or to make such distinctions as that cleaning or oiling machinery shall subject persons engaged in it to a variety of minute regulations, while in repairing it they shall be subject to none; or to enact that a manufacturer who dyes cloth Prussian blue shall be bound by a multitude of restrictions, while if he dyes Turkey red he shall be subject to none. All the above and innumerable other rules, which it is difficult to comprehend, are found in the Factory Acts, and often puzzle manufacturers to know what regulations they are bound by Act of Parliament to observe. And when, as often appears, several trades are carried on by one firm in one building, the difficulty of understanding their legal position is almost insurmountable. The following is an extract from the Report of the Commissioner on the Printworks Act and Bleaching and Dyeing Works Acts.

"It is possible that without any unnatural combination of trades, the business of one firm may be, as to one part of the employment under one law, as to another part under a second, as to another part under a third, and as to another part, exempt from any. This no doubt would be an extreme case, but it has been reached by a firm whose business still comes under the Factory Acts, the Printworks Act, and the Bleaching and Dyeing Works Acts, the fourth or exempted branch of their business having been given up (No. 93). Less extreme cases, however, of the different state of the law as regards different parts of the employment in the same establishment or premises, are not so unusual. The business of another firm, all carried on in the same premises, is legally under the Factory Acts, the Printworks Acts, and the Bleaching and Dyeing Works Acts. I was informed by one of the firm that from circumstances they were not aware of being under the latter (No. 94). The premises of another firm are part under the Printworks Act, part under the Bleaching and Dyeing Works Acts, and part under no Act (No. 147). In other cases, part of the employment is under the Factory Acts and part under the Printworks Act, or part under the Printworks Act and part under the Bleaching and Dyeing Works Acts, or part under the Printworks Act and part under no law. The combination may vary according to circumstances.

"10. It is obvious that, unless separate parts of the premises and separate workers are confined simply to the employment falling legally under one or other of the heads as to which the law is distinct, which may not always be convenient, and in some cases seems hardly practicable, it must be difficult, unless by keeping entirely within the limits of the more restrictive law, to guard against confusion and to secure the strict observance of the law, even with the full desire to keep within it."[3]

Inapplicability of factory legislation to agriculture.

79. It is obviously impracticable to apply any of these factory rules to agriculture, but I have given in a former part of this report my reasons for thinking that on the

[1] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1866–67, p. 21.
[2] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1867–68, p. 297.
[3] Report on Printworks Act, p. 1.

question of age, 10 might be safely taken as the limit, below which children should not be permitted to be employed in agriculture. Children, however, may be worked in factories at the age of 8, consequently where, as not unfrequently happens, agricultural and manufacturing operations are carried on in the same locality, if 10 were the agricultural limit of age, the Legislature would seem unfairly to interfere in favour of manufacturers and against the agriculturists, as it now interferes in favour of the agriculturists and against the manufacturers. Surely all ought to be treated alike; the Legislature can have no right to benefit one business at the expense of another. On this subject I will take leave to quote some striking observations by the Rev. Canon Norris from his essays before alluded to, on "The Education of the People."

Opinion of Canon Norris of the necessity of a universal restriction of the age of children working.

"The economists require that no manufacturing interest should be placed under a disadvantage, as compared with other manufacturing interests, in its command of labour. In juvenile labour, as in other marketable articles, there ought to be free trade. But what is the state of the case? Our manufacturers of clothing and hardware are trammelled by legislative restrictions in their employment of labour, while our manufacturers of food are free. The farmer may employ children at any age, for any number of hours in the day, while the proprietor of the neighbouring factory or mine can only employ them under certain educational restrictions. Clearly, I think,—so clearly that when stated it seems a truism—all or none ought to be restricted. All are competing one against another for the children's labour, all desire to obtain it on the cheapest terms. Is it fair that labour in the mill should be stinted by law, while labour in the adjoining farm is entirely unrestricted? And yet such is the case. And what is the result? That the children are forsaking restricted employments, and flocking into those that are unrestricted. The factory inspectors, while they unanimously commend the educational effect of the Factory Acts, confess at the same time that there has been a serious diminution in the number of children employed in mills. Since the passing of these Acts numbers of children have left their half-time employment in the mill to seek full-time employment at an earlier age in shop or farm service. The same will be the case in our collieries. The difficulty of finding an adequate supply of young hands is daily increasing, and will go on increasing, if other employments continue to be unrestricted. Thus, in some of the most important branches of trade (such as our cotton trade and our coal trade), the cost of production is unfairly raised by our present partial measures. We must recede or advance in this course of legislation. To recede, to go back to the frightful evils of the old factory and colliery system, described in the reports of the Children's Employment Commissioners, but now happily a matter of bygone history, would be infatuation. Advance we must; political economy and education alike demand it. The economist demands that all or none should be restricted, and the educationist demands that the undoubted blessings of the factory legislation should be extended to other classes of children." [1]

Agricultural children might be safely prohibited from working under 10 years of age.

80. After considering these various points I am disposed to agree in the following observations of Mr. Fraser:—

"Instead, therefore, of applying, with very doubtful prospects of success, the regulations of the Factory Acts to agriculture, I should like to see, as the Commissioners of 1861 wished to see, the Factory Acts themselves revised. I am satitfied that the age of eight is too early, on physical grounds, for children to go to constant work; I am satisfied that the age of eight is too early, on educational grounds, for them to commence half-time or periodic attendance at school." [2]

Commissioners of 1861 propose that Factory Act should be revised, and that it is too early for a child to work.

81. I have stated my opinion that, under present circumstances, 10 is the proper age for children to engage in agricultural work, while eight is the legal age for beginning factory work. Seeing the great advantage of introducing one universal and simple law, and the justice of not interfering in favour of or against any particular occupation, would it not be best to raise the factory limit of age to nine, and place the agricultural children under the same restriction as respects age? Thus we should have one universal law applicable to every child throughout the kingdom, and preparation would be made for a system of general education for every one at least up to the age of nine.

Proposal to make a compromise between the factory age for work and the agricultural age, and prohibit all children working under.

82. I have ascertained by inquiry that there would be no great difficulty with manufacturers in assenting to the age at which children are allowed to work in their factories, being raised one year. Messrs. Orr, Ewing, and Co., the proprietors at Levenbank of large dyeing and print works, in which they employed last winter 455 children and young people, say, "We admit that the educational part of the Printworks Act is defective, and "that the power to employ children at eight years of age is too young. We, therefore, "would have no objection that the earliest age, at which children should be permitted "to be employed should be increased to 10 years." [3]

This proposal may appear too timid, but there is a necessity of caution in commencing

83. It may possibly be objected that the prohibition up to the age of nine only, is too trivial an improvement, that it is unworthy of the Legislature to take such timid steps towards removing evils so generally acknowledged, and that at least we might begin by placing the limit of working age at 10. To this, I reply, that we are commencing a far wider and more complete interference with the labouring classes, than has even been known before; that it is necessary to proceed by very slow and cautious steps, and that if we pass a law not supported by general opinion, it would remain in-operative, and thus bring the Legislature into contempt, and possibly materially hinder, by

[1] The Education of the People, by J. P. Norris, p. 35.
[2] Fraser, p. 29.
[3] Report on Printworks Act, p. 75.

re-actionary effect, future progress. Besides, the advantage of one universal simple law is so great, that it is worth while for the sake of it to make this compromise between factory and agricultural workers, and place all under the same regulations in respect of age. a general interference with child labour.

84. Mr. Stanhope gives in his Report one instance of the inutility of endeavouring to carry out by law, what is not supported by general opinion. It has been enacted that boys under 13 shall not drive carts on a turnpike road, which Stanhope remarks "was "probably based on the ground of danger, either to the boys themselves or to the "public using the high road. This anticipation is not borne out by the evidence I have "obtained; hardly any accidents, and those to men as often as to boys, from negligence "in sitting on the shafts, are stated to arise from it." And alluding to some other proposed restrictions, remarks,— Instance of the impossibility of carrying out a law not supported by general opinion.

111. "That there would be very great difficulty in enforcing any such restrictions, unless they fall in to a certain extent with the public opinion of the country, may be shown by a very strong instance. By the Act 3 Geo. IV. c. 126. sect. 131, no boy under 13 is allowed to drive a cart on a turnpike road. This provision is not only evaded throughout my district, but is absolutely ignored. Very few of the magistrates to whom I spoke of it had ever heard of it, much less had ever enforced it, and it is practically a dead letter."

85. On this point of the danger of incautious interference with children's employment, the words of the late Prince Consort, which I heard him deliver at a meeting called in 1857 to consider the possibility of enforcing increased attendance at school, are worthy to be kept in remembrance:— Opinion of the late Prince Consort on this subject.

"What measures can be brought to bear upon this evil (of non-attendance at school) is a most delicate question, and will require the nicest handling, for there you cut into the very quick of the working man's condition. His children are not only his offspring, to be reared for a future independent position, but they constitute part of his productive power, and work with him for the staff of life. The daughters especially are the handmaids of the house, the assistants of the mother, the nurses of the younger children, the aged, and the sick. To deprive the labouring family of their help would be almost to paralyse its domestic existence."

86. In my opinion 10 ought, after a certain short period, to be the age, below which no child should be allowed to work, and possibly when further experience of the effects of these restrictions is acquired, it might be extended to 11 or 12; but at present I confine my recommendation to the proposal, that all children, whether factory or agricultural, be prohibited from working under the age of nine, except during 10 weeks of school holidays, and that in two years after the passing of the Act, the prohibition should be advanced to the age of 10. The prohibition of the age of working might be extended to 10 after a short period, and ultimately to 11 or 12.

87. Further it is my opinion, that simultaneously with the above prohibitions, some general system of education should be set on foot throughout the country, and that without the establishment of some such system, the above plan of an immediate restriction of all children from working under the age of nine ought not to be carried out. This second recommendation tending to the universal establishment of schools, I consider an essential and indispensable supplement to any proposed restriction of the working age of children, and that without it no measure restrictive of age ought to pass. Simultaneous with the above prohibition, a general system of education ought to be established, and without this the prohibition of age ought not to be enacted.

88. Perhaps it may be considered impolitic to insist on the prohibition with respect to age till schools are universally established. Now I believe that such a prohibition would tend more than anything else to the multiplication of schools where necessary, and supposing a scheme for universal education to be set on foot at the same time, the stimulus to increase and improve the schools everywhere would work with powerful effect. A general system of education must be accompanied by a survey of our existing wants and shortcomings, and the prospects of a rate or of some special Government interference, unless the present deficiencies were speedily filled up, would probably force immediate attention to the subject in every locality, and by exciting voluntary action, supersede the necessity of action by a central authority. Effect of passing a general system of education in inducing the erection of schools voluntarily where wanted.

89. But in truth through a great part of England schools are abundant enough, and what is wanted is not so much the establishment of fresh schools, as the improvement of existing ones. Mr. Stanhope reports that— Schools are tolerably abundant, but improved ones wanted.

"In Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire the number of parishes in which there is no school is certainly small. The demand for education among the labouring class is exceedingly active, and if from any cause a school is closed, a dame's school springs up almost immediately."

90. The Rev. W. S. Thomason writes, after a careful survey of the fen and march district—

"There is hardly a house in the whole district which is not within three miles as the crow flies of one of the Government schools."[1]

[1] Stanhope, p. 84.

91. Mr. Portman reports nearly to the same effect of Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire. He says :—

"I do not find that there is any want of accessible day schools. Throughout the portions of the West and North Ridings which I visited there appeared to be no dearth of available schools, and the state of education is probably better than in many parts of England."[1]

92. Mr. Norman's report on Northamptonshire says :—

"The defective state of education is certainly not owing to the want of schools, for schools are maintained in almost every village, and the villages are very numerous."[2]

93. Mr. Stanhope writes in his second report that—

"In Dorsetshire and Kent schools are for the most part in existence within reasonable reach of the mass of the population, and in the latter county are on the average of a very high order. The great and crying want of all these districts is not additional school accommodation. In every county, if private schools be included, it is at present in excess of the demand."

94. Mr. Culley, in his second report, says :—

"Judging from the parishes I visited and the evidence I received on the subject, there can be very few children in either Oxfordshire or Berks who are not within a tolerably easy walk of some school."[4]

95. The Rev. Canon Norris writes :—

"In the three counties with which I am officially connected (Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Shropshire) there is no mining or manufacturing district in which a child could complain that no school was within reach. In the agricultural districts there are very few parishes that are still without day schools, none in which a school competent at all events to teach reading, writing, and ciphering, would not be speedily established if the parishioners desired it."[5]

96. Mr. Fraser reports :—

"I do not believe, if it were properly distributed, that there is any deficiency of school area in relation to the wants of the population. At the date of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission there was a considerable surplus; and though certainly the population has considerably increased in the last 10 years, the work of school building also has not stood still. In the 10 sample districts selected by the Commissioners (comprised in the counties of Lincoln, York, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, Dorset, Devon, Somerset, Hereford, Worcester, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Lancashire Stafford, Warwickshire, Durham, North Wales, Cornwall, Middlesex) there was an excess of 46·7 per cent. of accommodation at eight square feet per scholar, so that for each 100 scholars in attendance, there was accommodation for 146·7."[6]

97. I am aware that many of these schools are bad, but their existence shows the desire of the populations for education, and working on these nuclei it should be the duty of the Minister of Education, whose appointment seems inevitable, to improve and extend the means of obtaining instruction to all the labouring classes, and especially to adopt measures for the general establishment of infant schools and night schools, which latter appear to supply the most certain guarantee of keeping up the learning that has been once acquired.

Failure of the educational clauses of the Printworks Act a sufficient reason for not re-enacting them for agriculture.

98. I think the generally acknowledged failure of the educational clauses of the Printworks Act is a sufficient reason for introducing no such regulations at present among the agricultural populations, more especially on commencing a general interference with the age of sending children to work, such as I have been proposing. If the labourers can ever be brought really to value education, they will voluntarily adopt some such scheme, as they actually have done in Northumberland, where Mr. Henley, speaking of the school attendance prescribed in the Printworks Act, says, "that a plan similar to "this is now carried out in the district by the parents themselves as the best method of "obtaining for their children the instruction they so highly value."[7]

Compulsory education.

99. Many witnesses examined under this Commission have expressed approval of a compulsory system of education, and the inspectors of the Committee of Council, "who "refer to the question of compulsory education, express themselves, without exception, "as favourable to the principle of it."[8] Crowded meetings of artizans at Manchester, Glasgow, and several other towns, have called for compulsion, and at the last meeting of the Social Science Congress at Birmingham, when Mr. Fawcett, in my hearing, addressing an assemblage of 2,000 working men in the Town Hall, proposed a plan for compulsory education, the proposal was received with the loudest acclamations of approval that the vigorous lungs of the meeting could send forth.

100. It appears to me that universal establishment of good schools must be an essential preliminary to any compulsory plan of education, and such schools could only exist after some general system of education had been some years in existence; and then possibly the necessity of compulsion may have passed away, owing to the willingness of the

[1] Portman, p. 98.
[2] Norman, p. 113.
[3] Stanhope, 2nd Report, p. 17.
[4] Culley, 2nd Report, p. 88.
[5] The Education of the People, by J. P. Norris, p. 41.
[6] Fraser, p. 22.
[7] Henley, p. 61.
[8] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, p. 39.

population to accept the good instruction offered. At present, as is observed by Archdeacon Hankinson, it would be impossible to apply a system of compulsion with any equity till we have established throughout the country a complete system of efficient schools. "To compel a child to spend five or six years of his life at a school where he "could learn nothing really profitable would be an unredeemed hardship."[1]

Apathy of parents one of the main obstacles to education.

101. I believe the truth to be, that with all intelligent workpeople, who feel thoroughly the advantages of education and take care to provide it for their own offspring and therefore would never incur the penalties of evading a compulsory law, a compulsory system is popular, from a benevolent wish to extend the benefits of education to all around them. But unfortunately this is not the character of the great majority of the agricultural labourers. The indifference of the parents to education is the great obstacle to be surmounted, and until that is overcome the opposition to a compulsory system would be too powerful to encounter, and when it is overcome, and the universal establishment of efficient schools will, I believe, alone affect it, compulsion will be unnecessary.

102. The evidence collected by the Assistant Commissioners contains numerous proofs of this apathy of the parents with respect to the mental improvement of their children Mr. Stanhope observes:—"The main cause of the absence and irregularity of the "children is undoubtedly the ignorance and neglect of the parents."[2] Mr. Fraser remarks:—"The apathy and low moral tone of the parents, exhibiting itself in indifference as to whether their children attend school or not, and in their retention at home "on very trifling pretext, are much more serious difficulties."[3] Mr. Norman mentions as the chief cause of the backward state of education:—"Indifference on the part both "of the parents and the employers; as a general rule neither the one nor the other is "willing to make any sacrifice to obtain an education for the children."[4]

103. The reports of the inspectors under the Committee of Council on Education speak to the same purport. The Rev. G. French says:—"I find that managers and "teachers are alike loud in their complaints of the apathy and unconcern of parents "with regard to the education of their children. I am again and again told that the "people do not care to send their children to school." And the Rev. H. Sandford says:—"It must be allowed that neither the demands of the labour market any more "than the inability of the parents to pay adequate school fees are, in a large number of "cases, the reason why the young receive an imperfect education. Doubtless the prospects of education are worst where the young are most absorbed in excessive labour, "but there are numbers of children deprived of education through mere neglect of "parents, or the real or fancied claim of home duties."

Inutility of compulsory education in Prussia and Switzerland.

104. In countries where compulsory schooling is adopted the result does not seem to be such as to warrant its introduction here. The system is in existence in Prussia, and Mr. Pattison in his Report to the Newcastle Commissioners observes:—"The schooling "is compulsory only in name; the school has taken so deep a root in the social habit of "the German people that were the law repealed to-morrow no one doubts that the "schools would continue as full as they now are. In the free city of Frankfort there is "no compulsory law, and I was assured by persons most likely to be informed that all "the children of school age are as regularly sent to school there as in any other town of "Germany."[6] The Rev. Canon Norris remarks:—

"If we turn to Switzerland we find Mr. Arnold reporting that in the Canton Vaud, where the law is most stringent, his inquiries led him to doubt whether the law is really ever executed at all; and his conclusion is, that though primary instruction is most prosperous in the Canton Vaud, 'the making 'it compulsory by law has not added one iota to its prosperity. Its prosperity is due to the general 'comfort and intelligence of the population. Where these are equally present, as in Geneva, the 'prosperity of education is equal, though there is no compulsion; where these fail the compulsion of 'the law is powerless to prevent the inevitable check inflicted on education by their absence.'"[7]

Opinions of the Newcastle Commissioners on compulsory education.

105. The Newcastle Commissioners finally sum up their opinions on this question in the following sentence:—"Any universal compulsory system appears to us neither "attainable nor desirable."[8] I concur in this opinion at present, though I imagine it may be desirable at some future time, when good schools are universal, to pass a law to enforce education on the waifs and strays of society, the street Arabs of our large cities, who may be found to resist all ordinary attempts to civilize them.

No further interference

106. The evils of the gang system appear to have primarily called attention to the subjects treated of in this Commission; but the Act for the Regulation of Agricultural

[1] Fraser, p. 22. [2] Stanhope, 2nd Report, p. 18. [3] Fraser, p. 22. [4] Norman, p. 113.
[5] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, pp. 96, 210.
[6] Report of Newcastle Commission, p. 193. [7] Education of the People, by J. P. Norris, p. 24.
[8] Report of Newcastle Commission, p. 300.

required with agricultural gangs.

Gangs, passed in 1867, seems to have effectually remedied the chief disorders complained of as regards public gangs. A private gang is defined to be "a group of children, young "persons, and women in a farmer's own employ, and superintended by one of his own "labourers." Any interference with workpeople so employed seems to me utterly beyond the province of legislation. So far as any evil arises from employing too young children in these gangs, the general law, which I have proposed above for restricting the employment of young children, will be a sufficient remedy. I think it unwise to do more.

Insufficiency of cottage accommodation cannot be remedied by the legislature.

107. There is a very general complaint of the want of sufficient cottage accommodation for the agricultural population, but here I am unable to see how the Legislature can interfere to any good purpose. The Union Chargeability Act has done all that it is in the power of Government to do, but the Legislature must not take credit for having by that Act directly done anything to remedy the evil of inadequate dwellings for the poor. All that it did was to remove from landlords the motives, which the Legislature itself had created, not to build cottages, and was really a step towards the *laissez faire* principle. Perhaps some slight advantage might ensue if the rules of the Enclosure Commissioners, or of the Public Works Loan Commissioners, who are empowered to regulate the conditions, under which money borrowed for the erection of cottages is expended, were relaxed;[1] but probably the Commissioners have sufficient reasons for the regulations they have established, and would doubtless alter them, if reasonable grounds could be alleged in favour of a change.

Danger of over legislation.

108. Possibly also some more effectual sanitary inspection of cottages might improve them. But here again we enter on the dangerous ground of over-legislation, and to insist that every cottage shall be supplied with every convenience that benevolent people think necessary, might simply end in preventing the building of cottages; just as the Act of 1562, mentioned in the first part of this Report, which was intended to force the annexation of allotments to all cottages, no doubt an excellent object, was repealed because it was found to prevent the erection of cottages.

109. Numerous complaints are made respecting the impropriety of employing women in agriculture and the immorality resulting from it. But here I must revert to the principles of legislation mentioned in the first page of this Report, within which I stated my recommendations should be confined, and beyond which I think no Government has a right to go. I think we ought to prevent every child from being cruelly treated or educationally neglected, and of course forcible cruel treatment of any person, young or old, ought to be and is punishable by law; but it is beyond the proper function of Government to restrict persons, who have arrived at years of discretion, from gaining an honest livelihood in any way they please.

Mr. Henley's Report on Northumberland.

110. I should wish to direct particular attention to the remarkable report on Northumberland by Mr. Henley. The agricultural wages there appears higher than anywhere else in England, being from 15*s*. to 18*s*. weekly. Yet, observes our Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Culley, himself a Northumberland landowner, and who reported for this Commission on Bucks and Bedfordshire:—

> "The earnings of the Northumberland labourer are very little higher than those of any fairly industrious man in Bedfordshire or Bucks, and yet he is mentally and physically a superior animal, treating his family in a manner which three or four times the difference in wage would not account for. What then are the causes operating in his favour? I take them to be chiefly the following:
>
> He has no need of a club, his hiring is a yearly hiring and his wages are paid when he is sick as punctually as when he is at work.
>
> His own earnings and those of his family all go to the family purse, and suffer very little variation.
>
> And last, but not least, it is not his habit to drink beer, except at the annual hiring; he hardly knows what a beershop means, and his children suck at the milk bowl instead of himself at the beer jug.[2]

Causes of the superiority of the Northumbrian labourer over the southern.

111. These alleged causes of the superiority of the northern labourer do not satisfy me. Why should he put his earnings into the "family purse" and the southern labourer not? Why should he not drink away his wages at the beershop, as is the practice in the south, and how is it that he can insist on his wages being paid when he is sick, as punctually as at work? The law is the same in Northumberland as in Bucks. The real truth appears to me to be that he is better educated, and hence is both "mentally and physi- "cally a superior animal." He has that within him, which enables him to insist on the best treatment and the highest wages, and to resist the vicious allurements, which degrade the condition of the workpeople in the south.

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[1] Henley, p. 68.

[2] Culley, p. 138.

112. Of Northumberland Mr. Henley writes: "There is a general concurrence of "feeling among employers and workers that no child should begin labour before 10 "years of age; and it rarely, if ever, happens that they are employed in North "Northumberland at an earlier age. I never found a mother of a family, however "large, who did not assent to this, usually adding '10 is young enough,' which in "Northumbrian dialect means 'too young.' And the Hexham Board of Guardians "declared that they did not want either boys or girls till they are 14 or 15." [1]

113. As a proof of the healthiness of the Northumbrian population, Mr. Henley quotes the Registrar General, who says of the Glendale Union, one of the largest agricultural unions in Northumberland,[2] "It is a model district in statistical tables. With "Farnborough, Bellingham, and Rothbury, it stands a monument of salubrity, to which "a sanitarian immediately turns, when he seeks a comparison or would direct an aim. "In the 10 years 1851 to 1860, the average mortality of Glendale was only 15 deaths "1,000 living." The general average of England is 22 per 1,000. But it is in education that the condition of the county seems most striking, and in this I am persuaded lies the main secret of the prosperous condition of the Northumberland labourer. Mr. Henley gives in his report a table, which shows, that in despite of some circumstances that make the table probably to err on the side of defect, "in the summer 1 in 7·3 of the whole "population of Glendale is at school, and in winter as many as 1 in 5·9." [3] This exceeds the Prussian proportion of 1 in 6·21. What would be said in the south to this opinion given to Mr. Henley by a large employer at Embleton: "Public opinion "would send any man earning wages to the position of a brute, who did not send his "child to school"? [4] What an advanced state of education is indicated by the possibility of the existence of such facts as the following:—

Education the secret of the prosperity of the Northumbrian peasants.

"105. The following fact was communicated to me by the Rev. John Young, who has been for 38 years Presbyterian minister at Bellingham. 'A few shepherds on the hills keep a schoolmaster among 'them, and they lately commissioned me to procure for them Virgil, Horace, and Cæsar. Of these 'people one family come nine miles to church on foot; one is a woman, the rest are men.'

"132. Some aim at higher pursuits and a better scale of education, as we may learn from the evidence of Mr. Duncan, English Presbyterian schoolmaster at Wooler, who says that—'At this time 'there are four boys in his school learning Latin; one the son of a gamekeeper, another the son of a 'shepherd, the third the son of a skinner of sheep, and the fourth the son of the widow of a railway 'porter. Two others learn French and Euclid; one of these is a shepherd's son, the other a hind's. 'This shows the anxiety of the parents for education.'" [5]

114. I do not mean to maintain that it is desirable to provide means for all labourers' children to learn Latin or Euclid, but I quote these instances as proofs that, without a general feeling in favour of education among all classes, such salient instances as the above could not exist. Mr. Henley adds that the farmers themselves are equally desirous to promote education. He says:—

"137. Before quitting this subject I cannot refrain from pointing out that the farmers of this district, so far from being lukewarm in promoting the education of the children of their labourers, or hostile to it (as they are said to be in other parts of the country), give every possible encouragement to the schools; in some cases supporting them altogether, and in others paying the school fees of the children entirely or in part." [6]

115. Mr. Henley concludes his remarks on education in the following words:—

"224. It was gratifying to find how few instances of total ignorance I met with among the children and young persons at work. They are hardly worth recording, being so exceptional. The standard of instruction was of course unequal, but there was an absence of that gross ignorance which is said to prevail in other less favoured counties.

"225. I cannot too often repeat, that in this district the pressure for education comes from the people themselves, though the higher motives which dictate it may have been instilled into them by their spiritual pastors. The population in the north of the county possess this feeling to the greatest degree." [7]

116. I would not be understood to assert that the condition of Northumberland is such as to be incapable of improvement. Several shortcomings are pointed out in Mr. Henley's Report, and it would undoubtedly be benefited by the establishment of a universal system of education; as there is a complaint from the labourer, certainly unusual in other parts of England, that the schools do not satisfy their requirements as to quality. But the general state of the wage-classes is so satisfactory, that I have no hesitation in asserting, that if all England had been like it, this Commission ought not to have been issued. [8]

If all England had been like Northumberland this Commission would have been useless.

117. Lest it may be supposed that Mr. Henley's account is overdrawn, I may observe that it is fully confirmed by the Report of Sir F. H. Doyle, who made a similar investi-

[1] Henley, p. 60. [2] Henley, p. 52. [3] Henley, p. 64. [4] App., p. 255. [5] Henley, p. 64. [6] Henley, p. 64. [7] Henley, p. 71. [8] Henley, p. 62.

gation into the condition of the county under the authority of the Poor Law Commissioners in 1843, which was presented to both Houses of Parliament in that year.

There are no direct methods of curing by legislative enactment the numerous evils that afflict the agricultural population.

118. It may possibly be objected that my recommendations go a very little way towards curing the numerous evils, affecting the condition of the agricultural population, pointed out by the able reports of the Assistant Commissioners. How, it may be asked, will the evils of inadequate wages, of miserable habitations, of vicious habits and customs, of the mixture of sexes in the field, of the neglect of their families by the employment of married females in farm work, &c. be remedied, or even palliated, by simply prohibiting the employment of children under 9 or 10 and establishing a system of general schooling. My reply is that there are no direct methods of applying a remedy to any of the above evils, and that there is but one way, and one way only, by which they may be eventually overcome, and that is by increasing the intelligence of the labouring classes, in other words, by a system of universal education which will make these classes the moving agents of their own improvement.

119. I will therefore conclude this Report by pointing out how improving the intelligence of the poor does certainly and safely, with the least possible disturbance or interference with the employers or employed, tend to annihilate all the evils which so many of the witnesses seem to think can only be met by direct authoritative measures.

120. The disgraceful state of the cottages is the theme of almost universal complaint. But the large landholders have everywhere been improving the condition of their cottages. In Northumberland Mr. Henley reports:—

"On the large estates of Earl Grey and Mr. Cresswell Cresswell, attention is particularly attracted by the excellence of the cottages. The Dukes of Northumberland have in this county built and improved 931 dwellings for farm and other labourers on their estates during the last 20 years. The work of improvement is rapidly progressing, and I could mention many other estates on which they are all that could be wished." [1]

121. Even more seems to have been done on the estates of the Duke of Bedford, of whom Mr. Culley, himself a Northumbrian landowner, remarks:—

"It has never been my good fortune to see any large estate upon which so much has been for many years past, and is now being done for the comfort of all persons connected with it, as on that of the Duke of Bedford." [2]

122. Mr. Fraser reports to the same purport [3]:—

"In the districts over which I have travelled, amid many instances to the contrary, it was pleasant also to find not a few of the largest landowners setting a noble example of their consciousness of responsibility in respect of the dwellings of the labourers who cultivate their land. I may select for special mention, the names of the Marquis of Cholmondeley and the Earl of Leicester in Norfolk; of the Duke of Grafton and Sir Edward Kerrison in Suffolk; of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Leconfield, and the Hon. Mrs. Vernon Harcourt in Sussex; of the Earls of Ducie and St. Germains in Gloucestershire. I do not mean to say that the estates of these noblemen and gentlemen are everywhere adequately supplied with labourers' homes; Lord Lecester has publicly admitted his own great deficiency; but all are working onward in the right spirit to the right end, and their example tells upon other landowners with an effect proportionate to its conspicuousness. There are some grounds for hoping that, 25 years hence, the villages of England will present a different and a more pleasing picture to the eye of the traveller than they present now." [4]

Increasing the intelligence of the wage classes is the sole cure for the evils they suffer.

123. I mention these facts, which might be multiplied, to show how improvement is going on, and I doubt whether legislative compulsion would induce the landowners to do more, possibly not so much as they have done. But the labourers themselves often oppose the benevolent intentions of the landlords by not having sufficient intelligence to appreciate the advantages of decent cottages. The Earl of Kimberley said in a meeting of the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture,—

"We have given a very good cottage to a labourer, and we find that he does not appreciate it at all. He puts his apples into one room, does not inhabit another, and would put his pig into another, if we would let him." [5]

Uneducated labourers do not value good cottages.

124. Sir George Jenkinson said in the Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture, speaking of the difficulty of getting labourers to value decent habitations:—

"If you built a palace and furnished it to match, you would scarcely induce them to leave these

[1] Henley, p. 66. [2] Culley, p. 124. [3] Fraser, p. 39.

[4] The Report of the Scotch Commissioners on Education show that even where cottages are worse than anywhere in England, consisting only of one room for all purposes, the evils complained of here do not necessarily occur. They say of the Hebrides:—"As the great majority of the inhabitants live in houses of "only one apartment, it may tend to modify the opinion which is sometimes entertained as to the immoral "tendency of such schools and dwellings, to learn that, according to the Registrar-General's Returns, the "per-centage of illegitimacy is less in the Hebrides than in any other district of equal extent in Great "Britain, while the grosser crimes are all but unknown."—Second Report of Scotch Commissioners on Education, p. 79.

[5] App., p. 15.

places, into which you would hardly put a pig to live. He had at that moment cottages unoccupied through the refusal of labourers to leave their own hovels."[1]

125. The Rev. Hinds Howell, chairman of the Drayton Board of Guardians, Norfolk, says:—

"In several instances since I have been rector of this parish I have had to complain of overcrowding, but at present there is only one instance, but that of the grossest kind, inasmuch as the wages are abundant to supply good accommodation."[2]

126. The Rev. J. Cane, rector of Weston, Nottinghamshire, says:—

"Where there are three bedrooms, I often find that the third is very little used."[3]

127. And a report to the Biggleswade guardians says:—

"In several of the cottages with two bedrooms, the father, mother, and children were huddled into one room, and the other bedroom is let to lodgers."[4]

Educated labourers do appreciate good cottages.

128. It is clear that it is the want of intelligence that prevents the poor from appreciating decent dwellings when offered. On the other hand, the best and most intelligent labourers are in the habit of not only appreciating but demanding comfortable cottages. Thus Mr. Henley reports from Northumberland:—

"A good hind in the present day requires extra wages in money or kind to bribe him to occupy what is so miserable for himself and family: and the farmer must either pay extra wages, or remain content with second-class labour."[5]

129. Mr. Calthorp, writing from Lincolnshire, says:—

"There is a growing feeling among the labouring class to look before them when they are entering into an engagement. They ask now what sort of a master, what wages, what sort of a cottage, how far from work? And I am quite sure that the increased difficulty in getting labourers will oblige some of us, farmers or landlords, to provide better cottages and more of them."[6]

Women are less employed than formerly in agriculture.

130. Many witnesses require that especial restrictions should be put on the working of females as degrading. I have stated above my opinion that it is contrary to sound principle to enact any such restrictions; but there is a vast change going on silently with respect to the employment of women attributable, in my view, to the improved education and consequent clearer conception of their duties that has resulted from the Government aided schools now distributed throughout the land. Mr. Fraser says:—

"Everywhere I heard the same story, that women are found to be less and less disposed to go out to work upon the land. They will refuse unsuitable work, they will stay at home on wet days. Whether from the easier circumstances in which they live, or from their having become intelligent enough to take a more accurate measure of loss and gain, there seems to be much less attraction for them in the farmers' 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day than there used to be. Agriculture, I presume, has not declined in the last quarter of a century in the counties of Gloucester, Essex, and Sussex, yet not a fifth part of the number of women is employed upon the farms of these counties now that was employed upon them 25 years ago."[7]

131. Mr. Norman reports from Northamptonshire:—

"On the whole it is quite clear that it is the exception rather than the rule for a woman to go to work in the field."[8]

132. Mr. Culley says, "It is not the custom to employ women in farm labour in "Bedfordshire."[9] And Mr. H. Tremenheere gives the following evidence from Cumberland:—

"'As to the employment of women in the fields,' writes Mr. George Moore, a gentleman to whom Cumberland is greatly indebted for his admirable schemes for the improvement of education, 'I think that in another generation it will be discontinued, as I observe amongst the girls educated in the schools in many parts of Cumberland that they show a decided aversion to field work, and it would only be by those whose character was lost or who had not been regularly to school that rough farm work would be chosen. In past years there was nothing done to civilize or indeed to humanize the labouring classes of Cumberland.'"[10]

Agricultural work not degrading to females.

133. Those who talk of the degradation of employing women in agriculture, and the propriety of restricting it by law, should read the following extract from Mr. Henley's Report:—

"28. There are many who hold the opinion that field work is degrading, but I should be glad if they would visit these women in their own homes after they become wives and mothers. They would be received with a natural courtesy and good manners which would astonish them. Let the visitor ask to see the house; he will be 'taken over' it, with many apologies that he should have seen it not 'redd up.' He will then be offered a chair in front of a large fire, with the never-absent pot and oven, the mistress meanwhile continuing her unceasing family duties, baking, cooking, cleaning, &c. Not one word of complaint will he hear; but he will be told that, though 'working people,' they are not poor; and a glance at the substantial furniture, the ample supply of bacon over his head, the variety

[1] App., p. 18.
[2] App., p. 152.
[3] App., p. 326.
[4] App., p. 507.
[5] Henley, p. 66.
[6] App., p. 273.
[7] Fraser, pp. 17, 18.
[8] Norman, p. 111.
[9] Culley, p. 124.
[10] Tremenheere, p. 137.

of cakes and bread on the board, and the stores of butter, cheese, and meal in the house, will convince him of the fact. When he inquires about the children he will hear that though they have not much to give them, the parents feel it to be their sacred duly to secure them the best instruction in their power, and '*that* they are determined they shall have.' The visitor will leave that cottage with the conviction that field work has had no degrading effect, but that he has been in the presence of a thoughtful, contented, and unselfish woman."[1]

134. And he adds this strong remark:—"To prohibit female labour in this district "would simply be to prohibit farming."

135. I think the inevitable conclusion from the above evidence is, that where farm work has been found to be really unsuited to females, from whatever cause, the increased intelligence of the people is rapidly putting an end to it, and where it is suitable, restricting it would be tyrannical and absurd.

Improving education tends to remove superabundant population, and increase wages.

136. Finally, I wish to show that improved education will effectually tend to diminish population where it is overcrowded, and to increase wages, the smallness of which is everywhere alleged, as together with the ignorance of the parents, to be the main reason among the agricultural classes for refusing to send their children to school, or to keep them there a sufficient time.

Best educated labourers get to higher work than farm work.

137. I think it unnecessary to refute the arguments that may be met with in the evidence, than an uneducated labourer is more valuable than an educated one. The notion that a man who has been taught to think, and to understand his duty to God and to man, will perform that duty less efficiently, seems to me an outrageous absurdity.

Reason of the farmers' objection to education.

138. Yet the farmers are often much opposed to educating the labourers, for a reason that I have hinted at above, that it really does tend to make them dissatisfied with low wages, and so often to induce them to leave the parish for the higher earnings that may be got elsewhere. On this point Mr. Stanhope remarks:—

"117. It is a common charge, brought against farmers as a class, that they care little for education and are rather disposed to discourage it. Now in many cases it cannot be denied that education is materially interfering with labour, because the object of the labouring class in seeking it is not to make their children better agricultural labourers, but to enable them to rise to a higher sphere in life. 'If 'I could only get him to be a scholar,' said one woman, 'he should never be a farm labourer.' 'If I were a scholar I shouldn't be here,' said a labourer, 'and that's the reason why the farmers 'hold against this 'ere scholarship.' (Evid. 187.) One cannot therefore be surprised that farmers should wish so to direct education as to prevent its having this effect as far as possible. 'Their view 'is that more than a little is very much too much; they are afraid that labourers will be spoiled for 'field work.' (Evid. 273.) Their object is to keep the school down and not to let it rise beyond a certain level. In consequence of this, their contributions to the school funds often amount to a small sum."[3]

139. Mr. T. L. Taylor, who farms 350 acres in Norfolk, says:—

"He finds an increasing tendency in the most promising and best educated boys to get away from farm work to other employments."[4]

140. Mr. Howard Taylor, a solicitor at Norwich, says:—

"The educated sons of the labourers, more conscious of their value, have displayed an exaggerated independence, and are prone to desert their father's calling for more remunerative occupations brought within their reach by early instruction."[5]

141. The Rev. W. T. Beckett, rector of Ingoldesthorpe, says:—

"Several employers of labour have expressed their opinion to me, that educated boys are more useful on the farms, and that the only objection they have to their continuance long at school is that their services as farm labourers are generally lost to them, as they aim at a higher position either as domestic servants or in other occupations."[6]

142. The Rev. S. Surtees, rector of Sprotburgh, Yorkshire, says:—

"All our most intelligent boys and the sons of the more intelligent and better off labourer are, speaking generally, put to a trade or brought up to other occupations. They do not bring up their sons to field work."[7]

143. Mr. Culley remarks:—

"One argument I have often heard urged against a local tax for educational purposes, is that the object of the improved education is to put the children in a position to be able to carry their labour to the dearest market, and so deprive of their services the parish or district, which has paid for their education."[8]

144. The Rev. A. Hanbury, vicar of Bury, Suffolk, says:—

"The schools have been, I consider, an incalculable blessing to the parish. To this assertion the farmers doubtless would in some measure demur. Hitherto they have been very liberal in their sup-

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[1] Henley, p. 54.
[2] Henley, p. 60.
[3] Stanhope, p. 84.
[4] App., p. 166.
[5] App., p. 173.
[6] App., p. 175.
[7] App., p. 398.
[8] Culley, p. 130.

port of them and have been proud of their success, but they are complaining and with some reason that all the sharper lads are migrating to London and other large towns, and the 'clods of the valley' alone remain. The fact is so, but I believe that the facility of communication by railroad and by penny post, and the circulation of information by the press, are more instrumental to this even than education, though no doubt the latter helps them to better situations."

145. [1] The Earl of Lichfield said at a meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture in London:—

"It appeared to him then that some of the speeches to which he had listened went against all education for the children of agricultural labourers. He considered, however, that a great fallacy lay at the root of the objection raised, that if children got something above the ordinary amount of education they were immediately unfitted for agricultural labour. Why was that? He maintained that it was simply because it was an exception to the rule that such children obtained an education that fitted them for anything else. The demand for a rather better education than was received by the ordinary class of children turned out of our national schools had of late years been too great for the supply, and the consequence was that wherever a child was somewhat above the common level of intelligence or was better educated than his fellows he would probably be taken away from the parish in which he had been bred and educated, and thus be lost as an agricultural labourer." [2]

146. I think the conclusion from the above evidence is, that the main objections which are urged by agriculturists against the universal diffusion of good education are precisely such as ought to induce the State to insist upon it. It raises wages, and removes superabundant population. In Northumberland, where wages are highest, the farmers, says Mr. Henley, "give every possible encouragement to the schools," and, as a consequence, the labourers, being well off, have no motive to desire to leave the country. Why should they go? when it is declared by Mr. M'Cabe, who has been a Union medical officer in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and has also been in business in the United States, and now been living in Northumberland a year and a half, that "he has never found working "agricultural labourers so well off in any place, including America; in fact, there are "no poor people at all here." [3]

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[1] I think it so important to prove that the theory I have put forward of the effect of education in inducing those who profit by it to be dissatisfied with low wages, and so inspire them with a wish to look farther a-field for work, thereby diminishing the population where it is redundant, and consequently low waged, and distributing it where it is wanted, that I add below some extracts from the Reports of the French inspectors of schools, showing that the same effect has been produced in France, as I have noted here. It is well known that in France the town populations are generally opposed to the Imperial despotic *régime*, while the country population support it. Great efforts have lately been made in France to extend and improve primary education, and the effect has been to increase the town populations and decrease the country ones. This result obviously tended to undermine the autocratic power of the Emperor, and in fact has done so, as shown in the late elections; and the Government, suspecting that this was caused by the great diffusion of education, sent a circular to all the French inspectors of schools, inquiring whether the migration of the country population to the towns was really the effect of the cause I have named. I have received the reply of the inspectors to this query from every department of France. They are obviously unwilling to allow that the effect of the diffusion of improved education, of which they justly boast, has really had the effect of transferring country labourers to towns, and so undermining what we should call the unconstitutional authority of the Government, but the admissions are quite sufficient to place it beyond all doubt that such is the result of the spreading of good schools. I give below a few extracts from the Reports of the French inspectors of schools, showing the universality of the principle which I have been endeavouring to maintain in the text of this report.

"La propagation de l'instruction primaire a-t-elle contribué à l'émigration des campagnes vers les villes? Cela a du être et sera encore pour les plus instruits, les plus intelligents, ou les plus ambitieux."—*Seine et Oise.*

"La propagation de l'instruction primaire est une des causes du mouvement qui entraine les habitans des campagnes vers les villes. Quand un enfant sait lire, écrire et compter, ses parens sont prompts à rêver pour lui une autre profession que celle de laboureur, ou, plus tard, cette pensée lui vient à lui-même, et c'est dans la ville qu'il espère trouver une position meilleure."—*Vienne.*

"A une certaine époque, on a pu accuser l'instruction primaire de contribuer à l'émigration des habitans de campagne vers les villes. Dans les circulaires commes dans les conferences, les inspecteurs exhortent les instituteurs à combattre ce courant funeste, qui précipite vers les villes l'élite de la campagne."—*Meurthe.*

"L'émigration des habitans des campagnes vers les villes est un fait incontestable!"—*Eure et Loire.*

"Il y a quelques années, l'enfant qui avait acquis des connaissances plus étendues que celles des autres habitants de son village s'en allait chercher une position qu'il croyait plus brillante que celle de son père; il venait à la ville."—*Meuse.*

Mr. Matthew Arnold, in his Report on France, confirms the above extracts. He says, "Eminent persons "complained to me that already popular education in France was carried so far that society began to be "dislocated by it; that the labourer would no longer stay in his field, nor the artisan in his workshop; that "every labourer would be an artisan, every artisan a clerk. This is the language which we have all heard "so often from those who think that the development of society can be arrested, because a farmer's wife finds "it hard to get a cookmaid. It is sufficient to say to those who hold it, that it is vain for them to expect "that the lower classes will be kind enough to remain ignorant and unbettered merely for the sake of saving "them inconvenience."—*Matthew Arnold on Popular Education in France*, p. 167.

[2] App., p. 19. [3] Henley, p. 57.

Effect of education in Scotland in raising the condition of the population in some of the Hebrides, and reducing the redundant population without any heart-burnings.

147. It seems to me so important to establish this principle, that education is really the only effectual method of raising the wages and general condition of any population, and of removing their redundant numbers, without any difficulty or the opposition and heart-burning that often attend direct modes of interference, that I am induced to refer to Scotland for a remarkable illustration of this truth. The second report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into Scotch education contains a striking example of the facility with which gigantic evils may be encountered and overcome, if the right method be adopted of working on the intelligence of the inhabitants. The Commissioners remark of the Hebrides :—

" It can scarcely be disputed that the population in the islands far exceeds the numbers of those who can be maintained in comfort from the produce of the district. Various means have from time to time been tried to cure this disease of over-population, but generally without success. The only effectual method is voluntary emigration ; but this cannot be applied except with the co-operation of the people themselves. In other words the people must be taught to appreciate the benefits which may be obtained by leaving their island homes, and must be furnished with means of employing their energies in the country to which they transfer themselves. Effects such as these can only be produced by education. The minds of these islanders must be enlarged, the desire for improving their condition must be stimulated, and the knowledge of the English language, whereby alone that desire can be practically gratified must become general.*

" In confirmation of these views, we think it right to quote part of a letter addressed by Mr. Ramsey to the Lord Advocate, 'On the State of Education in the Outer Hebrides,' in the year 1862 :—

" ' The population of Lewis in 1851 was 19,694, and in 1851, 1852, and 1855, 1,772 were sent to Canada, at Sir James Matheson's expense, but so far was this from arresting the increase that the number, as ascertained by the ceasus in 1861, was 21,059, so that, including emigration, the increase during the ten years was 3,137, or about 16 per cent. When in Barra I received similar information regarding that island. The population of the parish in 1851 was 1,870 : the proprietor, at his own expense, sent away in 1852 upwards of 400 emigrants, but the population in 1861 had again increased, and at the period of the census was 1,859.

" ' In both these cases a considerable outlay was incurred for the purpose of removing what was deemed a superabundant population, but the foregoing details prove that the expenditure has not yielded any return ; nor should it be forgotten that these removals are too frequently carried out amidst the opposition of the people, causing the infliction of much sorrow and suffering upon the poor reluctant emigrants themselves, while the process is one necessarily involving much labour and painful effort on the part of those engaged in carrying it out. My conviction is, that if the same amount of money and the same effort had been expended in wisely encouraging, or in case of need, enforcing the education of the young, the work would have been pleasant and the result satisfactory.

" ' In Lewis, indeed the proprietor for some years past has endeavoured to promote the education of the people, but either from the shortness of the time, or from the absence of cordial co-operation on the part of those who are resident, and locally interested in their welfare, or other causes, the work does not appear to have been carried out yet with sufficient persistence and energy to insure any adequate measure of success. In Barra I could not ascertain that the proprietor has ever done anything in the way of encouraging education, and in both cases the schools have as yet done so little, that the Gaelic language alone is understood by the great majority. The Island of Islay, I am informed, was in a similar condition not long ago. One of the small tenants, or a working man, who could then speak English, was pointed out to the stranger as an example of progress in his class. The late Mr. Campbell, of Islay, and his uncle, the late Captain Walter Campbell, of Sunderland, possibly without foreseeing all the results, but from their well-known benevolent desire to promote the welfare of every individual on their estates, took an active interest nearly 40 years since in establishing efficient schools throughout the island, and in encouraging the regular attendance of the young. This has been acted on and encouraged by those who have succeeded them, as well as by clergymen and other residents who have taken an interest in the subject. And the result has been, that although there have been few enforced removals during that period, and no outlay has ever been incurred by the proprietors to promote emigration, the diffusion of education has not only arrested the increase of the population, but has so promoted voluntary removals as to bring about a great diminution of their number.

" ' The population of Islay, which in 1841, in round numbers, was 14,000, decreased to 12,000 in 1851, and according to the last census was only 10,000 in 1861, while there has been a corresponding decrease in the number of the very small holdings of land.

* The same opinions are enforced in "Periodical Destitution in the Highlands, and its Remedy," by John Ramsay, Esq., Islay, 1863, and in Mr. Nicolson's Report, pp. 124–126.

Effect of education in the Scilly isles in raising the population from the extreme of misery to high prosperity.

148. I will give an exactly similar instance, which was accompanied by still more striking results, from the extreme south of England, the Scilly Isles, where the population having been in the extremest misery, after all the ordinary devices for improving them had failed, have been raised to the highest prosperity by the process of education. I give the details of this remarkable experiment in a note below.[2]

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[1] Second Report of Commissioners on Scotch Education, p. 170.

[2] Forty years ago the islands of Scilly were in the state of the severest misery and destitution, and the continual objects of charitable appeals for relief, which in one instance produced the large sum of 20,000*l*. The following is an extract from a Report of a Committee appointed to inquire into their condition. " Nothing can exceed the wretchedness and misery to which the unhappy islanders of Scilly have been

149. I should observe that the schools must be good ones, or the excellent results I have been describing will not flow from them. Geography, for instance, must be taught in them, as judging from my experience as a school inspector, I believe few subjects have a more powerful influence in enlarging a pupil's views. With it he is better enabled to

Necessity of teaching geography in schools.

" subjected within the last two years. By far the greater proportion of extreme suffering has fallen on the " females of those islands amongst the poorest classes. Doomed by a mysterious Providence to privations the " most extraordinary, and incapable of obtaining that kind of employment most suited to their sex, they have " dragged on a life of sorrow and anguish the most poignant and the most alarming. Widows have sighed " in vain for relief; orphans have bewailed their lot in gloomy solitude; aged and decrepit women have " beheld with horror the approach of increasing infirmity without the commonest necessaries of life to sustain " their declining years. And mothers have travailed again with sorrow and agony over their wretched " offspring; while children have pined away in artless woe and unavailing complaints, stricken with death " for want of bread."

The numerous Committees that were successively formed to alleviate the distress adopted the usual schemes for finding work for the inhabitants. The women were to be taught to spin and knit, to plait straw, and make line twine. The raw material was purchased for these manufactures, and "measures adopted to " find a market in all directions for the goods manufactured; and suitable rewards were to be distributed " annually to the most industrious, cleanly, and frugal persons." All the apparatus necessary for fishing mackarel and pilchards, which abounded in the surrounding seas, were procured at an expense of 8,000*l.* In a word, all the ordinary popular devices for raising a starving population were set on foot, and ended in failure. The large subscription of 20,000*l.* seems indeed to have produced absolute injury. It attracted back to the islands many Scillonians who were in employment elsewhere with the hope of sharing in this large sum, which was finally all spent without leaving a trace behind.

In the year 1834 the islands were leased to the present lessee, Mr. Augustus Smith, who appears to have discovered at once the real cause of the misery of the inhabitants, and to have applied the appropriate remedy.

One of the chief evils was the cottier system, under which each family was settled on a small portion of land, that was often scattered in minute fragments over the islands, and on the death of the father each little farm was re-divided equally among his children. This system had introduced a pauperized population, which was continually increasing from this subdivision of land, and mainly dependant for subsistence on the produce of these minute farms. These small holdings were consolidated, one of each family alone was permitted to take the farm, and the younger children were told that they must make their way in the world, either by going to sea, entering service, or learning some trade. But that they might be well qualified for their future callings, Mr. Smith's next care was to provide a thorough useful course of education. Schools had previously existed in the islands, and considerable sums been expended in their support, but owing to the inefficiency of the teachers, the want of all necessary appliances, and the absence of all regular inspection, these establishments were wholly inoperative as to producing any real benefits. The proprietor founded good schools in each island, appointed efficient teachers, stimulated their efforts by continual inspection, and obliged the inhabitants to send their children to them, by making them pay school fees for each child of an age to go to school, whether they sent their children or not.

In these schools, besides the elementary subjects of education, history, geography, and the rudiments of navigation, were taught, with a view of preparing the youthful population for what seemed their most fitting career—a sea-faring life. This last improvement—the good schools, was the real lever which succeeded in raising the population out of their low condition.

Ten years after the introduction of these improvements I visited the islands, and so can speak from personal examination of the result. The success was nothing short of marvellous. The chronic misery which used to cause yearly applications for public subscriptions had absolutely ceased. I never met with a better dressed population, nor one showing in their cottages and deportment clearer signs of comfort and refinement. I inspected all the schools, and found the children well instructed. I was particularly struck with a discovery I made on the island in which the proprietor resided, that one in five of the population was at school. This considerably exceeds the Prussian proportion of one in 6·21. An observation of the chief clergyman was still more striking, as he stated to me that he had a difficulty in finding persons willing to receive the sacrament money. Contrast this with the Report above quoted, "that nothing could exceed the wretchedness and " misery of the islanders." Drunkenness had been the characteristic of the population, yet now it was almost unknown, and the inhabitants of one island had forsworn spirituous liquors altogether.

The potatoe famine tried the islanders rather severely, as one of their most profitable occupations was growing potatoes for the supply of shipping. The London market, though tried, had failed altogether; and it was not till some years after the famine that the islanders, who planted earlier and earlier every year, as more likely to secure a good crop for their own supply, at last discovered they could compete with Penzance in the London market. The neighbouring county of Cornwall suffered greatly from this cause. Yet so far from Scilly sending forth the old cry for assistance, subscriptions were sent to relieve the suffering Cornishmen.

The proprietor allowed one son in each farm to succeed his father on death. But the people soon found out that small farming was a very unprofitable work, and so the children voluntarily took to ploughing the sea instead of the land; while the excellent training the boys received in the schools caused them to be in demand by the Liverpool and London ship-owners.

The conduct of these youths was so good, and their intelligence, owing to their superior education, so marked, that even before their time of apprenticeship was expired they were frequently promoted to be mates and stewards; and on a late visit to the islands, I ascertained the remarkable fact, that of all the boys who had gone to sea, not one, when grown up, had remained before the mast, but had all become masters or captains of vessels; and at this moment, many boys whom I had examined in the schools are captains of large ships sailing from Liverpool and London.

Now I wish to make a special remark on the methods adopted to bring about this great change. The proprietor did not, as before, resort to the plan of setting the women to spin and knit, and promise to buy all they produced. He did not supply the men with nets, and tell them to go and catch the fish that abounded around them. He even adopted some plans that on first sight might have appeared harsh. The inhabitants had been in the habit of cutting turf for fuel, and this he positively prohibited as destructive to the surface, but

appreciate the advantages of migration and emigration. A child, who can simply read and write, ordinarily knows no other lot open to him than that in which he was born, and the horizon of the village is his world.

150. On this subject I am tempted to relate an anecdote that occurred within my own knowledge. A gentleman, about to emigrate to New Zealand, asked me if I could send him an orphan boy from some workhouse school as a servant, and he especially desired that the boy should have been taught baking. I happened to know only one school where baking was taught, and I accordingly went to it, explained what I wanted to the first class, and the advantages which would probably be derived by a transference from the low condition, which was their only prospect if they remained in England, to the high-waged country at our antipodes. Not a boy would accept the offer. I then explained to the gentleman that I could not get him a baking boy, but that I could send him a boy of developed intelligence from a good school, who, though he would not know baking, would be found able by his superior education to turn his hand to anything, and thus be much more generally useful. He accepted my offer, and I then went to a good school in the Isle of Thanet, where I knew the children were well instructed in geography (none was taught in the other school), and made a similar offer as before to the first class, desiring any boy who wished to accept it to hold up his hand. Every hand was instantly raised. They were well acquainted with the British colonies. I selected a boy who answered perfectly well, and is now married and a prosperous colonist in New Zealand.

151. I believe the above to be a typical instance. The education of pauper children is now, as has been quoted above from the evidence, and no one is better acquainted with its character than myself, very superior to what is commonly imparted in village schools. And the result is, as I have reason to know from the large opportunities of inquiry I possess, that it is very rare for a boy brought up in a good pauper school to go to farm work. Or, if on being taken out of the school they are first put to farm work, they either quickly get to the best paid work on the farm, owing to their superior education, or transfer themselves to better places elsewhere. Many of them go on the railways, where the lowest wages are 17*s.* a week, or become telegraph clerks or shop boys, and so often rise to very high positions.

152. It is well known that the first effect of the Revised Code was to expel all the higher subjects of instruction from inspected schools. By a Minute issued by the Committee of Council on Education on 20th February 1867, this evil was partly remedied by offering increased grants to any school in which an examination in one secular subject, geography, grammar, or history, was passed by one-fifth of the pupils in average attendance. By the last Report of the Committee of Council it appears that 9,073 schools or departments of schools were examined last year under this Minute; but only 2,614 schools, or 28·8 per cent of those examined, succeeded in obtaining the grant; the whole sum thus expended amounting only to 13,235*l.*[1] I mention this fact to show how backward we are in this country in promoting education sufficient to produce the good effects I have been detailing, as undoubtedly the inspected schools are the best schools in England, and what they offer may be considered as the best education

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took care at the same time that coals should be imported, and on sale at a cheap rate in the chief town. He was bound by his lease to make some improvements in the chief harbour, and the employment thus created assisted the proprietor in meeting the first difficulty, but no employment was given simply for the sake of employment. No overpaid work was offered; no doles of relief were given; no subscriptions solicited; no one was forced or bribed to emigrate; in a word, every measure adopted tended to dispauperise and induce self-reliance, and was a complete reversal of the patronizing petting system previously tried. The real lever was found by raising the intelligence of the population, pointing out the way to self-support, and then leaving them to shift for themselves.

The result was perfect success. Of course in ten years the old pauper spirit could not be completely eradicated, but the pauperism was then smaller than I believe any place in England. It amounted in money to 8*d.* per head on the population, while in Kent and Sussex 15*s.* per head was a common sum. I found, for instance, that on one island, containing a population of 214, the sole pauper was an old woman who was paid 9*d.* weekly.

The increase that followed in the shipping interest of the islands was remarkable.

In 1830 the Port of Scilly had above 50 tons,	5	vessels	giving	406	tonnage.
In 1842 „ „	37	„	„	3,715	„
In 1844 „ „	38	„	„	4,120	„
In 1869 „ „	28	„	„	6,177	„

It has often been observed that the effect of good schooling on a low-waged population is to diminish their numbers, and this result took place here. The increased intelligence of the population enabled them to look farther afield for employment, and resort to more profitable occupations than were open to them within the confined area of Scilly. Thus it has been found necessary to import labourers to do the agricultural work of the islands.

[1] Report of Committee of Council on Education, 1868–69, p. 37.

open to the labouring classes. And it may further stimulate our efforts in this direction to mention what has been done by the French Government, who would almost appear to have been watching our progress in England. The Minute above mentioned, which thus succeeded in causing perhaps one secular subject beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic to be effectually taught in 2,614 schools out of the 13,442 schools inspected, was passed on the 20th February 1867. Two months later in France, by a law passed on the 10th April 1867, the teaching of geography and history was made obligatory on *every* primary school in France. The contrast is not flattering to our national pride, especially as France has long been considered one of the most backward countries in Europe in the matter of education.

Comparison between the minute of Committee of Council of 20 Feb. 1867 and the French decree on the same subject on 10 April 1867.

153. It has been my object in the recommendations I have made to carry out, as near as possible, the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th recommendations of the Newcastle Commissioners of 1861. These are the following:—

Object of the recommendations in this Report to carry out the proposals of the Newcastle Commissioners of Education in 1861.

"6th. That, under the present circumstances of society, a satisfactory point will have been reached when children go to the infant school at the age of 3, and from the infant school to the day (juvenile) school at the age of 6 or 7, and remain in the day school till 10, 11, or 12, according to the circumstances of the parents, and the calling to which they are destined; provided that they attend, while on the school books, not less than four hours a day for five days in the week, and not less than 30 weeks, ranging under the most favourable circumstances up to 44 weeks in the year.

"7th. That there is nothing in the feelings of the parents on the subject of education to prevent well directed efforts to ensure this amount of attendance from meeting with general success.

"8th. That special efforts should at the same time be made by means of evening schools to keep up the education once received, to which the encouragement of free and lending libraries would form a valuable auxiliary.

"9th. That much time may also be redeemed for educational purposes from the years of childhood now neglected, by preparing the children for the day (juvenile) schools in good infant schools."[1]

154. Thus my final answer to the question proposed in this Commission as to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adapted for the regulation of the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture is that none of them are applicable, except the single one as to the prohibition of children from working under a certain age, which age should be 9 immediately, and 10 at some period not exceeding two years from the passing of the Act, and that this prohibition should apply to every child in the kingdom. And at the same time that some legislative measure establishing efficient schools universally should be passed, and that without this latter measure, the former regarding age ought not to be passed.

Final answer to the questions proposed to this Commission.

155. It is beyond the scope of this Commission to suggest the details of any plan for universal education.

All this I humbly certify to Your Majesty.

Given under my hand and seal this 22nd day of October 1869.

EDWARD CARLETON TUFNELL.

2, Victoria Street, Westminster.

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[1] Newcastle Education Commission, vol. i., p. 225.

APPENDIX.

PART I. TO SECOND REPORT.

REPORTS

FROM

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

APPENDIX.

PART I. TO SECOND REPORT.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

1. This report, with an appendix of evidence, relates to the counties of Dorset, Kent, Chester, Salop, Stafford, and Rutland (together with one farm in Sussex), all of which, in accordance with your instructions, I visited during 1868–9. G.

2. The mode of inquiry adopted by me varied to some extent in every county; but my general rule was to select in each, two or more districts to be visited in detail, within which I went to every parish, giving previous notice of my coming, and in many cases asking for a small meeting. But in addition to this, I visited for special inquiry many separate parishes and estates; I held conferences with six chambers of agriculture, and several boards of guardians, and attended many other meetings of every description. I sent out between 70 and 80 of the printed circulars with which I was furnished, and communicated also by letter on any point requiring particular consideration with many gentlemen in all parts of these counties. From these materials I have compiled the following report, although I have referred also, where necessary, to the experience acquired last year in the prosecution of the same inquiry in the counties of Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester.

DORSETSHIRE.

3. In the county of Dorset I visited 42 parishes (containing a population of 37,000, and an acreage of 135,000), situated in various parts. The central district of the county on the chalk range of hills stretching through it from east to west, has been to a great extent brought into cultivation in recent years, is occupied in large farms, and, though considerable effort has been made, the labourer is in some cases living at a long distance from his work. Yearly hiring, and the system of letting cottages with the farms are common, one result of which has been the mode of hiring whole families presently to be noticed. Districts visited.

To the north of this range of hills lies the vale of Blackmoor, which is occupied in small farms, and is almost entirely laid down in grass. In some cases the occupiers of these farms cultivate them with the help of their families, and require little (if any) hired labour. The population is in consequence less well off than in the district just described, for the wages are lower, there is very little piece-work to do, and many men are thrown out of work in winter. Throughout the vale, and in some other parts of the county, as in the neighbourhood of Blandford, the manufacture of gloves is carried on to a

G. considerable extent by the families of the agricultural labourers. It is a very unremunerative work, and can only be made to pay by long hours of very hard work, and, like most other domestic duties of this description, it involves the younger members of the family being kept at home from a very early age, being put to work as soon as they can hold a needle, and being afterwards kept away from service.

To the south of the chalk hills is a large tract of heath. The mode of reclaiming this has often been to let a piece of land to a labourer on a lease for lives, with permission to build upon it. The result has been the erection of a large number of miserable cottages, occupied by these life owners, and never repaired. The population exceeds the wants of the district, and a large number of the men work on the farms only in the summer, and go to the woods or do any sort of work that they can get for a living in the winter. Many of them go long distances to work. An exceptional district is comprised in the peninsula of the isle of Purbeck, where many other occupations, such as clay and stone-cutting, enter into competition with agriculture, and raise the value of labour to a considerable extent.

System of hiring whole families.

4. One of the especial characteristics of this county is the system of hiring whole families. When a labourer is engaged by the year, the size of his family, and the vigour of his wife and sons,* becomes an important element for consideration, as they are expected to go out to work when required. If the wife cannot go, she must send a daughter or (as I found in at least one parish) she must provide a substitute. This arrangement is clearly a bad one for the labourer and his family. It forces his wife to work, it causes his growing sons, and sometimes his daughters, to be kept at home in an overcrowded cottage. The boys go to work at a very early age, not only because they are required by the farmer, but also because their employment being virtually treated as part of the father's remuneration, he becomes only too anxious to derive profit from their labour. As they grow up they continue to lodge at home, and though they gradually get to do the work of an adult man, they are frequently receiving two or three shillings a week below the ordinary wages of a man. (Evid. 68, 72). Or, if they prefer to go elsewhere, the father is discharged by his employer because his "family is not large "enough." (Evid. 64).

Employment of women.

5. Throughout the county, except where gloving is a constant source of occupation at home, women are largely employed in the fields. In the neighbourhood of Dorchester especially, they work as much as I have seen them do in Lincolnshire, which is partly due to the mode of hiring above mentioned. Young girls go little in most parishes, except in hay-time and harvest. A good deal of the work done by women is in winter, among the turnips, on the threshing machines, or in the barns. Their wages are very low (except when with threshing machines), and vary from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day, the latter wage being sometimes paid only when fewer "perquisites" are given to the husband. (Evid. 67 B.).

Employment of boys excessive.

6. Boys are taken to work by farmers at a very early age, for some go at 6 or even younger. One boy, the son of a shepherd, "is regularly with his father in all weathers and has been so all the winter; he "will not be 6 till next August." "Out of 17 sons of labourers, all but one had gone to regular work "between 6 and 9." (Evid. 18). "Out of 76 children in one school, only 12 labourers' sons were "over 6, and only three out of these were 8 years of age." (Evid. 26). At Marnhull "a good many "go at 6 and 7." (Evid. 48). At Holwell they "cannot keep any boys in the school after 7; they "go out as carter boys." (Evid. 50). At the Wareham agricultural meeting, two prizes for long "servitude" were given to boys who must have begun regular work with horses on the farm at 6 years of age. (Evid. 74). In fact, to speak generally, the proportion of boy labour regularly employed upon farms is larger than in any county visited by me, even in the fens. (Evid. 3). Boy labour has partly displaced that of men, and on this ground alone some restriction as to the age of continuous employment would be of great value.

7. But other causes, besides employment on the farms, take boys away from school at an early age. The lowness of the wages makes every labourer anxious to send his children out, although near Dorchester this is certainly surpassed by the eagerness of the farmer to get them. Again, the system of allotments prevails here, probably to as great an extent as in any county in England, and to most cottages ample gardens are attached. On the whole, therefore, the labourer (who sometimes also gets a piece of potato ground on the farm) occupies an unusually large amount of land, and on this occupation can be found for all his family. Says Richard, in the words of the Dorsetshire poet—

"What wi' dungèn, diggèn up, an' zeedèn,
A thinnèn, cleänèn, howèn up, an weedèn,
I, an' the biggest o' the childern too,
Do always vind some useful jobs to do."

and John answers—

"Aye, wi' a bit o' ground, if woone got any,
Woone's bwoys can soon get out an' eärn a penny,
An' then by workèn, they do learn the vaster,
The way to do things when they get a meäster."

Earnings of Dorset labourers.

8. In spite of this advantage the earnings of a labourer in Dorsetshire are less, and present a greater variety,† than in any county visited by me; and yet the amount is difficult to ascertain,

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* The following advertisements are from the Dorchester County Chronicle.
(1.) Wanted, a farm labourer, with a working family; apply to Mr. G. Tett, Chiselborne.
(2.) Wanted, a shepherd, with a grown-up son or two; apply to Mr. G. A. Ingram, Bagber.
(3.) Wanted at Lady-day, a thatcher, with two or three boys from 9 to 14 years of age; apply to Mr. G. Mayo, Puddlehinton.

† As an illustration of this variety, I append the wages of five large farmers, as stated by themselves:—
A. (Cerne Abbas); gives 8*s.*, a cottage and garden rent-free; some potato ground, some furze to burn, and 'grist' corn when he has it. Beer at piece-work.
B. (Marnhull); gives 9*s.* and three pints of cider a day during the summer. No other extras.
C. (St. Giles'); gives 10*s.*, no cottage; 12 'lug' (perch) of potato ground to some men; beer at piece-work.
D. (Winfrith); gives 7*s.*, cottage and garden rent-free, 20 'lug' of potato gronnd, pays the carriage of turf for fuel, and gives corn at market price. [In the parishes where C. and D. live, work ceases at 5 p.m.]
E. (Whitchurch); gives 9*s.*, cottage and garden rent-free to 3 out of 8 men, 15 'lug' of potato ground, and gristing at 5*s.* to all, some fuel to two. Beer at piece-work (average sum earned at piece-work, 2*l.* 12*s.*)

because the wages are paid partly in money and partly in kind. This mode of payment is described as "a low weekly wage supplemented and eked out at various times by perquisites and allowances in "coin or material, or opportunities of piece-work." G.

9. Omitting for the present all mention of carters, shepherds, or specially skilled men, the weekly wage for an ordinary labourer is generally 8*s.* with, or 9*s.* without, a cottage free of rent. Let us see what is added by perquisites and allowances, and opportunities of piece-work.

10. In the vale of Blackmoor the only addition usually made to the money wage is a certain quantity of beer or cider, given more or less regularly. In other parts they sometimes include in addition "grist corn," that is, "tailing" or second wheat, which some labourers are allowed to buy either below or at the market rate, a certain number of perches of ground for a potato crop, ploughed and manured by the farmer, the cost of the carriage of fuel and sometimes the fuel itself, whether wood, furze, peat, or coal, and a cottage rent-free.* It must in the first place be understood that these perquisites are given only to *married* men, that few (if any) farmers give all of them, and that in all cases they vary so much in amount, in quality, or in the times of year in which they are given, that it is impossible to lay down any general rule for estimating their value.

11. But the great objection to the system is its liability to abuse. That in many instances it is abused, it is impossible to deny. No doubt good employers, who give the full value of all these advantages, and who keep their agreement in the spirit as well as in the letter, may by this means add an average of 2*s.* or 3*s.* a week to their labourers' earnings. But on the other hand some farmers give none of these advantages, others give one or two only. Or again, the wheat may be, as it sometimes is, of the most inferior character, the "fuel" may consist of the commonest gorse, the cottage may be miserable and overcrowded, or extra labour (on Sundays or at harvest) may be required, either of the man or his family, in return for these advantages. In all of these cases it is clear that the addition to the money wages of the labourer may be very small; and the inferior employer, sheltering himself under a system which in good hands works very much to the advantage of the labourer, can by means of it screw his men to the greatest possible extent.

12. The opportunities for piece-work are not so great as in many other counties. In the vale of Blackmoor hardly any is done, in other parts ordinary men get it, as a rule, only at haytime and harvest, and many farmers, instead of giving it at all to regular men, substitute a fixed payment, varying from 10*s.* to 2*l.* This, it must be remembered, is earned at a cost of many extra hours of work, often amounting to an addition of two days to the week, and allowance must be made also for the greater amount of food and drink consumed, and for the wear and tear of tools. The difficulty of laying down any fixed estimate on this subject is shown by one of the tables in the Appendix (Evid. 68), where the earnings of 12 ordinary labourers at piece-work varied from the fixed payment of 1*l.* for harvest to 3*l.*, which was obtained by specially skilled men.

13. Difficult as these additions are to estimate, I think it may safely be said that the ordinary labourer in this county earns on the average (piece-work and everything included) from 10*s.* to 11*s.* a week. Carters and shepherds, who work longer hours, and to whom therefore some additional advantages are always given, would often receive from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week more.

14. To the "perquisite" system as above described there is another very strong objection to be made. The general time of payment is once a fortnight, in many cases once a month, and in some at irregular intervals. The result of this is that very little money passes between the master and his man. Deductions are made for the "grist corn," and often for cheese and butter, for skimmed milk, for barley for the pig, or for the pig itself, so that the actual money earned never passes between the employer and the employed, but the balance only which remains (if any) is handed over to the labourer. The result is that "48 hours after the labourer has taken his wages he has seldom a shilling left." (Evid. 72).

15. The rent of the cottages on some estates is very low. Lords Portman and Shaftesbury, for instance, let all their's at 1*s.* a week including a garden; so do many other landowners. Lord Westminster, who always adds an exceptional amount of land, charges 5*l.* a year, and round Dorchester few cottages are to be obtained at a less rate. Indeed many of the farmers in that district, who include a cottage in their wages, estimate its value at 2*s.* a week. In Fordington and similar open villages 2*s.* 6*d.* is no uncommon price. On the whole, however, taking the ample gardens into consideration, the cottage rents are usually below the average of other counties. Cottage rents.

16. The redeeming feature of rural life here is the amount of land held by the labouring class; indeed but for this the wages would sometimes hardly be sufficient to support life. The gardens are large, many regular labourers have a bit of potato land ploughed and manured for them, and allotments are very common. A reference to the tables appended to this Report (Evid. 65) will show that these are not always cheaply let, and that a good many are bringing in a profit of 4*l.* an acre to their Gardens and allotments.

* The following observations may give some assistance in arriving at an approximate idea of the value of the various "perquisites."

(1). 'Grist' corn is sold to labourers either at a fixed price per bushel—now generally 5*s.*—or at the market rate. Some few farmers allow them to buy as much as they like, more generally it is offered to them only to a limited extent, or during a part of the year. It is clear that this may be a gain or a loss according as the price of corn is low or high, or the quality of the wheat is good or bad. In many cases it is an undoubted gain; in bad hands it may be and is sometimes a loss; and in the neighbourhood of Dorchester, the possible gain is often counterbalanced by the reduced pay given to the wife for her work, that is, she will get 8*d.* a day and no 'grist,' or 6*d.* with it. One great hardship entailed by this system is that the corn has to pass through the miller's hands for grinding, and part of it is kept back as a toll. It is even complained in some cases that the wheat from inferior corn is substituted for that sent to the mill.

Potato ground is a piece of land upon a farm, given (generally in Dorset) free from rent, and ploughed and manured by the farmer. If these conditions are complied with, it is fairly estimated at 1*s.* per year for every 'lug' or perch. Each labourer has from 15 to 40 perch, or in some cases, a quantity proportioned to the size of his family. Where allotments are common, as on Lord Shaftesbury's estate, potato ground is very rarely given to ordinary labourers.

Fuel.—Some few masters give a ton of coal at Christmas; many more give furze or peat, according to the locality, or send a waggon to fetch it. No two masters, however, observe the same rule in this respect.

Beer or cider is generally given, as in many other counties, at task-work. In my opinion it cannot be reckoned, any more than it is in those counties, as a part of wages, because it does not go to the benefit of the family. Some give it all the year. This practice, I am glad to say, is diminishing. It has been much discountenanced by many landowners, and especially by Lord Shaftesbury; and money payments have been substituted for it. The value of this addition depends on the quality of the liquor, which is often very bad. In the case of cider it is generally grown upon the premises, and costs little or nothing to the employer.

G.

owners, and cannot, therefore, be described as any favour granted to the peasant. In the union of Bridport the *average* rent of land let in allotments is as high as 6 guineas.* Some landowners on the contrary have been very careful to avoid this. On Lord Shaftesbury's estate alone, there are 396 allotment gardens, of which the common rent amounts to a rate of 24*s.* per acre, and no less than 165 of them are half an acre in extent.

Cottages.

17. "For some years the cottages of Dorset were a byeword and reproach * * * * * *. It "is pleasant to look back upon the serious charges then advanced against them, because it places in "strong and gratifying contrast their present condition."† "There has been," says Lord S. G. Osborne, "in the 27 years I have known Dorset, the greatest improvement" (Evid. 4). Where many have improved, it is invidious to mention names. Following the lead of Mr. Sturt at Crichell, the great majority of landowners have effected great changes on their estates. The improvement in public opinion on this subject is no doubt in a great degree due to the exertion of Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne, to whose most valuable paper in the Appendix (Evid. 4) it is unnecessary for me to call your particular attention.

18. In spite of these changes, the cottages of this county are more ruinous and contain worse accommodation than those in any other county I have visited, except Shropshire; and it must be remembered that the system of hiring adopted here would especially seem to require a sufficiency of bedroom accommodation. The estate of Lord Rivers, having been long held by life tenants, is notorious for its bad cottages. And such villages as Bere Regis, Fordington, Winfrith, Cranbourne, or Charminster (in which there is an average of 7 persons to a house), together with others described in the evidence, are a disgrace to the owners of the land, and contain many cottages unfit for human habitation. Nor can this condemnation be confined to large open villages. The parish of Batcombe for instance (with an acreage of 1,109) has within its limits 23 cottages occupied by agricultural labourers, of which 11 have one bedroom only, and in five of these families with three or more children are sleeping (Evid. 59). In the 42 parishes comprised within the unions of Cerne and Wimborne, no less than 314, or (16 per cent.) of the cottages had one bedroom only, and 113 of these contained a family with three or more children (Evid. 59). What is called a second bedroom is often too a mere apology for it, and is sometimes described as "a closet not closed" from the bedroom. One special difficulty in the way of improvement in this county should, however, be mentioned. It is the number of cottages let on lease for lives, and until these fall in, the landlord has no control, and no power of effecting such improvement. It is to be regretted that some are still being let on these terms.

Sanitary state of village.

19. There is one circumstance connected with these villages which renders them more especially open to reproach, that is, the neglect of the most obvious sanitary precautions. In village after village the answer was "there is nothing like one privy to every cottage." I saw whole rows of cottages with none, and abounding with nuisances of all kinds. Remonstrance is generally disregarded, and the state of filth, in which many parishes are left, calls aloud for some active interference to relieve the present authorities of a responsibility they have grossly neglected.

Education.

20. In respect of education, this county appears to me to have made considerable exertion. The smallness of many parishes has rendered it difficult for them to procure a master, and therefore the school, which now exists in almost every parish, is generally taught by a mistress. From what I have already said it will be seen that these schools have great difficulties to contend with, owing to early labour, and to the scanty resources of the families. Education, therefore, is very insufficient, but I noticed with pleasure the great desire for instruction which prevailed among the labouring poor in this county, one proof of which may be found in the fact that the proportion of parishes with night-schools is very unusually large (Evid. 3). Farmers in this county are especially suspicious of education, because it is found in practice that the low wages drive away almost all the young men who are sufficiently well educated to go. A striking instance of this is given by Lord Sidney G. Osborne in his memorandum relating to children educated at Durweston (in which parish the day-school is not of any pretension, but a night-school has been most energetically worked) during the last 24 years. Out of 187 children thus traced, 129 are accounted for as having left the parish, and 24, besides four whole families have emigrated (Evid. 57).

21. The great need of education in this county is some check upon the *continuous* employment of children at an early age. In the case of girls, "gloving" is mainly responsible; in that of boys, as I have already said, it is field-work. Many cease to obtain any effective instruction whatever after 7 or 8 years of age, and in some parishes it is the maximum age to which they can be kept at school.

KENT.

District visited.

22. In the county of Kent I visited 49 parishes in detail (containing a population of 66,000, and an acreage of 160,000), besides others where my only inquiry was as to the condition of the hop-pickers. The nominal wages vary from 15*s.* in the east and centre of the county, to 12*s.* in the clay districts bordering upon Sussex; but the result of hop cultivation is to cause many men who obtain these wages in summer to be thrown out of employment in winter, and the addition to be made to these sums in order to form a true estimate of the condition of the agricultural population depends mainly on the fact of the district being suited for the growth of hops or not.

* From 45 parishes where allotments are let I have a return also of the rent paid. The following table shows that at least half are let at a very high rate.

Let under 2*l.* per acre.	2*l.* and under 3*l.*	3*l.* and under 4*l.*	4*l.* and under 5*l.*	5*l.* and over.
71 acres.	133 acres.	54 acres.	93 acres.	68 acres.

† Journal of Royal Agricultural Society, xv., p. 441.

G.

1. Hop-growing parishes.

23. The cultivation of the hop being essentially of a garden character, regular men are employed in the hop gardens during a great part of the year at piece-work, and it is no exaggeration to say that 3*s.* a week is often added to their earnings by this means, especially as on some descriptions of work a wife or a child can render some assistance. But in addition to this, there is a great deal of piece-work "easy and suited to females" (Evid. 81), which brings in a considerable addition to the husbands' earnings. "Tying" hops is an instance of this, where a woman contracts to tie the hops to the poles as they grow up at a certain price (13*s.* or 14*s.*) per acre; this lasts during May and June, and it is not uncommon for a woman, with a child or two, to tie as much as three acres. Then again at the hop-picking season every child that can walk is wanted; and it is estimated that every one over 12 years of age can earn on the average from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per day for a period of three weeks. In winter also there is a good deal of work, especially for the elder women, at making hop pockets, shaving poles, and in chopping up rags for manure, so that, in hop-growing parishes, almost any woman can work (if she will) during a considerable part of the year. At East Farleigh it is calculated that 70 per cent. of the able-bodied women work in the fields; but here, as elsewhere in the neighbourhood of Maidstone, the fruit gardens afford additional employment for two or three weeks in the year.

24. So great is the demand for such labour that some farmers make it a condition of hiring the husband, that the wife and children shall work when required, or at any rate at hop-picking (Evid. 84, 97). In other cases gleaning is made the inducement, and none are allowed to glean who have not helped their husband's employer at busy times (Evid. 125). Girls are very rarely employed directly by the farmer, but it will be seen that this district gives so much opportunity for family work, that the school attendance of very young children is terribly interrupted by their being wanted by their parents, either for the occupations above mentioned, or to collect blackberries and acorns in the lanes, which a summer such as that of 1868 causes to be more common than usual. For work on the farms, however, with the exception of hop-picking, their mothers rarely take them before 11, and in most instances not until a later age.

2. Parishes where hops are not grown.

25. In the parishes on the other hand, in which no hops or fruit are grown, the employment of the women is irregular and uncertain. Some farmers employ them in winter among the turnips, but as a general rule they work only in the summer at the ordinary occupations of hay-making and harvesting, and at pulling up the weeds, or couch grass; and therefore their total earnings in the fields would rarely reach a large amount. In these parishes also, men get piece-work only at the ordinary times, and a system not uncommon in this county appears to me to detract very much from the advantage generally afforded by this mode of employment. It is of the very essence of "piece" work that the price should be fixed beforehand, and that a man should know for what he is working. I found, however, in many cases that this is not done, and that the labourer trusts to his employer to fix a fair price after the work is finished.

Employment of boys.

26. Many boys, especially in hop-growing districts, are employed by their parents at occasional work from the age of infancy; but even by farmers they are taken for occasional bird-tending as young as 7 or 8, and very few ever ask the ages of the boys they employ. The employment for such children varies from two to four or five (Evid. 128), or even seven months in the year (Evid. 117). It is rare, however, for them to be continuously employed before 11, unless the waggoner likes to take his own boy to help him, at a younger age.

"Mates."

27. As soon as a boy becomes a "mate" (waggoner's lad), almost all opportunity of self-improvement is gone. "A boy works from 6 a.m. till 8 or 9 p.m., and is entirely under the control of the waggoner, "almost invariably an utterly ignorant man. Very few farmers will interfere to make it possible for "the mate to go to a night school" (Evid. 84), if he would; but no great disposition seems to be shown to do so. "Often the hours for feeding horses are so arranged that it is quite impossible for the lads to "get away to either school or church (Evid. 84)." Even if the boy is inclined to help himself, there is "often no fire and no light" for him (Evid. 111). Under these circumstances it is no wonder that the lads degenerate into louts, and forget all their previous book learning. It has always seemed to me, however, that one effect of the solitary life which these lads are obliged to lead, is that such lads become dull of hearing, and utterly incapable of doing themselves justice when spoken to, but are not really as ignorant as they would appear at first sight. Still, at one large night school at Yalding, "the "greater part have forgotten how to read, except with considerable effort, and it is hopeless to "expect them to explain words" (Evid. 94). So at Sandhurst, the Rev. G. Ridout says, "some who "were fair scholars before, had almost entirely lost it" (Evid. 128).

Education.

28. This rapid forgetfulness was the chief complaint, and appears to me to be the main characteristic of the present system of employing waggoners' "mates" in Kent. Schools are universal, and probably no county in England has a larger proportion of good ones. "For such a district as mine," says Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in 1868, "I do not think it would be necessary to take "seriously into account the possible case of there being no school *within reach*" (Evid. 79). In this opinion the Rev. B. F. Smith, Diocesan Inspector of Schools, in his report for 1869, expresses his entire concurrence.* Nor was there much complaint of the entire non-attendance of children, although their constant employment in the fields causes great irregularity. At 10 years of age, on the average, in the case of good schools, almost all the boys of the agricultural labouring class leave altogether, and in the case of schools under a mistress, about a year sooner. Although they leave so young, there is even then no complaint of entire want of knowledge, but that when they turn up again for confirmation, four or five years later, they have either lost all that they had previously acquired, or it has become a simple mechanical power of no practical use.

29. Some farmers suggest that this difficulty can be remedied on large farms, by giving the charge of the horses into the hands of a "horseman," by which means the lads are set free at the close of the day's work, without having to return to the stable (Evid. 97, 115). This plan has, however, found little favour, although the increasing disinclination of boys to become "mates" was constantly made the subject of remark; the hours are too long for them, and they are getting to prefer any other employment.

* "Were the State to take in hand the establishment of schools in every district which it considered to be beyond fair reach of "any existing school, *very few* would be required to supplement the existing provision" (p. 35).

G.
Cottages.

30. "Cottages," says one witness at Maidstone, "are bad generally, and insufficient in number. (Evid. 81), and yet it appeared to me that they were better than in any county that I have visited. In very many villages some landowner is resident, who is anxious to see the cottages present an agreeable appearance, and the flowers, which it is the common custom of the cottagers in this fruitful county to cultivate, renders many of them especially attractive. On one estate the appearance of the village, in which the residence of the owner is situated, creates universal admiration, but (as often happens), his whole attention appears to have been concentrated on this one place, and on the rest of the estate the complaints are loud of the want of sufficient cottages. Bedroom accommodation is spoken of as generally deficient, although the number remaining with one bedroom only, is comparatively small. The insufficiency in number, and still more the extremely high rents, have led to an increased number of lodgers being taken in. Some few cottages on the farms are let at 2*s.* a week, but the ordinary rents, demanded in the villages, average at least 2*s.* 6*d.* In East Kent the results of letting cottages with the farms are obvious, from the state of repair into which many have been allowed to fall, and the system appears to me to be on the decrease. In some cases I noticed that the great want of cottages had caused tenants to put up temporary wooden huts on their farms, in which the accommodation was most indifferent. Allotments are to be found in a fair proportion of villages, but on the other hand gardens are not by any means universal, and in the very rich hop-growing parishes are most insufficient in extent.

The HOP-PICKERS.

31. The condition of the immigrant hop-pickers in Kent engaged my especial attention, and I visited 25 parishes in the chief hop-growing districts during the time of picking. Besides this, I wrote to 70 of the principal hop-growers soliciting information, from 42 of whom I received more or less detailed answers. I obtained also the co-operation of the Society for the Employment and Improved Lodging of Hop-pickers, and to its secretary, the Rev. J. Y. Stratton (of Ditton rectory, Maidstone) I would here tender my heartiest thanks. Much of the following information was derived from him, and I would call your particular attention to the detailed statement in the appendix, with which he has furnished me.

32. No less than 41,000* acres were under hops in the county of Kent during the year 1868, and taking the usual proportion of four pickers to the acre, it follows that a very large population is employed in hop-picking, the great majority being of course home-dwellers; but it is impossible to estimate the number of immigrant hop-pickers (in which class I include all those who leave their homes to lodge elsewhere), at less than 25,000 to 30,000, of whom not very far short of 20,000 come from London and its suburbs. The returns obtained by me, relate to 13,000 of these immigrant pickers.

Change in class of pickers.

33. Not many years ago the extra labour required for hop-picking was supplied by the bands of Irish harvesters who were willing to lodge in barns, outhouses, or in the open air. But as the cultivation of the hop increased, and improvements in the mode of drying and preparing the hops enabled the hop-picking season to be very much shortened, more hands were wanted, and a new class of pickers was attracted from the metropolis; they consisted of the poorest inhabitants of London and its suburbs, of costermongers and small tradesmen, whom the dead season set free from their usual avocations, and of tramps. Children, however young, were generally brought with them, not only because even a very small child can earn something at hop-picking, but also from there being no other means of taking care of them.

34. For this class of pickers, which became more common every year, "accommodation was at "first (and excusably) inadequate." (Evid. 131.) They slept where they could, and even where temporary provision was made for their lodging the evil was perhaps aggravated by the overcrowding of the inmates. Nor was this the only or the chief complaint. Two or three weeks before the commencement of the picking, the exact date of which they had no means of ascertaining, thousands of poor persons overran the county of Kent, sleeping in the tramp wards of the union houses or in the open air, and in the daytime going round the country in search of employment. The inhabitants of the villages to which they went showed no sympathy towards a class of persons whose filthy, indecent, and disorderly habits made them unfit to be taken into their cottages, and who before the time of picking lived mainly by their depredations. The effect of this influx of strangers upon the resident population was grievously complained of; and when the hop-picking was over, and the vast population was paid off to return to their homes, the scenes of debauchery and riot which occurred were described as frightful. Still worse was the state of things if, as not unfrequently occurs in the hop-garden, a "strike" took place for an increase of remuneration, or some petty offence gave rise to a pitched battle between the immigrants and the natives.

35. It is not to be supposed that all hop-growers looked on at this state of things without attempting to remedy it. The efforts made, however, were very partial in their operation, and it was not until it had reached its climax by the constant increase in the number of immigrants, that the public opinion of the county was thoroughly roused, and it was determined to make an endeavour to remove the reproach which rested upon it in respect of the accommodation given to this population, and to devise some means by which the class of pickers might be improved, and more control over them obtained, by the planters. But only in 1866 was any united action taken, in which year the Society for the Employment and Improved Lodging of Hop-pickers was formed by the adhesion of the principal hop-growers of the county, by the support of many of the landowners, and by the exertions of Mr. Stratton. Its objects were two-fold,—(1) to promote the supply of better lodgings and accommodation for the hop-pickers, and (2) to establish a system of engaging them by means of respectable and trustworthy agents living in the town whence they came.†

(1.) Lodging.

36. With respect to lodging a very great change for the better has been effected. In 1868 the difficulty of providing adequately for their accommodation was increased by the number of pickers being larger than in any previous year. Yet it may be said with certainty that more than half of the

* By the Board of Trade returns, the whole acreage under hops in England is 64,500, so that two-thirds are in Kent.

† The religious aspect of the question—how best to provide for the spiritual wants of this immigrant population—was designedly omitted, to prevent any chance of thereby alienating any of the planters. Nor is it within my province to describe the efforts made for this purpose in many parishes.

pickers are now decently lodged, and the improvement which takes place in every successive year is very marked. G.

37. The accommodation recommended by the society, and now being gradually adopted, is the "hopper house," which may be described as a long low-pitched building of brick, stone, or wood divided internally into 10 or 12 compartments, about 12 feet square, each with external entrance. Every compartment is intended for a "bin's company" of six or eight persons, not including children, The number in each constantly therefore amounts to 12. Some growers attempt to set aside a compartment for each family, but the London immigrants more generally prefer that the bins' company which has come down to the hop-garden together should occupy the same compartment, and with these arrangements it is impossible to interfere. Other sorts of lodging are created by the "exigency of the service." Some growers erect buildings of straw or heath, others supply tents, which in fine weather are wholesome and satisfactory.

38. The tenements generally contain nothing but straw, or in some cases a low wooden bedstead which serves also as a seat. Candlesticks and shelves are occasionally, and should be always, furnished, and a very great addition to their comfort in wet weather is made by a covered cooking house. Such accommodation cannot be called luxurious, but it renders decent habits possible, and considering that the hop-picking season lasts only three weeks, appears to be as good as can reasonably be expected. Some employers, such as Mr. Ellis of East Farleigh, do far more for the comfort of their pickers, by providing medical attendance and any little luxuries that may be needed by the sick.

39. The improvement thus described is mainly due to the public opinion of the county, but in the second place to the society, which, by the information and advice it has issued, and still more by the standing protest it continually affords against the indifference formerly shown, has done much good. It cannot however be denied that very much yet remains to be done. In some districts, and especially in the neighbourhood of Cranbrook, very little change is taking place. It is not uncommon for growers to provide straw and hurdles, and to leave the pickers, immediately on their arrival, to build up any sort of shelter which their ingenuity can suggest. In other cases an old barn is thrown open and they are left to occupy it as they can, with such partitions between families or bins' companies as they may be disposed to put up. Sometimes "hurdles are put between the beds, "leaving them to twist straw in if they like; *they seldom do so.*" (Evid. 142.) In several cases that came under my notice at least 50 men, women, and children were living in one large temporary hut, without any attempt at partitions. In another the "lean-to's" round a barn, in which the owner would have been ashamed to put his cattle, were utilized for the purpose. Another especial complaint is want of cleanliness. Many of the buildings, decent enough in themselves, are allowed to get into a state quite unfit for habitation by being used in winter for the storing of roots or for cattle, without being properly cleansed afterwards. On one farm, where the pickers were lodged in a barn, the farm-yard outside was still full of manure. Another cause of filth is the want of privies, which are to be found as yet on few farms. On the other hand it must be admitted that employers have in many cases great difficulties to contend with in the filthy habits, and "the utter disregard for their good shown "by the objects on whom improvement is attempted."

40. Much opprobrium has fallen to the lot of the growers which ought rightly to be borne by the landlords. It is clearly their duty to provide decent accommodation for those employed on their land, for the tenant farmer, holding (as he generally does in this county) on a short lease, cannot be expected to do so. "Oast-house" accommodation for drying the hops is universally recognized as a permanent improvement to be made by the landlord, and on the same grounds accommodation in proportion to the acreage under hops for those employed in picking them ought to be provided by him. Some tenants, indeed, are bound by agreement to keep a certain amount of land under this crop, and "hopper houses" are at least as much a necessary appendage to such as farm as an "oast" house.

41. Of the accommodation provided by the public authorities I cannot speak highly. In the Maidstone union workhouse, which I visited in the height of the season, I found stables and every available space occupied by vagrants, but the workhouse is four miles from Maidstone and no building is provided in the latter place. In consequence of this the poor people arriving there late, have to spend the night in the streets. This year a large building was however erected near the river, but without any partitions, and all who came, young and old, male and female, were crowded together without any regard to decency.

42. "Much of the evil arising from overcrowding and from faulty structures would be checked," says Mr. Stratton, "if an inspector of these tenements was appointed, who would certify their fitness, and "the number each should contain" (Evid. 131); and he goes on to suggest that the weather-proof character of the lodgings, the amount of space, the arrangements for decency and cleanliness, and the supply of water, would all properly fall within the cognizance of such an officer. No doubt the change of air and scene and "the invigorating occupation of hop-picking" contribute to the general healthiness of this class. Nevertheless if an infectious illness does occur, as in 1849 cholera broke out at East Farleigh, the danger to the pickers and to the neighbourhood is so great as to make inspection desirable on this ground alone. The regulations now adopted for common lodging-houses, would, with some modification, exactly meet the case.* It would, however, be difficult to define the amount of accommodation required on a farm, which depends not only on the acreage of hops, but also on its nearness to a village, whence a supply of home-dwellers can be derived. Near Canterbury for instance, it is customary for the planters to fetch out their pickers in carts, and to take them back at night, thus avoiding the necessity of having to provide lodging for them. I do not see how any regulation could be framed so as to overcome this difficulty.

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* By the Sanitary Act, 1868, sect. 35, the following regulations are enumerated:—
(1.) For fixing the number of persons to occupy such a house.
(2.) For their registration.
(3.) For their inspection.
(4.) For enforcing therein the provision of privy accommodation, and other means of cleanliness.
(5.) For their cleansing and whitewashing at stated times.

G.
2. Mode of hiring

43. The class of persons employed in hop-picking varies according to the mode of hiring. In East Kent a class of pickers more akin to the home-dwellers is to be found in those who come from the seaport towns or from Sussex villages, bringing with them furniture, beds, and cooking utensils. They are superior to the ordinary immigrants, and the inhabitants of the hop-growing villages are often not unwilling to receive them into their houses. They are not unfrequently hired through an agent in each town. In the neighbourhood of Maidstone many pickers are also hired through the agency of the "binmen" or gangers. A man living in London or the suburbs agrees beforehand with the planter by letter to bring down one or more "bins' companies" of from six to eight persons each, besides children. Generally each picker is paid separately for his or her work, but sometimes a system analogous to that of the "public gang" is adopted, and the ganger "brings down his party to the "scene of action, paying all expenses, feeding them miserably, and giving them perhaps a trifling sum "at the finish" (Evid. 81). "Sometimes a costermonger takes them all down in his cart, feeds them, "and gives them fixed wages, taking for himself the rest of their profits" (Evid. 137). In other cases also, even where each individual is paid the sum that he or she has earned, extortions by these binmen are represented as by no means uncommon, and at any rate some treating or remuneration is expected by them in return for their services in collecting the party. This system appears on the whole to work fairly well, if the grower carries out his agreement. Sometimes, however, when the hops go off suddenly, and the planter finds himself in no want of any hands to pick them, he is careless about giving notice to them not to come, and in one case no less than 100 pickers, arriving from London in accordance with their contract, found themselves thrown upon the road without employment or money.

44. The most objectionable mode of hiring is that already mentioned of collecting them from the roads, or from the tramp wards of union houses. It is no uncommon thing for a grower to send up at night to the union and to hire all who are to be found there, without any reference to decent behaviour or ability to perform the work. This system has been described as *a direct premium upon vagrancy*, and is a very great hardship to the respectable poor who have to leave London without any certainty of employment.

45. Before work begins in the garden, or very shortly afterwards, it is the custom of the principal hop-growers to read over to the assembled pickers a list of rules to be observed. In West Kent this includes fixing the "tally,"* or price which is to be paid for the work, varying in each garden according to the amount and condition of the crop. "In the event of the hops going off badly, owing to "disease or bad weather, the people will naturally become dissatisfied with their earnings; under such "circumstances," says Mr. Bannerman of Hunton, "the best course is to lower the 'tally' voluntarily "at once, before being compelled to do so" (Evid. 136). On Mr. Ellis's farm, where 1,500 pickers are employed, the "tally" fixed beforehand is rarely adhered to throughout; he anticipates complaint by altering the rate of payment (Evid. 135). Hops when about to go off rapidly must be either picked or lost, and "in such an emergency the grower is completely at the pickers' mercy" (Evid. 136). If a change in the "tally" is refused, a strike takes place, originated not unfrequently by the home-dwellers, whose experience enables them to discern the symptoms of an approaching change in the hops. Sometimes a strike is enforced by violence or incendiarism, and the grower, who cannot get other pickers at a moment's notice, or, if he could, would be unable to clear his garden of the occupants without a regular battle, has no alternative but to yield.

46. Throughout East Kent this difficulty is met by not fixing the tally till the conclusion of the picking, that is, by expecting the pickers to do work nominally by contract, although no contract price has been agreed on. The apparent injustice and onesidedness of such an arrangement is obvious, and it is condemned by the general opinion of the West Kent hop-planters, because it is clearly fair that both parties to a bargain should know the terms beforehand. There is, however, one security against injustice, which appears to prevent any serious complaint, and that is, that the planter who treats his pickers ill will have a difficulty in getting them another year. I think therefore that the grievance is more a sentimental than a practical one, and indeed in most hop-gardens it is very difficult to fix the tally until it is seen how the hops come down, or if it is fixed to adhere to it throughout.

47. In order to obtain some control over the pickers, and to improve the class of persons employed, a system of agency has been attempted by the society. Agents, generally Scripture readers, have been appointed in all the poorer parts of London, to whom pickers seeking employment are invited by advertisement to apply. The agent thus becomes the medium of communication between the pickers and the planter, which in the case of poor people, who cannot themselves write, is especially valuable. The names are entered in a register, after inquiry into character, and the pickers are sent down as orders are received for them. The great advantage to the poor is that they do not leave home without a certainty, of employment (Evid. 137), of decent lodgings (for this has formed a part of the stipulation made for them by the agent), and of having for their companions people of decent habits. To the planter on the other hand the system gives a powerful control over his pickers, because bad characters are punished by being struck off the register of the agent for future years; and if a serious disturbance arises, fresh pickers can be obtained at a days' notice. "An owner of hop land in Wadhurst was under the necessity "of resisting demands made on strike, when about half through the picking. All the hands were dis-"charged, and application was made to the society for a fresh supply. An inspection of the lodgings "provided for them was thereupon made, and the number of pickers required promptly sent from the "agency in Westminster. The work was completed to the satisfaction of the employer." (Evid. 134). Such a system of agency would appear to be sound in principle, but I regret to add that few planters have as yet taken advantage of it; in every case where they have done so their report has been favourable; and it is due to the South-eastern Railway Company to say, that they have contributed as far as possible to its success, as well as to the convenience of the poor hop-pickers, by providing special trains, and by kind co-operation with the agents of the society.

48. Of late years the effect on the neighbourhood of the large influx of strangers has very much diminished. By being lodged in buildings actually erected *in* the hop-garden they are withdrawn from

* The agreement is to pick so many bushels to the shilling, and is called the "tally."

much association with the home-dwellers, and the class of pickers is being gradually improved. Many growers employ the same persons year after year, thus having (although they do not always exercise it) a powerful check on their conduct in being able to strike off their list any idle or turbulent individuals. G.

49. Where decent accommodation is provided, the effect of the work upon the people themselves is not unsatisfactory, and it appears to me to call for no legislative interference. The hours are short, the labour light and easy, and being done by contract every one is too busily employed for mischief to arise from the sexes working together. Bad talk there is, and must be, but some check on it is imposed by the fact that each family works together round its own "bin" or its baskets. The employment is healthy and invigorating, and the immigrants return to their homes much benefited by the change of air.

CHESHIRE.

District visited.

50. In Cheshire I visited the agricultural district lying in the south-western part of the county, containing 105,000 acres, and a population of 17,000. In this county the parishes were originally of an enormous size, comprising many different townships, and some of them even now cover an unusually large area. This fact has rendered it especially difficult to bring schools within the reach of the whole of the population, and in consequence complaint was made at several of the meetings at which I was present of the large number of children attending no school at all. Deficiency of good infant schools, to meet the wants of the outlying populations, appeared to me to be the prominent defect, although hardly any parish was without a good school for the older children. "I cannot close my report," says Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in 1867, "without expressing my strong sense of the public "spirit and generosity which the landowners of Cheshire showed with regard to the support of the "National schools with which they were connected, during the ruinous losses caused by the cattle "plague. I expected to find half the schools in the agricultural parts of the county closed, but on "the contrary every school has been kept open, and I doubt whether a single subscription has been "withdrawn." (Evid. 165). As might be expected from the causes above stated, I found night schools to exist in three only of the agricultural parishes that I visited. The attendance of neither boys nor girls is much affected by the demands of field labour. Schools.

Irish labour.

51. Almost the whole of these parishes being laid down in permanent pasture, the amount of labour required for the cultivation of the land is small. But for this, the want of sufficient cottage accommodation near the farms would be a more serious evil than it now appears to be. Nevertheless this fact, coupled with the great drain of the agricultural population into the manufacturing and mining districts, has led many of the dairy farmers to employ only such men as they can board and lodge in their houses, and has induced almost all to dispense with as much out-door labour as possible. During the summer, when it is essential, it is supplied to a great extent by the Irish, who flock over from their own country for the two or three months of harvest, or who, crowded together into the towns of Northwich, Middlewich, or Knutsford, work on the farms at a considerable distance from their homes. This has now become so recognized a system that some landlords have added to their farmhouses a room specially for the Irish. (Evid. 155.)

Female out-door labour.

52. Excluding Irish women and the labour employed in potato culture in the peninsula of Wirral, women work very little on the land in this county. The wives of the ordinary labourers are called upon only to assist in haymaking or in milking both morning and evening, for which, if paid in money (which is not always the case), they receive from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per week. The only objection to this latter employment is the very early hour in the morning at which it takes place, and the consequent intermixture of the sexes without any supervision.

Female in-door servants.

53. The number of female in-door servants is, on the other hand, very large, and though on the smaller farms the wives of the occupiers do the cheesemaking for themselves, with very little assistance from hired labour, on the larger the dairymaid is the most important person on the establishment, commands very high wages, and during the cheesemaking season cannot possibly be dispensed with. On such farms a vessel cleaner, and often other assistants, are required.

54. Amongst these female servants it was universally admitted that a very low state of morality prevails, and to this fact the large amount of bastardy in Cheshire bears some testimony. Few farmers in hiring appear to make any inquiry as to character, and it makes no difference whether a woman has had bastard children or not. The explanation given of this is that "the great scarcity "of labour and the necessity of such labour to assist the farmers' wives causes a girl who is known to "be a good dairymaid to be hired independently of her character." (Evid. 147.) And again Mr. Latham says, "the only point ever asked is, can she make cheese?" (Evid. 154.)

55. It is however a great question whether this state of morality is not mainly due to neglect on the part of employers. "The key ought not to be given to them on Saturday nights," said the farmers at one meeting. It is in fact the custom in some parishes (now, I am happy to say, a diminishing number), that a servant girl, before hiring herself for the year, stipulates to have the out-door key given her on one night in the week, so that she can go out herself or let any one in. (Evid. 150.) Such force has this custom, described by one witness as a "gigantic evil" (Evid. 145.) attained, that in the case of the smaller farmers it is represented to be almost impossible for them not to yield to the demands for its observance. It is fair to say that among many farmers the system has always been discountenanced, and various attempts have been made by gentlemen of influence in the county to put an end to it. In one parish "all the farmers signed a paper never to allow the key of the house to remain in their "servants' hands at night." And in other instances combinations among employers, which was represented to me as the only means by which a stand could be made against the custom, have been formed. The result has been to confine it to a more limited district, and, as the Rev. Chancellor Thurlow says at Malpas, "great improvement is taking place." (Evid. 164.)

Sunday labour.

56. Attempts have also been made by some of the principal landowners to diminish the amount of Sunday labour required of female farm servants. Cheeses are usually made on that day, on the ground that the milk will not keep till the following one. Mr. Tollemache, however, by building extra space

G. for storing milk, has to a great extent surmounted this difficulty, and prizes are now offered at the local agricultural shows for the best cheeses not made on Sunday. The success of these endeavours has hitherto been very partial.

Cottages. 57. The cottages, as I have already stated, are too few in number, and not very well distributed. The old black and white materials of which many are constructed present a picturesque appearance, but such cottages generally are in very indifferent repair. In respect of bed-room accommodation considerable changes are wanted, for though on some estates (such as that of Lord Westminster) very great progress has been made, on others no improvement has taken place, and must unfortunately be further postponed by the terrible calamity of the cattle plague. Rents, where a garden is given, average 4*l.* a year. Gardens are general in the smaller villages, but allotments are almost unknown. The neighbourhood of the manufacturing towns, causing their produce, which chiefly consists of damsons, to find a ready sale, makes the gardens in this county an unusually large source of profit. It is not at all uncommon to pay the rent out of the garden. Some landowners frequently give enough land to their principal labourers to enable them to keep a cow, while in every township on Lord Westminster's estate there is "a ley field for them to pasture their cows on in summer, and another for "them to cut hay from. For these advantages they pay 5*l.* a year, which many of them are ready to "do." (Evid. 158.) Of the merits of this system I shall have more to say presently.

Wages. 58. The usual wages paid in this part of Cheshire vary from 11*s.* to 12*s.* a week, without extras; but, owing to the large amount of permanent pasture, there is very little piece-work compared with other counties. Married men, who live at some little distance, who are required to work more than the usual number of hours, are not unfrequently paid partly in food; they are boarded in the farm-house, and receive in addition a weekly sum, varying from 7*s.* to 6*s.*, or even 5*s.* It is obvious that by this plan a man gains at the expense of his family, and, from that point of view, I heard no defence made for it. One advantage which the poor possess in this county is the abundance of butter-milk, which can be had almost for the asking, and, coming as I did from the south of England, I could not fail to be struck with the very great additional comfort enjoyed by families in this county from the cheapness of fuel.

SHROPSHIRE.

District visited. 59. In Shropshire, I selected for the purposes of inquiry, two groups of parishes containing a population of 20,000, and an acreage of 115,000. The first, in the neighbourhood of Wem, resembled in its northern portion the dairy district of Cheshire which I have just described; but on the Shrewsbury side there is more arable land, and the conditions of the agricultural life are different. Labour, which is not well distributed, is partly supplied, at busy seasons, by gangs of Irish, who are satisfied with any accommodation which barns and outhouses can afford. Women and very young children are very little employed in outdoor work.

The other district visited lies in the south-western corner of the county, bordering upon Wales. It is in every respect different from the former. The farms are smaller, employment is less regular, and wages are very low. There is very little independence among the labouring class. In this part of the county, women are more employed in the ordinary farm operations, sometimes doing a few days' work when required, on condition of being allowed to glean on the farm.

Cottages. 60. The point especially deserving of attention in this county, is the infamous character of the cottages. In the majority of the parishes that I visited they may be described as tumble down and ruinous, not water-tight, very deficient in bed-room accommodation, and in decent sanitary arrangements. On the whole they are more uniformly bad, and in a less improving condition, than in any other county visited by me. Two at least of the principal landowners in the north of the county have cleared themselves of the reproach of owning bad cottages by pulling them down, without adequately replacing them by others. On these estates the labourers herd in the open villages, while on many others, cottages are to be found, belonging to the owner of the soil, which are a disgrace to any civilized country. In one parish, out of 62 cottages owned by large landowners, 29 have one bed-room only, while out of 36 owned by railway and small proprietors only seven have this limited accommodation. (Evid. 196.) I would call your especial attention to the detailed accounts of the cottages in the villages visited by me.

Education. 61. With this state of things it is very difficult for those charged with the education of the poor to contend. "I find from questioning the boys to-day," says the schoolmaster at Clun, "that all but "one half of them belong to families living in cottages with one sleeping room." (Evid. 174). "It "is an insuperable obstacle," says another witness, "to a proper education" (Evid. 178), and we find accordingly from the report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in 1868 that throughout this county "the number of children in attendance falls considerably short of the proper per-centage of the population" (p. 128). And again, even "if a very ample margin is allowed for private schools, it is hardly "possible to avoid the conclusion that large numbers of children who need instruction are left without "it, partly it may be from lack of school accommodation, but still more from lack of proper interest "on the part of their parents" (p. 129, and see Evid. 2). Field work certainly is, to a small extent only, the cause of this absence. The main hindrances are "the poverty and ignorance" of the parents, and the distance which many of the children have to go to school. Here, far more than in Cheshire, infant schools sadly need encouragement (Evid. 170), and schools of the better class (the effect of which in promoting good attendance has been apparent throughout these counties) are only very slowly finding their way into this district. Labourers' children become irregular at school about the usual age of 8 or 9, but are not found to be taken away for regular work till they are 11 at any rate, little pressure being put upon them by the farmers to go to it. One exception (Loppington) deserves notice. In this parish it is found "that the best paid labourers are the least educated. Labourers' "children ought therefore to begin work as soon as they can get it, and by this means it is hoped "that the children of the smaller farmers will keep ahead of their labourers in respect of education." (Evid. 184.)

62. The early age at which they are taken into farmhouses interferes, however, very much with the education of girls. Many go at 10 or 11, and, this, coupled with the fact that the labour to be performed in farmhouses is often very severe, appears to me to require serious attention. Early employment of girls in farm houses.

63. Cottages (miserable as they are) are not let at a very cheap rate. The larger landowners let many at 3*l.* 10*s.*, but the unusual number of cottages in this county which are in the hands of small owners causes the average rent to be from 4*l.* to 5*l.* Gardens are generally attached, but of very inadequate size. The allotment system is almost unknown, owing (as I was told) to potato ground in many instances being given by the farmers; but I found rent, and a high one, to be almost always charged for this, which makes it in fact hardly any boon at all. In the north, and especially on the estate of Sir B. Leighton, Bart., a good many cottages have land enough to keep a cow. Rents.

64. The condition of the peasantry, in no part very satisfactory, is deplorably low in the hill country of the south-west. The system of "privileges," and of part payment in beer or cider, on which I dwelt at some length in speaking of Dorset, prevails here, with several additional disadvantages. In the first place the hours of labour are not, as in other counties, strictly limited, nor is it an understood thing that extra pay is due to the labourer for extra hours of work. The usual remuneration for such extra labour is in food, but it is a mere matter of charity, given or not at the pleasure of the employer. Another unsatisfactory part of the system is the uncertain nature of the agreement entered into between the farmer and his labourer, for even the sum of money to be paid, and the time of payment, is not always settled beforehand. The custom of boarding married men in the farm-house, and giving them 6*s.* or even 5*s.* only in money, prevails to a considerable, though a diminishing extent; it has mainly been caused by the distance of the cottages from the place of labour, and it now generally implies that the man is to work for rather more than the ordinary number of hours. The usual money wages vary from 9*s.* or 10*s.* at Clun, to 11*s.* or 12*s.* in the north; overtime, as at harvest, is generally paid in food or drink, the value of which it is impossible to estimate; and the addition made by gifts or cartage of fuel, or by a cottage being given rent free, varies (as in the case of Dorset) on almost every farm. Wages, &c.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

65. In the county of Stafford so few districts are purely agricultural that I visited only the tract of country between Stafford and Uttoxeter, containing an acreage of 66,000 and a population of 16,000, not nearly all of whom are employed in agriculture. Most of this was pasture land, occupied in small farms for dairy purposes, and it was represented to me as being the poorest district in the county. District visited.

66. The wages were at least 12*s.* in money, in addition to perquisites; but in this, as in other grass counties, work was not quite constant. There was but little piece-work, and even harvesting was often paid by a fixed sum. The additions by way of perquisite were given only by some farmers, and were of the usual varied character. Indeed one farmer, in writing to me on the subject of the wages he paid, gave as one item in his estimate "the opportunity of sending their children to a free "school." The labour of women, though not very regularly employed, is thought valuable, and not to be dispensed with, especially on the threshing-machines in winter. Earnings, &c.

67. The exhaustive return contained in the appendix (Evid. 215.) gives a complete account of the state of the cottage accommodation. In the 63 parishes from which returns were received no less than 25 per cent. of the cottages had only one bed-room, and 9 per cent. contained a family with three children or more living in that one bed-room. I found, however, that considerable improvement is taking place, and on some of the larger estates good cottages are now the rule. Gardens are general, and allotments not uncommonly given by the great landowners. The neighbourhood of large towns forms a ready market for their produce, but involves the disadvantage that the rural population is more exposed to the impositions of travelling hucksters. Lord Harrowby has in some cases added to the cottages enough land to keep a cow, and has found the system to work well in keeping good labourers at home (Evid. 198). Cottages.

68. The attendance at school is considerably below the average. In consequence of this fact a very complete inquiry was made by the Archidiaconal Board of Education in 1868, and the deficiency was found to arise in part from a want of school accommodation; for 27 per cent. of the parishes expressed a demand for more schools (Evid. 199). The chief cause of non-attendance was stated to be the neglect of parents, while poverty was very seldom regarded as a hindrance. In only six agricultural parishes was early employment stated to be a cause of non-attendance, or of withdrawal from school. But even from my own limited experience I am convinced that this very imperfectly expresses the extent to which field work interferes with schooling; because in this, as in other counties, I found regular labourers anxious that their children should earn something as soon as possible, and though there is little demand by the farmers for the occasional labour of children, yet a good many boys are taken away from school altogether at 11, and occasionally at a younger age, to go with horses. Education.

RUTLAND.

69. A short visit to this county convinced me that it presented hardly any features worthy of special notice here. Very few parishes are deficient in school accommodation, two only, where there was any considerable population, being pointed out to me, and in these efforts are now being made to establish a school. The consequence of this is that the proportion of children attending school is unusually large, no less than 1 in 6½ of the population being on the books of Church schools alone, and 1 in 8½ being in average attendance at them. But knitting, in the case of girls, and field-work in that of boys, produces irregular attendance and early withdrawal from school. Boys seldom remain after 10 or 11 years of age.

70. In this county alone, I found two or three organized "private gangs" of women and children to be employed. Before the passing of the Agricultural Gangs Act they would have been classed as

G. "public;" but the mode of hiring is now changed; still, in one case, the children have four miles to go to work, and boys and girls are employed together in a manner which cannot be defended. On the eastern side of the county, where there is less grass land than in the west, women are a little employed, but girls very rarely.

71. The situation and condition of the cottages are grievously complained of, but on all the principal estates improvement is either taking place or is promised. In one instance a man and his family had to live for eighteen months in a barn, because his cottage, which was his only means of living near his place of work, was pulled down over his head. Many of the cottages were built by the occupiers, and, as usual, are of a tumble-down character, and contain generally one bedroom only. Rents are high; few decent two-bedroomed cottages being obtainable for less than 5*l.* to 6*l.* Allotments, which are large, and on which corn is usually grown, are common, but are too frequently allowed to fall into the hands of the small tradesmen. Wages are generally 12*s.*, but in a few cases beer is given in part payment. Piecework is, for the most part, confined to the hay and corn harvest.

(A.) Restrictions upon Moral or Physical Grounds upon the Labour of Women and Children.

Women. Extent of Employment.

72. Women are engaged in farm labour in all the counties visited by me, but the nature and extent of their employment varies in almost every parish, and frequently on adjoining farms. The greatest variety of female labour is to be found in Kent; the most regular and constant employment of it in Dorsetshire, while in the dairy counties of the west they do very little out-door work, but are in great request for milking and cheese-making.

73. The increasing disinclination of women to undertake any but light and occasional out-door labour was everywhere apparent. Certain employments, such as reaping, have gradually been almost abandoned, while others have come to be considered by many employers as unsuitable; and although the introduction of machinery has tended to create a greater demand for such labour at certain seasons, the number of women regularly employed appears to be very much on the decrease.* So much does this disinclination exist, that I found it very common for farmers to make it a condition of hiring the husband that the wife shall work at the particular seasons when such exceptional labour is required. Thus in Kent this season is that of tying and picking hops, in Cheshire that of hay-making, in Shropshire and Staffordshire only that of threshing corn, while in Dorsetshire alone, is regular and constant employment sometimes thus exacted from the wives of the labourers.

74. Work in the hay and corn harvest is the only occupation common to all districts; that of weeding corn or attending threshing machines is followed in many parishes; hoeing or "hacking" turnips, beating manure, or stone picking are confined to particular farms. Employments still more local in their character, among the hops and fruit have been alluded to in my description of Kent.

Objections to it.

75. The principal objection to field work for women is the loss of refinement which almost necessarily ensues. "It is most destructive to the female character," says Lord S. Godolphin Osborne. "When-ever any number of females work in company at farm work, especially when in that company there "are also male workers, the conversation is of a character most destructive to all purity of thought." (Evid. 4). "It tends to tarnish the purity of their minds and feelings and to make them 'mannishly' "coarse." (Evid. 6.) Even in Kent, where the light work in the hop gardens is "easy and suited "to females" and "is not inconsistent with health, morality, and general well-being," (Evid. 81,) it is described as "roughening" them (Evid. 84). Mr. Dudgeon, however, whose experience of Scotch female labour entitles him to be heard on this point, considers that this objection is obviated when they live in cottages on the farm, and so are sure to know each other, and not to be mixed with strangers (Evid. 216).

76. But, besides this, field work by married women causes a "loss of evening comfort to the husband" (Evid. 6) at the time, and too often renders the woman altogether unfit for domestic duties. No doubt some hard-working women do manage to attend to their homes in spite of outdoor employment, and some few employers go so far as to maintain that the best kept houses are those of women who work in the fields, but as a general rule my own experience, supported by the greater weight of evidence, leads me to the opposite conclusion. Indeed the principal complaint among the women who were compelled by their husbands' employers to go out to work was, that they were physically unable to attend also to their homes, and that, after allowance is made for wear and tear of clothes, waste of food, and damage done by children left at home, the addition made to their income is very small indeed.

General opinion on subject.

77. While generally admitting the force of these objections, the common opinion of the districts visited is to deprecate any legislative interference with such labour, mainly because it is not shown to be injurious to their physical condition, and the loss of earnings which would ensue would be felt very much by poor families. And certainly it would seem clear that the only ground on which such interference can be justified is, if the work in which they are engaged is unsuitable, or injurious to their health or morals. Of such work Lord S. Godolphin Osborne furnishes a definition. "Anything which tends "to form in women masculine habits is unsuitable, everything which overtaxes female power and is "dangerous to the female constitution is unhealthy." (Evid. 4.) Let us see what descriptions of work (if any) fall within these classes.

78. No doubt many women go to field work at times when it is most dangerous for them to do so. I heard many cases where they continued at work up to the very eve of their confinement, or returned within a very short time after it. As a rule, however, when undertaken at proper times, light field work is not only not injurious to their health, but the exercise and constant employment tends to promote it. Work in the hay, corn, and potato harvests, at hop-tying and hop-picking, in fruit gathering, or in the cultivation of a garden, cannot possibly be objected to as overtaxing the strength

* In Dorsetshire especially, the decrease is remarkable. While the number of male agricultural labourers has decreased only 2½ per cent. between 1851 and 1861, that of female labourers, out-door and in-door, has fallen 34 per cent.

of the female (the hours of work being generally only from 8 to 5); or, considering the time of year at which they are so employed, as being likely to expose them to any great extent to the inclemency of the weather; and indeed hardly any one, including the many medical men with whom I conversed, condemned it on this ground. When, however, it takes place in the winter, as upon the turnip lands, it is open to the latter objection, and many women refuse to go to this who are anxious for summer employment; while some farmers, thinking it unsuitable, have ceased so to employ them.

Work on dairy farms.

79. On the dairy farms the indoor work of women is undoubtedly far more severe. The hours, especially during the cheese-making season, are very long. The contract made with them by the employer often expressly requires work from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m., and during very busy seasons even these hours are exceeded. It should be remembered also that they have almost always to work on Sundays. Physically, however, the condition of these women was represented to me as not inferior to that of others, and on the smaller farms, the wives of the occupiers themselves, undertake voluntarily an exactly similar amount of work.

Work with farm machinery.

80. In my former report, I called your particular attention to the system of employing women with farm machinery, and I entirely adhere to the opinion which I then expressed on the subject, although it must be admitted that the weight of evidence from these counties is not so great as from Lincolnshire. The proper complement of a threshing machine is from 12 to 14, of whom two or sometimes more are women. They generally stand upon the stage of the machine to cut the bands and to hand the sheaf to the man who is employed in feeding the machine; sometimes they are put upon the wheat or straw stack, working with a pitchfork as a man would do. The great objection to be made to all such employment is, that it places them during the whole days' work in close company with men, exposes them to weather in an equal degree, and requires them to work the same number of hours as the men. The result certainly is that the women who constantly work with threshing machines, following them as they go from farm to farm, are generally amongst the most degraded of their class, although in physical condition they are more than half men. And further, it exposes them to especial danger. Accidents, which were very common in Lincolnshire to women employed in this way, are found to occur in all counties where the practice is prevalent, the dress of the woman rendering her especially liable to be caught by the machinery, unless she exercises unusual caution. The women themselves have a strong opinion of its unfitness, and many of them are not allowed by their husbands to go to it.

Work with ladders in Kent.

81. The employment of women on ladders, either to tie hops or to pick fruit, was much objected to in Kent on the ground of its indecent character and of their being exposed to the danger of falling from them. "It is dangerous and inappropriate," says Mr. Whitehead (Evid. 81), but it exists in few parishes, and is very much on the decrease; and before long the good feeling of employers will cause it to be altogether abandoned.

General recommendation.

82. With the exception, therefore, of employment with machinery, my decided conviction is that there is no ground for any interference with the labour of women. That such labour is in itself objectionable, and that it would be much better for themselves and their families if they would abstain from any but the lightest summer work, may be admitted; but there is no injury to health or morals of so serious a character, or so directly traceable to their employment, as to justify taking away from them a means of adding to the income of the family. "Women must earn and when and how they are to do it is a "subject most difficult if not inexpedient to define by law." (Evid. 4.)

Children's labour—its value.

83. The average value of the labour of a family cannot be estimated, even for a limited district. In some cases its effect is mainly to increase the value of the piece-work done by the husband, as in the case of "poling" the hops, where the man fixes the poles in the ground; but even a young child can give efficient assistance by placing them in a convenient situation for him. It may be said generally, that all such labour must necessarily be an advantage to the family, unless it in any way displaces adult male labour. In the case of women and girls this does not appear to result in any of the counties visited by me; boys, however, (especially in Dorsetshire) are sometimes put to work which in other places is assigned only to men; and restrictions upon such labour would, therefore, be less felt by the poor than might at first be supposed.

Its nature.

84. The labour of children is of two sorts; (1) where they are hired directly by the occupier of the farm, and (2) where they are employed by their parents on gardens or allotments, in assisting in gleaning or other family work, in collecting fuel or wool, and in gathering blackberries or mushrooms in the lanes. The latter class of employment is found in all districts, and is objectionable only as interfering with school attendance; but it will be understood that the following remarks apply only to the children hired directly by the farmers.

85. The amount of labour done by children, and the ages at which they are employed, formed a very important element in my inquiry; but the main difficulty in obtaining any reliable statistics on these points arose from the fact that the employers themselves rarely know the ages of the children working upon their farms. What is wanted by them is physical ability to do the work, and the age of the child, and his state of education, are matters of comparative indifference.

Employment of young girls.

86. Young girls are not much employed in these counties. In the hop districts and market gardens of Kent, a few go to field work, but rarely before 12 years of age. In the eastern part of the same county, and on some farms in Dorset and Salop, I found that when boys were deficient, they were occasionally sent out to tent birds, and for similar light work. In Dorset, girls (though rarely below the age already mentioned) do go to the same sorts of out-door work as the adult women, of which the mode of hiring whole families often adopted is the main cause. But wherever any domestic employment exists for them, such as glove-making in the vale of Blackmoor, they are always found to prefer it to field-work.

87. Such labour, wherever it exists, meets with much condemnation. "It is ruination to young "girls," says the chairman of a board of guardians in Kent. (Evid. 106.) "No greater evil," says Lord S. Godolphin Osborne, "social or physical, affects the agricultural population than the employment "of young girls; they are the destined mothers of another generation, and on their healthy condition "as wives will much depend the health and strength of the parents of both sexes of that generation."

G. (Evid. 4.) And he goes on to recommend that the age of womanhood fixed by the poor law (15) should be adopted as the limit of age before which girls should be forbidden to work.

88. In this opinion I am unable to agree. It must at once be admitted that such employment does lead to a certain loss of refinement, if they work in strange company, and separate from their mothers: in many cases, however, a girl is employed with her father or mother, or with some respectable neighbour, and provided that this is only in summer time, I can see no strong objection to such employment, except the suspension of education which must necessarily ensue. At the same time it would be difficult to discriminate between different sorts of employment, and, while permitting some, to stigmatize others as objectionable. The only true distinction which appears to me to have been made in this respect is between winter and summer work, and a regulation prohibiting work to such girls in the winter months would in my opinion meet most of the objections which have been raised to their employment.

89. It should not be forgotten that in exceptional cases the value of such labour to farmers is very great. I have before alluded to the potato districts, in which restrictions upon it would involve a diminution of the area under that crop, and the same thing may be said of the cultivation of peas, flax, and hops, all of which require an enormous number of hands during certain parts of the summer, at which time of the year out-door employment is actually beneficial to their health. To interfere with these by legislation would not only therefore be a disadvantage to the farmer, but would materially affect the income of poor families. Where a girl is sent to regular daily work, the balance of profit, after deduction is made for the loss involved in other ways, appears to be very small; but it is otherwise as regards this occasional employment at busy seasons. In hop-picking, for instance, girls of 12 can often earn 2*s.* a day, and the amount obtained even by infants is an appreciable addition.

Employment of boys.

90. Boys are usually put to "bird-keeping," or other light work upon a farm, as early as 7 or 8 years of age. At harvest they often lead the first horse in a team, but are rarely put to regular work with horses until they are 10 or 11, or, in the west of England, till a later age. To this Dorsetshire is an exception, boys being occasionally put to such work as early as 6, and in many cases beginning continuous employment with sheep or horses before they are 8. It is due to the farmers to say that this is often done at the earnest request of a constant labourer.

91. Where they are put only to light work (in which I include all descriptions at present done by them with the exception of work with horses), where the hours are not too long, nor the employment continuous throughout the year, hardly anyone appears to think that physical injury results to them. On the contrary, employment in the open air is decidedly productive of health, and the earnings thus obtained often lead to the parents being able to provide them better food. It conduces to habits of industry and obedience, and where not continuous assists in providing for the school fees. The case of boys is moreover in another important respect distinct from that of girls, in that by field work the boy is actually acquiring that practical knowledge which will make him a useful agricultural labourer, should he continue in that sphere of life. It is a mistake to suppose that agricultural labour is entirely unskilled; the best ploughmen are said to be "carter-bred" (Evid. 97), that is, the sons of carters brought up amongst horses, and accustomed to their habits from their earliest years.[1]

92. Another consideration which cannot fail to have weight is the fact that much of the labour done by them is on some soils essential to good farming on the modern system, and if they are to be withdrawn, it must either be neglected altogether, or else done by women and grown-up girls, an alternative which few persons will be disposed to prefer. It will on the whole "require a strong case "to justify interference." (Evid. 4.)

Boys with guns.

93. The only description of light work to which much objection was taken was the permitting very young boys to be in possession of guns for the purpose of frightening birds from corn (Evid. 108). Though accidents are said to be rare (Evid. 107), such an employment must be admitted to be likely to lead to them, and it is satisfactory to find the system limited to a very few parishes in Kent.

Employment with horses.

94. But employment with horses, when regular throughout the year, appears to me to be the reverse of "light." The hours are very long, (often from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.), it gives little leisure to a boy, and requires him to walk every day at least 10 or 12 miles over ploughed ground. In most counties no farmer would think of putting a boy to such work, unless very exceptionally strong, before 10 or 11 years of age, yet in Dorsetshire many boys, as before-mentioned, begin at 7 or 8. One very large employer of such boys near Wimborne, who begged that his name might not be made public, considered all fit to go with horses at 6, and to plough at 8 or 9 years of age. In that county, indeed, the per-centage of boy labour is excessive, and it seems probable that to this cause, next to insufficiency of food, is partly traceable the stunted condition and early decrepitude of the adult population.

95. In my former report I called your attention to the Act 3 Geo. 4. c. 126. s. 131, by which boys under 13 are forbidden to drive a cart along a turnpike road. In all these counties, but especially in Dorset, this provision is being openly evaded every day, without any attempt being made to enforce it.

96. The prohibition contained in that Act was probably based on the ground of danger, either to the boys themselves or to the public using the high road. This anticipation is not borne out by the evidence I have obtained; hardly any accidents, and those to men as often as to boys, are stated to arise from it. But the objections to early employment with horses are very strong. Dr. Aldridge, of Dorchester, attributes to it "the prevention of proper muscular development, and very often the production of "tuberculous diseases" (Evid. 5). "The sameness and overhardness of toil mars the young and "yielding bones and muscles" (Evid. 6). "It is seen in their after life in a way to me most clear; "there is a want of physical energy, of what I may call labour-pluck, a deadening of mind and body "force" (Evid. 4). "A boy of this sort (7 or 8 years old) gets up with his father at 4 or 5, has to help "to prepare and feed the horses, walks from 6 till 2, except a little halt for meals, then comes to "dinner, and returns to feed the horses. I see the effect of this early work in making the boys bow-"legged" (Evid. 23).

General recommendation.

97. On physical grounds alone, therefore, there appears to be no reason for interfering with the ordinary light labour to which boys are now put at occasional seasons, but rather some grounds for encouraging it. But on the same grounds I believe that the opinion even of farmers in most counties would agree

in condemning continuous work with horses at an early age, and in fixing 11 or 12 as the very earliest time at which it ought reasonably to be undertaken. The only means suggested of securing this object, without interfering with occasional employment, would be some requirement of school attendance up to that age, on which subject I shall have more to say presently. G.

98. The hours of labour of women and children in the fields call for no legislative interference. Except in the case of the dairy farms, and during the busy times of harvest, women usually work from 8 a.m. (or sometimes 7 a.m.) till 5 p.m. Boys work the same hours as the men, but their work is generally well adapted to their size and strength. At bird minding they sometimes begin earlier, but it is not an active employment, and the only objections to it are the exposure which it involves, and the want of any stimulus to mental exertion. In all cases a certain interval is recognized for dinner, and there is commonly no objection to an occasional cessation of labour at other times of the day. Hours of labour.

99. It may be a question whether some check ought not to be imposed on Sunday labour. On dairy farms, where it is described as an especial evil, it must probably be left to the good feeling of employers to effect. At bird minding, and when employed with horses, boys are required to work on Sundays as on other days. In the latter case, a re-adjustment of the hours for "baiting" horses could easily be made so as to give boys an opportunity of attending school and church; but, whether by the same boy or not, rooks must be kept off the corn throughout Sunday as on other days. In one instance in Kent, I found the father doing the work for his son on that day during the hours of Sunday school. It has been suggested that work on alternate Sundays only should be permitted, but it is doubtful how far such a restriction could be enforced in the case of boys attending no such school when not employed. Sunday labour.

100. In these districts women and children are rarely taken long distances to work, the Irish gangs out of the large towns of Cheshire and Shropshire constituting almost the only exception. In other cases the work is at no such unreasonable distance as to call for any special notice. Distance to work.

(B.) Education.

101. The general result of the remarks which I have already made on the educational condition of each county comprised within this report may be thus expressed:— Result of previous remarks on education.

In the west (in the counties of Chester, Salop, and Stafford), the school accommodation is insufficient, but especially in respect of infant schools in outlying districts, and the attendance of children, though in general not much affected by field work, falls considerably below the average. Night schools reach only a very small proportion of the population.

In the south, on the contrary, (as represented by Dorsetshire and Kent), schools are for the most part in existence within reasonable reach of the mass of the population, and in the latter county are on the average of a high order. Field work, however, has in both counties very considerable effect in causing the early withdrawal and constant absence of children from school. Night schools are in consequence more common. The eastern counties, reported upon by me in 1868 (Lincoln, Nottingham, and Leicester), and Rutland, fall also within this class, although the deficiency of schools is greater.

102. On this state of facts I found two general propositions.

A. *The great and crying want* of all these districts *is not additional school accommodation.* In every county, if private schools be included, it is at present in excess of the demand; nor does this statement take into consideration the obvious fact that, if by any additional inducements or persuasion regularity of school attendance can be secured, no difficulty will be found in providing adequate accommodation, "I "feel certain," says the Rev. A. T. Bonner, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, "that if "managers generally were sure of due attendance, which implies a large amount of income, both in "school pence and grant, complaints and inability to provide requisite funds for a certi- "ficated teacher would cease at once; in other words, I believe compulsory attendance would render "compulsory rating needless. It is irregularity in attendance that is the sore point of our schools."* Nothing is more disheartening than irregular or partial attendance; only make it certain that all who are of the proper age shall attend, and the difficulty of school accommodation will be almost entirely surmounted. (A.) School accommodation not insufficient.

103. No doubt the teaching in many of these schools is unsatisfactory. In Shropshire especially there is a large tract of country entirely without any good school. It is, however, a fact which needs to be confronted, that good schools do not always produce good attendance. It is said with truth that they succeed in their work, not by means of, but rather in spite of, the regular methods of discipline and instruction adopted in them. Wherever children's labour is in much demand, the restrictions of a good school cause many boys to be kept away altogether and sent to a dame's school, or lead to their early withdrawal. This is partly caused by the earlier age at which, under an improved system of teaching, children attain the amount of knowledge which is considered sufficient by their parents; but mainly by the struggle for existence among the poor, which makes them wish to be free from any restrictions likely in any possible case to interfere with earning (Evid. 91).

104. However this may be, it is clear that the money now expended upon the better class of schools in an agricultural district directly benefits the very poor to a small extent only; indirectly, of course, by putting before them a higher standard, and bringing more practically before the parents the advantages which accrue to a child from a better education, the effect of such schools is enormous; but since at present the children of labourers are leaving school at 10, and often 9, or even 8 years of age, the difference to them of a good or a bad school is little felt; and unless some provision is made to ensure that the especial class who most need assistance in educating their children shall avail themselves of them, grants of public money to such schools are to a great extent wasted.

105. Distance from school is no great obstacle to attendance in the case of the older children in any of these districts. The evidence, on the contrary, shows that the most distant scholars are often the most regular and punctual (Evid. 186). But in the case of infants it is still felt (especially in the west of England), to be a very serious difficulty. The great necessity of such agricultural districts is Infant school.

* General Report on Salop, Stafford, &c., 1867, p. 130.

G. the multiplication of infant schools. Thus the Rev. R. K. Haslehurst, of West Felton (Salop), asks—

"What can be done for the education of infants in a parish such as this, which though containing only 1,067 inhabitants, is at least five miles long? If I am to have *only one* infant school, I don't know where to put it; in fact, I can literally do nothing with only one; I want *at least three*. I think the Education Board would do well to act more liberally for the encouragement of infant schools" (Evid. 170).

"Children ought to be sent very much earlier than they are" (Evid. 110). "They ought to read "at 7 years old, and to read well by 9." This point is strongly insisted on by many witnesses.

Central schools. 106. Another plan often dwelt upon as the best means of bringing a good school within reach of small villages is the creation of "combination" or central schools, that is, where groups of contiguous villages having only infant schools combine to support in the most central a good school for the older children of all. In two instances I have met with such attempts, originated by the support of the chief landowner. The first, at Ollerton (Notts.), is threatened with failure in this way,—one of the subsidiary parishes, containing a population of more than 1,000, has opened a good school for itself, the result being that the central schoc has lost a great part of the support on which it relied for its maintenance in efficiency. Exactly a similar fate seems likely to befall the other attempt at Sheldwich in Kent; and in both these cases the landowners are put in a difficult position with regard to the central school which they have established. Without some central authority to regulate the relation between the school managers of the different parishes, their more general establishment can hardly be hoped for.

(B.) Defects in attendance. 107. B. On the other hand, *the great need* of all these districts *is a check on the early withdrawal and irregular attendance of children*, and some security that all shall attend a school.

108. Early withdrawal will be seen from what I have already said, to be in the case of boys, the great complaint. In Kent the average age is 10 (or in dame's schools 9). In Dorset it falls to 8 or 9. In Cheshire and Staffordshire they leave between 10 and 11, and in Shropshire perhaps rather younger. It will be observed, however, that this is the *average* age, and implies many boys being taken away a year or two sooner. In Shropshire especially and in the parts of Dorset where gloving is very common, the same complaint of early withdrawal extends to girls.*

109. Even before these ages irregularity of attendance, sometimes during many months of the year, is represented as a great hindrance to education. At Knockholt (Kent) "during seven months in the "year the attendance is very fluctuating. There is no real effort made to send the children." (Evid. 128.) At Cranbrook from October to February inclusive, we have nearly 12 months' work to do in school, as the constant "breaks in attendance do away with the work done at other times." (Evid. 98.) The girls are almost as irregular as the boys, particularly in these districts where the mothers go a good deal to work, and they are kept at home to mind the baby, or to look after the house.

110. Absolute non-attendance is far less complained of. It is curious that this appears to be more uncommon in those counties where field labour makes the greatest demands upon young children. In Cheshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire, where there is not generally very much employment for them, a far greater number are said never to attend school. There is in this respect a great distinction to be drawn between small country parishes and those containing a population exceeding 700 or 800. In the former, chiefly because they are more thoroughly under the eye of the clergyman, the complaint that families never send their children is comparatively rare.

Causes of non-attendance. (a.) Neglect of parents. 111. The main cause of the absence and irregularity of the children is undoubtedly the ignorance and neglect of parents. Even where they will send their children a little, they have not yet begun to appreciate the difficulty of learning. "I sent her a whole year," one woman said, "and she can't read," and so she thought schooling useless. (Evid. 110.) The most trifling excuses are assigned; "wanted at home" often means little more than that the children being employed on Monday the parents have not thought it worth while to pay for the rest of the week's schooling. (Evid. 84.)

112. In some few parts of my district this indifference on the part of the parents has been represented to be on the increase; but the evidence more often points to the growth of a better state of feeling in this respect. The parents are beginning to see more and more (and I was especially struck with this in Dorset) the practical advantage which a boy gains by starting in life with a better education, and they are in consequence attaching a higher value to its attainment. In this class of life, however, the power of control which parents have over their children practically ceases at a very early age. The wilfulness and caprice of children, so often complained of by school managers, means really that when they have begun to earn, they are rapidly emancipated from domestic restraints. "It is that sort of independence which a boy soon assumes after he has entered the labour "field." (Evid. 4.)

(b.) Employment. 113. Next in importance in keeping boys away from school is early employment. I have already described the two sorts of labour done by children as that hired directly by the farmer, and that employed by the parents. The latter sort of work is by far the most injurious to regularity of school attendance, though it is not responsible for early withdrawal. Here is a list of employments in one Kentish village, "strawberry and gooseberry picking, hop-tying, hay-making, gleaning, hop-pick-"ing, blackberry picking, and acorn collecting" (Evid. 108); for all of which the parents kept their young children at home. In another it is said, "besides employment by farmers there are other things "which keep children far more away from school, such as getting cowslips, blackberries, and acorns." (Evid. 201.) "Many of the boys are taken away from the school for weeks at a time to attend to the "cultivation of the allotments, and this makes it very difficult to maintain anything like uniform "progress." (Evid. 13.)

* There is reason to think that children are withdrawn from school younger in some counties than they used to be. Mr. A. Austin in his report on the employment of women and children in agriculture in 1843 says of a district which includes Dorset, "the average lowest age at which children were finally taken from school to work in the fields is 10 years and 23 weeks, and the "average highest age 12 years and 1 week" [p. 45]. Of the western counties, however, (including Dorset), the Rev. J. Fraser, in his Report to the Education Commission, 1861, says that he is "persuaded that children on the average stay longer at school" (p. 58); and in the report of 1843 Mr. Vaughan says of Kent, that work withdraws "nearly all at the age of 10 or 11, and some "much earlier." My own opinion certainly is that they are leaving school younger than formerly.

114. Direct employment by farmers, or the prospect of getting it, is however, the main cause of early withdrawal. Many are kept away only because the parents are expecting to procure work for them (Evid. 76), or because "they ought to be earning something." But it is the fact of early employment by some farmers which gives encouragement to such expectations. G.

115. Poverty is not often *directly* the cause of non-attendance. Even among the largest and poorest families those who are anxious to send their children to school before the age when they are of any value as bread-winners, always manage to afford it. It is only when the opportunity offers of adding a few pence to their income that the state of their resources naturally prevents their being able to resist the temptation. Bad cottages are far more frequently to blame. Almost everywhere it is the family living in the worst cottage and in the most degraded state that is especially careless or irregular in this respect. (c.) Poverty.

116. The last hindrance to education to which I shall call your attention is the system of yearly hiring, especially where (as near Dorchester) whole families are engaged. "By this system the children in "the school change every year, and that generally between two examinations." (Evid. 26.) "We "get a totally new set of children every year; our maxim is that a boy loses six months by change of "school." (Evid 27.) The families of the yearly labourers are generally "growing up without "control, as they never stop long enough in a place to come under the same moral influence as the "resident poor." (Evid. 31.) (d.) Yearly hiring.

117. In framing remedial measures for this state of things, the first and principal object would appear to be to interest employers in the work of education. Many instances of harmonious action might be quoted where a farmer has made a sacrifice to enable a particular child to continue under instruction, or the clergyman is not such a rigid adherent to fixed rules as to be unwilling to recognise the occasionally urgent demands of the farm; but the tendency of the present system is too often to cause the two forces to pull in opposite directions. The majority of farmers are, however, no longer altogether hostile to education, and very few at any rate are willing to avow it openly. The feeling of the more educated employers is well expressed by one of them, "Enlighten a labourer reasonably, but "don't let it be only book-learning. If you prevent his being employed under a certain age, you hinder "his being taught to get his living. A boy that is going to be a clerk is learning how to live when "at school but *one that is to be a farm labourer* is learning what is a luxury to him." (Evid. 87.) These words contain the whole secret of their opposition. Their fear, and a well-grounded one, is that labour will become scarce, and that educated men will be drawn away to less laborious and better paid employment. The farmer's object is to educate the boy so as to keep him as a farm labourer, while that of school managers on the other hand is to give a boy such a foundation of simple knowledge as to enable him, if otherwise capable, to improve himself and to rise to a higher station in life. These distinct and opposite aims it is impossible to reconcile, and this appears to me a conclusive reason why it would be detrimental to the progress of education to throw the management of country schools into the hands of the ratepayers. Two points must, however, be conceded to employers; first, the necessity of boy labour at certain times of the year in some districts, and secondly, the advantages which accrue to a boy physically and morally, from occasional employment. But if it is attempted by legislation to take away boy labour altogether, or to put such restrictions upon it as practically to prevent its employment, school managers must be prepared not only not to expect the co-operation of employers, but to contend with their open hostility. Considerations in framing a remedy.

118. It is not for this reason only that severe restrictions are to be deprecated, but also because the absolute loss of the earnings of the children cannot be endured by families without an amount of misery which can hardly be estimated. Take a case known to myself. A.B. farm labourer, has six children and 10*s.* a week in wages. His eldest son, between 11 and 12, is earning 3*s.* Deducting rent (1*s.* 6*d.*) there remains less than 2½*d.* a day per head for food and clothing, or *if the son's earnings be deducted*, less than 2*d.* And I must do employers the justice to state that on all occasions they pressed this point upon my attention as of paramount importance.

119. Bearing in mind these two considerations, I shall make a few observations upon the principal suggestions for the improvement of education in country districts which are to be found in the evidence appended; they are,— Remedies suggested.

(I.) The general establishment of night schools.
(II.) Prohibition of all employment before a certain age.
(III.) Prohibition of all employment until an elementary education has been attained.
(IV.) The requirement of some school attendance as a condition of employment.

I. The General Establishment of Night Schools.

120. This involves in the first place a great increase in their number; not more than one-fourth of the parishes (and if town populations were excluded a still smaller proportion) maintain a night-school, and yet there are comparatively few, except under very unfavourable circumstances, where the experiment has not been tried and failed. Dorset is an exception, there being double the number of night-schools in that county, and a far larger proportion of scholars.

121. The great difficulty is that in country parishes they have to serve the two-fold object (1) of giving ignorant adults a knowledge of their alphabet and the mere rudimennts of reading and writing; (2) of being a supplement to the day school, so that the education there begun may be carried higher and wider; these two classes requiring a totally different mode of instruction, and it being practically impossible, both on this ground and from a respect for the feelings of men grown up in ignorance, to teach them together.

122. With respect to the former class night-schools are making but little progress. To help such scholars requires a large number of additional teachers, and the closest personal supervision. "It is "requisite that the teacher or teachers should take them singly" (Evid. 129). For trained schoolmasters this is disheartening work, and they are generally very reluctant to undertake it. "We thought "that teaching monosyllables to those who had neglected our good schools occupied more time than "could be consistently given to such work" (Evid. 195). The men too, who have been persuaded by

G. the clergyman, or some friend, to come, find it more difficult to learn than they expected, and after a fortnight's trial drop away.

123. The attendance of the second class is found to vary considerably in different counties. Some employers are unwilling that their lads should be off their premises at all, and make no attempt to arrange their work in such a way as to render it possible for them to attend. (Evid. 84.) In other districts the distance of the school is an insuperable difficulty, which is likely to increase under the modern system of isolating farms and the cottages attached to them.

124. It is found in fact that the greater part of the children who do attend a night school after leaving the day school are those who least need it. They are the boys who have made the most satisfactory progress, and who are the most anxious to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded for retaining their knowledge, while those who have been irregular and feel themselves after a year or two of absence to be deficient in acquirements, are ashamed to exhibit their ignorance by attending a night school. Thus at Eastchurch (Kent) "the only evening scholars materially benefited are those who "have been pretty well taught previously." (Evid. 129.) At Swanage (Dorset) again, "15 years "experience in night school teaching shows that those who leave the day school at 9 or 10 with very "imperfect education seldom come to the night school as a supplement." (Evid. 42.) And at West Felton (Salop) "those who most value the evening school are generally those who (comparatively "speaking) least want it." (Evid. 195.)

125. This result is also partly produced by the interval of time which is generally suffered to elapse between leaving the day, and beginning to attend the evening school. This gap is often an intentional one on the part of school managers, in order to prevent the latter from having the effect of causing children to be sooner withdrawn from the day schools, a view which is adopted by the Committee of Council on Education in recognizing no children at a night school before 12 years of age. A strong feeling was nevertheless expressed at the meeting of the West Kent school teachers that even with this precaution they tended to injure the day school (Evid. 76.), and the effect of leaving this interval, during which all education is suspended, is universally complained of. "I have been astonished to "find in an evening school young men who rose to the second class of a day school before leaving to "go to work, and in a few years have become ignorant of even the letters of the alphabet." "The "greater part of them have forgotten how to read, except with considerable effort, and it is hopeless to "expect them to explain words" (Evid. 94.) "On comparing young men at our evening school with "each other, it is often difficult to see any difference in attainments between those who have attended a "day school and those who have not." (Evid. 24.)

126. A further difficulty is the impossibility in small villages of obtaining good or sufficient teachers, and of providing the necessary funds. A master, who has worked conscientiously during the day, is too much exhausted, and it is hardly fair to expect him to teach. This is the cause generally assigned in parishes where the attempt has been abandoned,* and although this might be surmounted by a more liberal grant, the other reasons given appear to me conclusively to show that night schools cannot be reckoned upon as a sufficient means of bringing the education in rural districts into a satisfactory condition.

II.—Prohibition of all Employments before a Fixed Age.

127. The age usually named is 10, but sometimes even 12 or 13. Occasionally, as in Lincolnshire, it is thought by some farmers that any higher limit than 9 would be a hardship to them. On grounds of health, as has been already pointed out, the evidence shows no such check to be necessary, and it may therefore be asked why such children should be kept from earning anything to a later age than those employed in the unhealthy indoor work of factories. Such a restriction would, moreover, afford no guarantee whatever of attendance at school, but from narrowing the resources of the family would make the school payments more difficult to afford, and danger would be incurred of leaving large numbers of children to run about the streets instead of learning how to earn their bread.

III.—Prohibition of all Employment until an Elementary Education has been attained.

128. This scheme would offer encouragement to every attempt at self-improvement, whether at school or at home, and some inducement to self-sacrifice in view of a prospective benefit. Wherever children's labour is in demand, it would interest all employers in the work of education, and above all it would afford a means of enacting a uniform law for the regulation of every description of juvenile employment. On the other hand, it would throw the whole burden upon the parents, who under the present system obtain, by means of the occasional employment of their children, money to pay for their education during the rest of the year. It would subject the children to no regular system of discipline, and would not meet what is at present the chief complaint. The standard to be fixed must clearly be one which there is reasonable hope of boys being able to pass at 11 or 12 years of age. But quick, clever boys will attain this amount of information at 10 or even 9 years, and will leave school altogether with a sort of government certificate that they have received a *sufficient* education. To my mind the weight of evidence points unanswerably to the necessity of keeping children a few years longer than at present under the influence of school training. The majority of labourers' children at school are now receiving instruction "with minds more capable of acquiring than of retaining it." Education, it has often been said, does not consist only of information; what a man *is*, rather than what he *knows*, will have the greatest influence on his after life; for it is not only forgetfulness that is complained of, but a boy that is entirely emancipated from control before he is fit to govern himself. "They are boys," says Lord S.

* A strong opinion was often expressed that one great want is the multiplication of evening schools; one witness says, "assistance to multiply night schools rather than to make them very good would be most valuable; several small evening schools "even tho' taught by inferior teachers, would be far more useful in a large parish than one central one held by a certificated master. "By such rough means a more ignorant class would be effectually reached than under the present system." (Evid. 84.) A valuable hint was thrown out by the Rev. H. W. Dearden, of Maidstone, who suggests that the large number of educated clerks in such a town should be utilized in surrounding villages; many would gladly teach in a night school, and in a very efficient manner, the difficulty is to provide for their remuneration, unless Government will recognize them as teachers.

Godolphin Osborne, "before they have ceased to be mere children, act and speak as men before they "have ceased to be boys." (Evid. 4.) G.

IV.—The Requirement of some School Attendance as a Condition of Employment.

Instances of "half-time" schemes.

129. Almost all the principal places in which half-time schemes for children employed in agriculture have been attempted being within the district assigned to me, I propose to give a short sketch of the results attained.

130. One of the earliest attempts of this description was the Teddesley Farm school (Staffordshire), established by the late Lord Hatherton. The class numbered from 26 to 30 boys between 11 and 15 years of age. They received school instruction from 6 to 8 o'clock every morning in a spare room in the farm yard. "The boys' increased steadiness and diligence in the field more than compensated for "the curtailment of their hours of labour." (Evid. 222.) Some difficulty was found, however, by Lord Hatherton in dispensing with the boys' services just at the hour when they were most wanted on the farm. This may have been the reason for the abandonment of the scheme.

131. The experiment of Mr. Paget, late M.P. for Nottingham, at Ruddington (Notts.), was described in my previous report.* In November 1854 he took eight boys for employment on his farm, each boy spending half his day at work and half at school, but he found an inconvenience in this arrangement. When the boys' clothes were wet and dirty from their morning's work, they were unfit for school; he therefore changed his method, and the boys now work on alternate days. They are between the ages of 9 and 14. During harvest and at other busy times the system is broken through, and all the boys are required to work, by which means the number of days of school attendance of each boy during the year is reduced to 91.

132. At Rostherne (Cheshire) Lord Egerton of Tatton "grieved at the early age at which boys were "taken from school," employed upon his farm eight boys, paying them full wages on condition that they went to school one half the day, and to work the other, the four who are employed in the mornings one week working in the afternoons the next. They are put to every sort of farm labour, under the supervision of an experienced workman. They are all between the ages of 12 and 15. (Evid. 152.)

133. A similar plan has been adopted at Oulton (Cheshire) by Sir P. De M. G. Egerton, Bart., M.P., who takes eight boys for employment on his farm and garden during half days at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. They are divided into two gangs, one goes to school in the morning and to work after dinner, the other goes to work in the morning and to school in the evening. A great deal seems to depend on the willingness of the bailiff to enter heartily into the scheme. (Evid. 148.)

134. At Acton (Cheshire) the industrial school, said to have been most successful, is now discontinued. No less than 60 boys between 10 and 15 were more or less employed for the half of each day in agricultural labour. But in this district the demand for young boys on the farms is very small, and this, combined with the unwillingness of the present managers of the schools to maintain it, probably led to its discontinuance.† Even in manufacturing districts, whenever the demand for boy labour is slack, the employers begin by getting rid of the children under educational restrictions.

135. Similar attempts have been made in several industrial and reformatory schools, and with uniform success. At the excellent district school of Quatt (Shropshire) all the boys over 9 are required to assist in the work necessary to cultivate a farm of 10 acres arable and two pasture under the superintendence of a special teacher. School hours are from 9 to 12, before and after which they work upon the farm, or take their turn in looking after the stable and the cows. Even before the age of 9 they are occasionally put to light work. The profit earned by this means towards the cost of the maintenance of the 30 boys amounted last year to 70*l.* (Evid. 221.) Other places where this sort of industrial training is adopted are the reformatory schools at Whitchurch in Dorsetshire, and Bradwall in Cheshire. (Evid. 154.)

136. The education given is in all these cases represented to be satisfactory. At Ellesmere they progressed "nearly, if not quite as well as though they had no loss of school time." "Their "education is far better on an average," it is said of Ruddington, "than that of boys that have "attended school without work to 12 years. The half-timers take as good a position in our school "as those who come whole time." The effect on the school is not, however, limited to the boys themselves. "Remaining to a later age, their attainments are greater, and they give a higher tone "to the school." At Rostherne it was thought to be "an encouragement to good attendance and "an incentive to industry." "From continuing under supervision they become more humanized, and "better mannered, and certainly would present a strong contrast to the clownish dolts of their own "age who present themselves for hiring each Christmas time."

137. The best proof of the excellence of the education is that it is very rare for a boy educated under most of these systems to continue an agricultural labourer in after life. Every one of the boys employed during the 15 years of Mr. Paget's experience has ceased to be so. In the same way, out of 25 boys who have been through Lord Egerton's training between 1863–8, five only are now working upon a farm (Evid. 153). From the school at Quatt "very few are taken away by farmers and put "to agricultural work, but the demand for them for other sorts of service and for various trades is "very great." (Evid. 221.) The lessons which are taught by this appear to be that a mixed system of school and work, regular or irregular, can produce excellent educational results, but that the age to which the system of training has been carried is unnecessarily high for the mass of the agricultural population.

138. It should be borne in mind that every one of these attempts presupposes a good elementary education before the commencement of labour. "I took none," says Lord Hatherton, "who were not "able to read and write, say the church catechism, and do a little mental arithmetic." In the same

* 1st Report C. 157.

† The same reason probably led to the discontinuance of several similar attempts in this neighbourhood, the foundation of which was mainly due to the Rev. J. P. Norris, Her Majesty's Inspector of schools, who was anxious that the system should have a fair trial. Boys were educated on the half-time system at Middle (Evid. 183) Tarporley, and Ellesmere.

G. way a fair knowledge of reading is the condition of entering upon Mr. Paget's farm; and in fact these schemes have generally been worked so as to afford a means of continuing education to boys who have already done well at school and who would otherwise be withdrawn from it. "They are selected "from those boys who are steadiest, and most forward in school work." (Rostherne, Evid. 153.)

139. Parents have been found to give their approval to these schemes, even where they have had to forego half the earnings of their sons. It will be observed, however, that in most of these instances the boys are paid full wages for half a day's work; and it may be said generally that, with the exception of the system of Mr. Paget, who has tried to carry it out as a practical farmer,* all these attempts have been supported artificially, and at considerable expense, by gentlemen keenly interested in the subject. It is therefore no wonder that farmers have been found unwilling to imitate the example set before them, even in a modified form. One employer at Ruddington has hired two boys in this way, but no other similar case was brought to my notice.

140. It is probably for the same reason that in Mr. Paget's case alone the system is so worked as to meet the difficulty of the farmer requiring an increased amount of labour at certain seasons of the year. In all the other instances no modification of the system is permitted even at busy times, for the simple reason that the main object has not been to work them as they would be worked upon a farm, and with the same economy. It may therefore be said that the success of these attempts affords no proof, except in Mr. Paget's case, that any such plan could be adapted to the general wants of farmers, but the fact that none of them have adopted it tells rather in an opposite direction. Even Mr. Paget, in spite of his success, does not consider the principle carried out by him to be capable of universal application to farm work, but proposes the substitution of a far more irregular system.

Experience and general opinion against a rigid system of "half time."

141. This inference, which I have drawn from experience, is entirely in accord with the opinion of all the districts visited by me; the few persons who recommended the adoption of a regular system of half time, that is, a requirement of school attendance during part of every day or week, hardly venturing to describe it as really practicable. The possible distance of the school from work, the want of clothes, and the weariness which necessarily ensues from field labour, appeared to me fatal objections to the half-day system, even if it were not also most inconvenient to employers. Attendance on alternate days, or during part of every week, would be no less difficult to enforce, owing to the requirements of the weather and of the seasons, the fluctuations of the supply of labour in particular villages, and the special needs of various modes of cultivation.† Most employers said at once that they would employ no boys under such severe restrictions as to school attendance. The loss to the boys themselves of out-door training, and of income to the families, would be ill compensated for by the improvement in their education.

Plan suggested.

142. While rejecting all rigid half-time schemes as impracticable, the majority of employers are ready to admit that, if not carried on to too late an age, a requirement of school attendance during a certain part of every year, as a condition of employment, would be very little hardship to them. The East Kent Chamber of Agriculture deprecated all compulsion, but at the same time resolved that "some means should be taken to secure the attendance of children at school *during part of every year* "*up to* 12 *years of age*." (Evid. 78.) "The hours of employment of all children," said the Staffordshire Chamber in 1867, "between the ages of 8 and 13 should be so regulated as to afford an opportunity "for attendance at school during a certain portion of that time." (Evid. 199 a.)

143. In the western counties the feeling of employers was almost unanimous. In many cases they were ready to agree to children being entirely excluded from field labour up to 12 years of age, although they represented that the loss of earnings would be seriously felt by poor families. In Kent, if 12 be the limit up to which restrictions are to be imposed, the weight of evidence is almost as strong that, without any serious inconvenience, children could be spared to attend school during at least half the year. (Evid. 86, 92, 93, 97, 118, 122, 123, 126.) In some cases they are said to be free during a longer period. (Evid. 117). In Dorset, as might be expected from the early age of commencing work, the opinion of employers was generally against any restrictions after 10. But if a rule were to be laid down, which appears to me to be required upon physical, no less than educational, grounds, that regular and continuous employment with horses is not to be entered upon until at least 12 years of age, the demands of occasional work upon a farm are not so great even in that county as to render such a requirement of school attendance a real hardship to employers.

144. The great advantage of such a system would be that it would give farmers a direct interest in education. The greater the demand for boy labour, the more effective would be the stimulus to employers to see for themselves that the attendance at school, before which employment is forbidden, is completed. It is for this reason that I have before so strongly urged the necessity of promoting, rather than of discouraging, the occasional employment of young boys. It affords a means of securing a minimum of schooling, which no other plan short of compulsion could achieve.

145. Such a modified system of half-time has found many advocates among school managers. The feeling in favour of some pressure, direct or indirect, is very much on the increase. The meeting of West Kent school-teachers was unanimous upon this point. (Evid. 76.) "All our teaching," says the Rev. G. R. Moncrieff, "is powerless for effective good so long as nothing is done to compel the attend- "ance of children up to a reasonable age" (Evid. 79), and he goes on to argue in favour of a scheme for rendering steady attendance at school in winter the condition of employment in summer. It is however, commonly objected that a requirement of school attendance during so many days or hours

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* "I also wish to say emphatically," writes Mr. Paget, "that the system costs me nothing; that on the other hand I believe I gain by it as a farmer, for on any day when I want more boys to drive carts I inform the schoolmaster, *and only pay the boys* "*for the time they are at work*, and at no higher rate than other employers in the village." (1st Report, appendix part 2, p. 318.)

† It is suggested that particular times of the year might be excepted, as would of course be done in the hay and corn harvest; but if the principle were once admitted, the exemptions claimed would vary in many parts of each county. In potato districts children of all ages are much needed in October, and boys of 11 during part of the winter; for pea pulling children are wanted in June, for osier peeling in April, for hop-picking in September, for fruit gathering in July, and interference with these would in every case reduce the area under the crop.

in the year would lead to such irregularity that very little (if any) progress would be made. One answer to this is to be found in the experience derived from night schools, open only about 40 times in the year, and for 1½ hours at a time, and yet the scholars are found not only to keep up their previous knowledge, but sometimes to extend it. G.

146. The minimum of attendance during the year must, however, "be fixed high, not less that 200 "half days, so as to restrict the time of work to the months when it is really necessary." (Evid. 79.) Such an amount of attendance would very far exceed that of the majority of children now at school, who, on the average, do not attend nearly one half of the school year.* And it must be carefully considered whether the requirement of so large an amount of attendance would not throw the majority of children altogether out of work, and so utterly frustrate its own object. If employment is to be made a means of securing school attendance there is the strongest motive for giving every reasonable encouragement to it, and therefore I should not venture to recommend at first a longer period than 150 half days.

147. That any such restrictions should cease at 12 years of age is the almost unanimous opinion of employers, and, having regard to the poverty of many families, it would seem to be prudent to fix that limit for the present; as to the age of commencement, there is more difference of opinion, for on physical grounds occasional employment may reasonably be entered upon at 8. There is one forcible reason which points to the same age. It is that fixed upon by the Factory Acts, and in many districts the agricultural and manufacturing population are so intermixed that, until a revision of those acts takes place, to fix a higher limit in the case of employment in agriculture would open the door to systematic evasion.

148. The simplest mode of enforcing any such system would be to require before employment in any given year a certificate of school attendance during the previous year. As March is the usual time for the commencement of field work, the year might be reckoned from that date. There would be no difficulty in point of detail in requiring schools to send in, at the end of the year so fixed, the amount of attendance of all children, and there is strong ground for believing that the jealousy which would be created between certificated and uncertificated children would prevent any very easy evasion of the rule.

149. Much more cannot be claimed for such a scheme than that it appears to me to be the best possible under the circumstances, and likely not to defeat its own aim by putting an end to employment. It would in fact lead to pretty regular attendance during the winter and to occasional in summer; and though this would no doubt cause some difficulty to school managers, it may be assumed that if a grant were given for such children as "half timers" such an objection would not be generally pressed.

150. Its practical success, however, depends mainly on the children having previously received a sound elementary education. And before 8 years of age, when the children cannot go to work, and when their parents are actually glad to get rid of them for the day, it cannot be pretended that even poverty affords much obstacle to attendance. Some inducement, however, is required, and as none is ever so powerful as that which holds out to the parents the prospect of some advantage to accrue from the sacrifice, it might reasonably be enacted that even at 8 children should not be employed, unless they can read fairly well. This plan has found many advocates in my district, and is that adopted by Mr. Paget (who fixes the age at 9) with most satisfactory results.

151. Of the children attending no school at all, those belonging to families receiving out-door relief constitute a large proportion. And yet I found very few boards of guardians availing themselves of the power contained in Denison's Act, which enables them to pay for the schooling of such children. In Kent it is occasionally made use of with good results; in the Canterbury, Cranbrook, and Bridge unions this was especially brought to my notice. In other counties it was not uncommon for guardians to inquire of the pauper whether the children were kept regularly at school, but such schooling is not, as in the unions above mentioned, regularly paid for. The necessity of making the adoption of the act compulsory was strongly urged upon me, as well as its inability to reach cases where the relief is only of a temporary character. Application of Denison's Act.

152. Before quitting the subject of education, I have a word to say upon the possibility of combining a system of industrial training for girls with the ordinary work of a day school. The necessity for such training was everywhere impressed upon me, not only from the scarcity of good household servants, but also because of the ignorance of such subjects displayed in every cottage, and yet schools were very rare in which anything was taught beyond needlework. Sometimes a little knowledge of household work was imparted by the girls being required to clean out the schoolroom in turns, and theoretical teaching on such subjects was not uncommon, but is of very little practical use. In most counties there are schools supported by benevolent persons (such as that of the Hon. Mrs. Portman, at Blandford), where girls wishing to be trained as domestic servants are lodged and boarded, but a large outlay is then necessary; and it was very rare to find any attempt to combine such instruction with the ordinary work of a day school. Industrial training for girls in schools.

153. The expense, indeed, is generally represented to be the main difficulty in the way of introducing an industrial department into ordinary schools. "It appears to be simply and entirely a matter "of finance." But it is further urged, and great stress was laid upon this at the meeting of the West Kent School Teachers' Association, that the consent of the parents was very difficult to obtain. This was very frequently stated as an objection, but as a matter of fact it does not appear to be the case where the system has been practically in operation.

154. As to expense, the truth is that too much is aimed at. If the intention be to train good domestic servants, no doubt considerable expense would be incurred; but if it be only to teach the elements of cooking and household work sufficiently for the wife of an agricultural labourer, there is strong evidence to show that this can be achieved at a very cheap rate. A good instance of this is that of Stokesay school (Salop), where the simplest cooking was taught, "*with the common apparatus* "*of a cottage kitchen,*" by the wife of a labouring man. The whole expense for the year was 8*l.*, without reckoning the value of the cooked food, which was distributed to the sick poor. "The parents,

* The school year may be taken at between 200 and 220 days.

G. "far from objecting, liked the system very much, and said that their children became very useful to "them at home" (Evid. 223). Again at Well, in Lincolnshire (population 202). "The oldest girls "take it in turns to prepare a dinner for eight or ten of their schoolfellows; the cook for the day "remains behind the night before, and comes early the following morning to prepare for it. The girls "are responsible for all the arrangements, the dishing up, the service, washing up, &c. By marketing "herself, and by ready money payments, the schoolmistress is able to provide this meal at a small "cost" (First Report, Appendix, Pt. II., p. 280). It will be seen by these instances that a large parish is not essential to the success of such a system (as has commonly been asserted), nor need expense be an important consideration. But I will go further and say that to carry it out on an expensive scale is to impair its usefulness, because the object is solely to teach girls how to cook the simplest food with the most ordinary cooking utensils.

155. The success of these two attempts induces me to hope that the simple system of adding a cottage kitchen to the school will have a further trial.

(C.) The Home of the Agricultural Labourer.

State of the cottages.

156. From what has been already said on the subject of cottages it will be seen that in the counties comprised within this report they are better distributed than was found to be the case in the east of England, although in Shropshire especially, some of the largest landowners have pulled down their old cottages without building new ones. But their condition in all these counties (with the exception of Kent), is at least as bad. The great deficiency is in bedroom accommodation. Thus, in 42 Dorset villages no less than 314, or 16 per cent. of the cottages have one bedroom only, and 113 of these contained a family with three or more children. In one village alone there were 59 one-bedroomed cottages. A similar return from 63 Staffordshire parishes shows 596 small cottages, of which 212 were overcrowded to the extent before mentioned. And although I have no such accurate statistics for Shropshire, I am persuaded that a similar return would have exhibited no less lamentable a picture.

Efforts of landowners.

157. That the remedy for this state of things lies mainly in the hands of the landlords is obvious, and it is therefore gratifying to find that most of them are now ceasing to look for a direct return for cottage improvements in the shape of an increase to their rent-roll, but are recognizing the advantage which they and the occupiers of their farms derive from the better condition of their labourers, and their disposition to stay where they are well housed. One hindrance to more rapid improvement has been the extravagant ideal set before many landowners by the buildings of their richer neighbours; and though often anxious to remove the great causes of complaint on their estates, they shrink from the expense of the ornamental cottage which it is the fashion in their neighbourhood to erect. This is partly due to leaving the whole management of improvements in some cases (especially where the landlord is non-resident), in the hands of an agent, who indulges his own crotchets to the loss of his employer and of the poor*. While an estate contains many families living in one-bedroomed cottages, ornament and luxury should be matters of comparative indifference.

Remedies suggested.

158. Amongst other legislative remedies, it is sometimes suggested that all landowners should be required by law to provide cottages in proportion to the size of their estates; and further, that no cottage should for the future be erected without a specified amount of accommodation, and without compliance with certain rules deemed necessary for health and decency.

159. The first of these suggestions appears utterly impracticable. The number of cottages required for each hundred acres of land depending upon the nature of the soil, and the mode of cultivation adopted, no general rule on the subject can be laid down. The common number would be two, or sometimes three, but more often one would be amply sufficient; and indeed this point, namely, deficiency of cottages upon or near the farms, or within convenient distance of the place of labour, appears likely (now the check formerly imposed has been removed by the "Union Chargeability Act,") to meet with a satisfactory solution. Employers are keenly alive to the necessity of good accommodation in order to secure efficient labourers, and the class of farmers now entering everywhere into the occupation of the farms is pressing the matter upon the attention of landlords in a manner which cannot fail to produce great effect.

Government loans for cottage building.

160. More efficient encouragement to cottage building might, however, be given by the state. The powers of the 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114, under which money borrowed for this purpose may be charged upon the inheritance, are a step in the right direction; but many difficulties have been found in practice to interfere with their being more generally made use of. The conditions imposed by the Inclosure Commissioners are complained of as too severe; they have been guided by fixed and rigid rules, making no allowance for particular circumstances, and in consequence the extra outlay involved has deterred many persons from going to them. This power applies moreover only to entire re-building, while the addition of a bedroom or the general reconstruction of the premises would be a quicker, and almost as substantial a benefit. Precautions could easily be taken against the possible abuse of this concession.

161. Other suggested difficulties are, that the Enclosure Commissioners do not lend the money, but the borrower has to go to companies who require to make a profit, and that the time within which repayment has to be made is far too short. Both these points have in other cases been conceded by Parliament. With respect to "populous places" the Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act, 1866,† authorises the Public Works Loan Commissioners to advance money for the erection of labourers cottages, and the period for the repayment of such loans is extended to forty years. The curious result of this is that if a landowner forces his farm labourers to live in a town at a distance from their work, he can get a loan

* As an instance of this I may mention some cottages which I saw being erected on one of the large estates in Lincolnshire Although built of stone, very handsome, and very costly, they had only two bedrooms each, and these bedrooms had only one window between them, making the partition also a most imperfect one.

† 28 Vict., c. 28. In the same way the Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act 1868, for the improvement or demolition of any premises "in a condition or state dangerous to health, so as to be unfit for human habitation," is confined to places containing a population of 10,000.

from Government to help him to build cottages: if on the other hand he wishes to put them on the farm, in a healthy country district where ample ground can be assigned for gardens, he is unable to obtain any such assistance.

Requirement that all cottages should be built in conformity with certain rules.

162. With regard to the suggestion that provision should be made against the erection of cottages containing inadequate accommodation, it would be found impossible to lay down any invariable rule as to the number of bedrooms a cottage should contain, for some in every village should have two, others for old men and widows only one. Among the most successful visited by me were some double cottages with five bedrooms between them, the middle room being so adapted as to be available for either cottage, according to the size of the family occupying it. Some other requirements, however, such as proper provision for ventilation and water supply, for drainage, and the erection of a privy to each cottage in a suitable place, might well be made.*

Working of Sanitary Acts.

163. To carry out any such regulations would naturally fall within the province of the Inspector of Nuisances, and for this reason the working of the present system of inspection was the subject of constant inquiry by me. At present the inspector is appointed† by the Board of Guardians, is dependent on their votes, and is generally the relieving officer, who has already enough to do, and receives very inadequate remuneration for his extra duties. Under these circumstances it has come to be the accepted rule among such officers (with some creditable exceptions) that they are to do nothing "*proprio motu*," but are to wait until their attention is called to some nuisance too intolerable to be any longer endured. But in some unions no inspector whatever is appointed,—in others the clergyman and Guardians of the Parish are expected to act. In one (Sturminster Newton, in Dorset) I found the police filling the office with great advantage to the appearance and sanitary condition of the villages. Under such varied modes of proceeding as this, the Sanitary Acts have not had a fair trial.

164. In three especial respects great reform appeared to be necessary. First, as to the abatement of *out-door nuisances*, of which in some unions no notice whatever is taken. The filthy state of many Dorset villages has been already described. Secondly, *overcrowding* in cottages, with respect to which the powers given by the Sanitary Acts are very rarely exercised.‡ And it may be presumed to be from a doubt as to the extent of those powers, that the overcrowding which now notoriously exists in many cottages is not interfered with; and, thirdly, *ventilation*.§ "The windows in cottages ought to be larger, and should be made to open" (Evid. 32). "Rooms in many cases are very low, hardly 6 feet, and the windows are very often not made to open" (Evid. 58, Cerne). "Often the window does not open" (Stower Provost, Evid. 58). "The windows are small and not always made to open" (Clunbury, Evid. 196). Dr. Aldridge "knew a cottage, without ceiling or floor, and containing 8 or 10 persons, with a window certainly a foot square, but without the possibility of being opened, the consequence being fever among the inmates" (Evid. 5).

165. Until my attention was especially directed to this subject by these statements, I could hardly have believed the extent to which windows in bedrooms are even now being put up without any means of being opened; and in living rooms the complaint is almost as common. Where in an old cottage the single bedroom has been divided into two, it is not unusual to find that the only means of light afforded is by a glass tile which cannot be opened. Although as to all these points (unless perhaps overcrowding) the powers of the existing Sanitary Acts are not represented to be insufficient, their efficient enforcement is sadly needed. Inspection must be compulsory, and above all things the inspector must be thoroughly independent of a Board of Guardians.

Situation of cottages.

166. The best situation for cottages, whether upon the farms or in the village is a question to which it is difficult to find a satisfactory answer. To build them close to the farm is a very great boon to farmers, and gives them far more control over their labourers. No doubt it also removes many a working man from the temptation of a public house, and saves much labour to him in going to or from his work; but it is far easier for him to do so than for his children to go a long distance to school. Intelligent labourers, whose opinion on this subject is entitled to great weight, generally say that the education of their children is the first point to be considered, although it is probable that they are to some extent influenced by the consideration that on the farm they are far away from the society of many of their friends, and from the shops at which they deal, and are brought too much under the power of their employers. It is pretty clear that the same system will not apply to all districts.

Control of cottages.

167. A still more difficult question is in whom the control of the cottages is to be vested. Should they be kept in the landlord's hands, or let with the farms? This point has occupied my attention throughout my inquiry, and especially in the eastern counties, where very great importance is attached to it.

168. The opinion of farmers is nearly unanimous. They represent it to be an essential point that the tenant should have some security that the cottage built for the accommodation of his farm shall really be available for it. And as regards certain special labourers, such as the foreman, shepherd, and carter, the only way, it is said, in which the farmer can get a proper control over them is by having the cottages in his hands in which they live. "Should any one of them be unfitted for his post, "it does not necessarily render him an unworthy tenant to the landlord; but what means has the "farmer to provide himself with another man to supply his place, there being often no other suitable "house at hand?" (1st Rep. App. Pt. II., p. 281). "It is most important to the farmer to have

* The necessity for some such provision is well illustrated by an instance I met with in Leicestershire, where two rows of cottages were built facing each other, between which, opposite and close to the front doors, were the privies and pigstyes. In Salop, the pigsty is constantly a part of the same building as the cottage.

The bye-laws sanctioned by the Treasury, Feb. 14, 1867, under the 29th Vict. c. 28, require in all new buildings, for which money is advanced under that Act, separate water-closet accommodation for each tenement, dust-bins, ready access to water, and good lighting, "by external windows *made to open*."

† Under the Nuisances Removal Act 1860, sec. 9, his appointment is permissive only and not compulsory.

‡ By the Sanitary Act 1866, nuisances remediable under the Nuisances Removal Acts are made to include "any house or part "of a house so overcrowded as to be dangerous or prejudicial to the health of the inmates."

§ By this I do not mean any system of artificial ventilation, for outlets of this kind are invariably stopped up by the inmates. In almost every case where I have found a fire place in a bed-room, the chimney has been blocked up with paper or old rags. Large windows made to open, and well placed are the best and only means of ventilation. The fault to be found in the most modern cottages, especially where they have an ornamented roof, is that the windows are too near the floor of the bedrooms.

G. " his shepherd, stablemen, and a few others, so under his control that he can dismiss them at his will, " and therefore he ought to have the power to give the same notice to quit the cottage that he gives " to quit the service." (Evid. 63.)

169. The feeling among the labouring class is even more certain. In all my inquiries upon this point *I never yet met a man* who preferred to "live under a farmer," as they call it. The apparent advantage in point of income enjoyed by a man in Dorset, who is a yearly servant, and lives in a house attached to the farm, is great (Evid. 64.), and yet even there the labourers had the strongest objection to the system.

170. With great reluctance I have been forced to the conclusion that, except in certain districts, and in the case of special labourers, there is no system more fatal to the independence and comfort of labourers than that of letting cottages with the farms. It is admitted even by those landlords who express this opinion, that for skilled labourers it is important to the tenant to have a few cottages under his control,* and in the same way there are cases where the farms are so isolated from any village that, unless the occupiers of certain cottages work for the tenant of the farm, there is very great difficulty in obtaining labour. The latter difficulty is often met by the landlord making it a condition with the occupier that he shall give his services, if required, to a particular farmer.

171. With respect, however, to the great majority of cottages, the objections to the system are overwhelming. His reasons for disliking it are thus stated by Lord Portman:—

" First, the occupiers of cottages have sometimes been persons whom I have wished to get rid of, but who have been good labourers, and therefore useful to the farmer. * * * Secondly, I have found that in some cases the farmer has oppressed the labourer by actually making him pay such a rent as to produce a profit from the cottages which I have let to the tenant with the farm, or by putting into a cottage lodgers beyond its capacity. And, thirdly, I have found the farmer constantly neglect to look after the cottage, not only by omission of whitewashing, but by neglect of simple cleaning." (Evid. 62.)

172. For these complaints there is unfortunately ample ground. The cottage is in some cases no doubt made a means of extortion, and when given (as in Dorset) as a part of wages, it is often only on condition of an unknown, unlimited, and unremunerated amount of additional labour. But the chief objection appeared to me to be the state of neglect into which they are allowed to fall, and the overcrowding which is constantly permitted. Of the former evil East Kent, where cottages have been on many estates long let with the farms, affords sufficient proof, some of the worst being those under this tenancy. Overcrowding I found everywhere, but especially, and as a recognized system, in Dorset. One farmer in Salop, to whom two cottages were let, told me that in each case, though the families contained five children, lodgers were always taken in. " It ought to be stopped," he said with emphasis, and yet it never seemed to occur to him that he was directly responsible for the scandal.

173. The opinion expressed by Lord Portman is endorsed by the majority of landlords throughout my district. Many of them expressed to me the strongest feeling on the subject, and Lord Westminster has afforded the best proof of his concurrence by taking all his cottages into his own hands. But in almost all these cases the right of nomination is conceded to the farmer, although the rent is paid to the landlord. " Practically I give the tenant the absolute nomination, and I give my agent full autho- " rity to act when I am absent in dismissing the occupier, when necessary." (Evid. 83.) The clergy also, as a rule, concur in approving this arrangement. " All sub-letting is a great evil. A landlord " can only effectually secure that his provision for the moral conduct of the labouring class is not " abused by holding all his cottages in his own hands." (Evid. 63.) " It is open to abuse by placing " the poor man too completely at the mercy of his employer. I have known very hard cases result " from it." (Evid. 20.) " It opens room for cases of great tyranny on the part of the employer, and " as often keeps the house in a bad state of repair." (Evid. 3.)

Lodging of lads in farm-houses.

174. Farm lads are less lodged in farm houses than they used to be. Kent, where the system still exists, and Dorsetshire, where it is almost unknown, afford an opportunity for considering the merits of the two modes of hiring. The education of the lads undoubtedly suffers where they live in the farm house, because they are further removed from the night school, and the indifference of employers and their hours of work are serious obstacles in the way of their attending it. In respect of health it is certainly an advantage, because it takes them away from an already overcrowded cottage, and secures them better and more nourishing food. But the great complaint urged against it in Kent was the want of proper supervision by employers, and the miserable character of the accommodation given to them. Often they sleep only in the farm buildings, or even in, or quite close to, the stable. They lose what should be the refining influence of home, and for want of anything to awaken their interest or intelligence, degenerate frequently into mere " louts."

Allotments.

175. The system of letting allotments of land to the poor prevails to a very great extent in Dorsetshire and Rutland, on some estates only in Staffordshire and Kent, and is very rare in Cheshire and Shropshire. In the last case it is superseded by the potato ground let by the farmers, but the high rent commonly charged for this privilege renders it a very questionable benefit.

176. The advantage of an allotment to the labourer is admitted on all hands, although its value depends on many circumstances. It must be reasonably near at hand, and the rent low. Some of those in Dorset are let at an exorbitant rate. (Evid. 65.) It should be limited in size. Far too many in the same county are half an acre in extent, on which ploughing and the cultivation of corn is permitted. Few persons are found to approve this, for it leads to irregular work on the part of the labourer. In one case I was told that a man lived upon his half acre of allotment, and in many others that the occupiers were willing only to work at occasional jobs. From allotments of this size, when not granted with discrimination, results also a very greatly increased employment for the young children, and a tendency among the labouring population to depend too much on the potato

* Lord Portman, who lets four cottages on each farm in this way, for the most important labourers, inserts in the lease clauses enabling him at any time to inspect the state and condition of the cottages, requiring the tenant not to allow more than —— persons above the age of 12 years at any one time to inhabit the cottage, and in the event of any person who shall be considered by him to be an improper person occupying the cottage, the tenant is to discharge him forthwith on receiving notice. (Evid. 62.)

crop. The more general opinion appears to be that the maximum size for such gardens, save in very exceptional cases, should be a quarter of an acre, and where the soil is reasonably good half that quantity is sufficient. In one Dorset village the produce of quarter of an acre allotments was estimated at 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* a week all the year. G.

177. In the western counties, and in Rutland, a few landowners are accustomed to let to some of their labourers two or three acres of land, in order to enable them to keep a cow. In Cheshire a modification of this plan is found in the "ley," or run for a cow, assigned at a small rent in some villages to those labourers who desire it. The inquiries which I made into this system (and especially on the estate of Sir Baldwyn Leighton in Shropshire, who has adopted it for many years), lead me to form a very favourable estimate of the inducement to thrifty habits, and of the comfort it afforded. "A "good cow will at least produce 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week in summer from butter, besides affording milk for the family." In another case the value of a cow to a family is estimated at 12*l.* a year upon an average, although in one favourable instance it amounted to 18*l.* (Evid. 216.) The whole character of the labouring population was said to be raised, and providence before marriage, in order to obtain this additional comfort, was very much increased by it. "But there is a caution," says one writer on the subject, "to be observed. Thrift and savings must in every case *precede* the grant of land, or the most "fatal consequences may ensue. Idle labourers will endeavour to subsist on their cow and their wife's "labour, the district will become over populated for the demand of labour, wages will fall, and the "people will starve, as in Ireland; and the occasional loss of a cow, where there is no previous saving, "will bring ruin to the cottage home." On the Loton estate (Sir B. Leighton's) this caution is always observed, and to this may be attributed its success there. The holdings are never let to any man who cannot produce a savings' bank book, and show that he has saved enough to occupy this amount of land. The result has been that almost all the labourers have a savings' bank book, and for every cottage with land attached which becomes vacant there are many applications. (Evid. 138.) One family, which had lost four cows in seven years, had still 10*l.* in the savings' bank. I would call your particular attention to the details of my visit to this estate. "Cow-gates."

178. The chief objection urged to the system is the amount of time for which the care of a cow withdraws a labourer from his ordinary employment. In almost all the cases brought under my notice, this amounted to three weeks or a month (Evid. 188); and though employers in Shropshire and Staffordshire are divided in opinion as to the necessity for this, and also as to the extent to which it interferes with a man's efficiency, in most counties such an amount of absence would at once stamp a labourer as irregular. Besides this, the occupiers of such plots neglect the education of their children far more than ordinary labourers, especially where they send their cow out into the lanes, or keep (as they often do) a small donkey cart. Bad farming too is the rule on all such occupations, and great care is needed to prevent any part from being ploughed up, because the whole object is not to create small farmers, but to encourage thrifty and efficient farm labourers.

179. A modification of this system which is common in Scotland, was observed by me in Cheshire, and on Mr. Dudgeon's farm in Sussex, and is that of giving regular labourers keep for a cow during the year, the animal being looked after by the regular herdsman of the farm. This appeared to me to comprise all the advantages of the system already noticed with none of its drawbacks. It is an equal encouragement to saving, and involves no loss of time to the labourer, no employment of his children, and requires no supervision. It renders unnecessary the subdivision of the grass land into very small fields, and the loss of space and the expense of fencing thereby caused. The gradual extension of such a plan to a limited number of deserving labourers in every parish, where it is possible, would be of the greatest value.

(D.) Other Circumstances Affecting the Condition of the Agricultural Labourer.

180. In the six counties forming the subject of the present report, the estimated weekly earnings of the labourer vary from 10*s.* or 11*s.* (everything included), to between 18*s.* and 20*s.* in the hop growing parts of Kent, the latter constituting an entirely exceptional district. Rate of wages.

181. But the condition of the agricultural population is affected not only by the rate of wages, but by *the mode of payment*, and above all other evils is part payment in beer or cider. Of course at harvest or other times of very hard work, men may require some additional stimulant, though they would certainly work better without it, but the system complained of is that of giving as a part of wages a certain number of pints of beer or cider every day. To the family it is actually an injury instead of a benefit, and it therefore appears most unfair to reckon this as any real addition to wages. In many cases where cider is given, it is actually a direct advantage to the employer to be able to dispose of the produce of his orchard. "The fact is," says Mr. T. D. Acland, (Journal Royal Agricultural Society, II. 750) "that the masters and men play into each others hands, the women and children "suffer, and the men too in the long run; the labourer in a year takes off his master's hands about "two hogsheads of cider, and satisfies one of his own bodily appetites at the cost of 15 per cent. of his "earnings. The liquor refreshes and stimulates him, but wears him out." In harvest time the amount of drink given is often almost unlimited, and a temptation thrown in the labourer's way, which it is hardly possible to expect him to resist. Mode of Payment of wages. (a.) Partly in beer or cider.

182. The best proof of the mischief of the system is that the counties where it prevails support nevertheless the largest proportion of beer and cider sellers. Mr. Baily Denton draws a comparison in this respect between Lincolnshire and Dorsetshire, and shows that in the latter, where the wages are only two-thirds of the wages of the northern county, the proportion of beer and cider sellers is 1 to 33 agricultural labourers, as compared with 1 to 40 labourers in Lincolnshire. (Evid. 73.) Many employers told me, and indeed it is an undisputed fact, that these labourers would be very unwilling to forego this privilege even for more than an equivalent in money. So degrading is the system that they prefer to expend in gratifying selfish appetites what ought to go towards the maintenance of the family; and after a certain time the labourer becomes so accustomed to it, that it would be very difficult if not impossible for him to dispense with it, and the mere promise of a little extra drink will induce him to undertake work that money would not make him willing to perform. The following anecdote illustrates the dominion

G. which drink can thus obtain over a man's mind. A labourer having earned at a piece of task work a considerable sum of money, left off for several days, and during that time was incessantly drinking. One morning, after all his money was expended, he set off to resume his work at a distance of three miles from his home. On reaching the place, he took off his coat and threw it on the ground, but as it fell, a forgotten sixpence dropped out of the pocket, upon which he put it on again, and walked back the three miles to finish the sixpence before he would begin work.

183. A last objection to the system is that it often extends to the women and children also. On many farms in Dorset and Salop a large proportion of the whole outgoing for labour is paid in this way, the women and boys receiving it in proportion to their money wages, and thus the latter are taught from the outset of life to require during work the stimulus of drink.

(b.) Part payment in kind.

184. Of the part payment of wages in kind I have already spoken. Excellent as the system may be in good hands as tending to correct in some degree the hardship arising from the constant fluctuation in the money value of wages, it is objectionable mainly on the ground that from its onesidedness it is liable to abuse, and is often abused. I allude especially to the "perquisite" system prevailing in Dorset and parts of Shropshire, which leaves the labourer practically at the mercy of his employer, but also to the payment of extra time in food, and to the plan, often adopted in Cheshire and Shropshire, of giving a married man all his food in the farm-house, and a sum in money varying from 7*s.* to 5*s.* per week. All such plans introduce an element of uncertainty into the contract between master and man, and by making the labourer too much dependent on charity, impair his independence. And as to the last mode of payment it may be added that "it can never be a good thing to separate the husband and father "from his family at meal-times; to do so must tend to destroy union of effort on the part of man and "wife to provide for the wants of the family." (Evid. 161.) The man probably gains at the expense of his family.

(c.) At long intervals.

185. Part payment in kind is still more objectionable, when combined with an irregular date for payment. There is much to be said against a fortnightly system, as tending to drive the men into debt, but far more against the monthly payment, often adopted in the counties of Dorset and Salop. They are even not always paid at any regular interval. Some landowners themselves are setting the very bad example of paying at irregular intervals of many weeks, during which time the labourer is left to live upon credit.

Extra earnings of summer supply, defects in winter.

186. Much is said, and especially in Dorset, of the extra wages earned at piece-work. A skilled man will no doubt deserve, and obtain exceptional remuneration, but as to the mass of the agricultural labourers their piece-work (if they have any) is limited to the summer, and frequently to the hay and corn harvest. Too often it is the case, as described by one witness, "that the labourer's winter income "is too little to meet his winter wants, and he is obliged to mortgage, so to speak, his summer wages." (Evid. 73.) Out of the harvest or other extra earnings the boot bill is paid. This difficulty will always be found to be in the way of the successful establishment of co-operative stores, while wages continue as low as at present. All the labourers are ready to go there in summer, when they have money, but in the winter they are obliged to resort again to dealers who are willing to give credit.

The pig.

187. In the same way the pig of the agricultural labourer is practically "mortgaged." The greater part of it is sold, or returned to the farmer in payment of its original cost before fattening, and the instances are comparatively rare in the low-wage counties, where he is able to eat the whole of it himself. In many cases, and far more often than is generally supposed, his employer will not allow him to keep a pig at all. And this proves a loss to him, not only in the value of the meat for eating, or for conversion into cash, but as depriving him of a means of utilizing all refuse, and securing adequate manure for his garden.

Diet.

188. There can be no doubt that in the greater part of these counties the labourers are sadly underfed, especially when not allowed to keep a pig. In such a case, unless their earnings very far exceed the usual average, even those men who are most regularly employed have to be content with a diet which consists almost entirely of bread, potatoes, and cheese. The wife of a Dorset shepherd in regular work thus described her food to me:—"We don't have a bit of butcher's meat not for half a year; we live on "potatoes, bread, and pig-meat, and are very thankful if we can get a bit of pig-meat; we often sit "down to dry bread. For harvest dinner we send out some boiled potatoes, a bit of cabbage, and "we put a bit of fat to the potatoes." (Evid. 10.) A family with three children earning, and "who "have never had sixpence from the parish," "buy a little pig-meat; we use it with the potatoes, we "don't have a dish of pig by itself; at harvest we eat some cheese, but not at any other time. We "don't often get potatoes." (Evid. 11.) "Their diet is bread and cheese and potatoes, with a little "bacon in the families that are best off. But for the last few years pigs have not been so common." (Evid. 20.) And this is in a county, in parts of which, "fuel is so scarce that the families as a rule "never have a fire, except at meal-times, even in the depth of winter." (Evid. 20.)

189. As I went north, the greatest difference to be noted in the condition of the agricultural population was the increased comfort afforded them by the greater cheapness of fuel: yet even in Cheshire "hardly any labourers eat meat at home, though some few can afford a little occasionally on Sunday. "Potatoes with butter milk if they can get it, is the ordinary food; sometimes a little bacon as a "luxury. Where a labourer's wife takes his dinner to him, it is then either hot potatoes in a covered "basin, or else gruel thickened with a little treacle or sugar." (Evid. 156.) In Shropshire again the wife of a waggoner in constant employment was last year "four months without any bacon or meat "because the pig had been a little one. We had nothing but potatoes and salt, bread and water." (Evid. 180, a.), and another had her "pigstie out of repair, and so killed no pig at Christmas; will have "to do without bacon this year." (Evid. 180, b.) In one Staffordshire village the diet of the labourer "is almost wholly bread, cheese, and potatoes; they never eat butchers' meat, and many of them get "no bacon. But what I think they miss most of all is milk, which cannot be got, and is a great loss "to young children."* (Evid. 204.)

* At St. Giles (Dorset), by Lord Shaftesbury's influence, a "parish cow" is kept, by which means all can buy milk at a reasonable rate.

G.

190. The diet above described is that which falls to the lot of the family of a hard-working and industrious man, who is not in the habit of frequenting a public house. And my inquiry leads me to the conclusion that drunkenness is considerably on the decrease in rural districts, and that it is not so common among regular farm labourers as it is usually represented to be. The places where this "most frightful source of poverty and demoralization" is most complained of are the large open villages, in which men are not always in regular work, their cottages are miserable and unattractive, and the number of beerhouses is out of all proportion to the population. Excessive competition in the trade, it is generally said, leads to the increase of drunkenness, and this report would be incomplete, if I did not call your particular attention to the feeling which everywhere exists as to the necessity of limiting the number of beerhouses, of obtaining more control over them, and of transferring their supervision to some more competent authority. Beerhouses.

191. For my own part I look with far more confidence to the effect which will be produced by an improvement in the condition of the cottages, in enabling them to compete in attractiveness with the warm and well-lighted public house. I say their *condition*, because some believe that this object can best be achieved by a change in their *situation*, that is, by placing them on the farms, where the man is further removed from temptation. In the same way other landowners have endeavoured to check the evil by not permitting any public house to be opened in the village of which they are the sole proprietors. I cannot speak very highly of the success of these attempts. A drunkard will drink in spite of the trifling obstacle of distance, and considerable hardship is caused to others, who are charged an exorbitant price for the poisonous liquor which is sold to them as beer.

192. One circumstance which above all others gives encouragement to drinking habits is the feeling so common in rural dictricts that no business can be done except over a pot of beer.* In some places where a man enters into a contract with his employer to do some 'piece work,' he expects a drink to cement the bargain. So again, when he goes to the monthly meeting of his club, to make his regular payment, he must drink. When he goes to the "statute" or "mop" fairs to be hired for the year, he drinks every day, and spends a great part of his yearly earnings.

193. The drunkenness at these fairs is the main cause of the immorality which is said to prevail at them. There is something very degrading also in the fact of young men and women standing in the market place to be looked over like so many cattle by the farmers who come to hire them. There is this further truth in the comparison that they are hired from their physical appearance, and very rarely from their previous character. And though in some places a room has been provided for the women to sit in under some respectable supervision, it is not easy to induce them to relinquish the licence they had previously enjoyed at their only holiday in the year. "Mop fairs."

194. And before passing on to consider the question which, of all connected with the agricultural labourer, is the most perplexing—that of "yearly hiring"—I am anxious to separate from it that of the "statute" fair. It is a consequence—but by no means a necessary one—of the system of yearly hiring; and therefore it is no condemnation of the latter to say that there is nothing more degrading to the agricultural population than the "statute" fair. I have observed that it is not a necessary evil. In Cheshire, where yearly hiring is common, fairs have been abolished; in other cases register offices have been substituted with some success in spite of the opposition of employers. And it is an evil which appears to me to call loudly for the intervention of the legislature.

195. It is sometimes urged that, if these fairs were abolished, the opportunity of meeting together, dancing, and drinking, would still induce farm servants to spend their annual holiday in the market towns; and further, that it is a great advantage both to employer and employed to look at each other, before entering into so long an engagement. These considerations, however, do not touch the main question, Why are agricultural to be hired in a different way from any other servants? In other cases hiring by character, with all its imperfections, is found to be the most convenient and satisfactory mode, and it remains still to be shown in what way (if any) it is inapplicable to the farm servant.

196. I have met with the system of yearly hiring not only in the East of England, but also in parts of Shropshire and Dorsetshire. The agreement is usually made, as has been pointed out, at the statute fair, and is hardly ever in writing, but a shilling passes as "fastening" money, as soon as it is entered into. Some of the ignorant labourers of South Shropshire are even now consenting to such engagements without any definite agreement as to remuneration or as to the amount of work to be required of them. The hiring is for fifty-one weeks, the remaining one being compulsorily kept as a holiday,† and the men usually change places every year. Some masters, no doubt, employ the same servants year after year, but the ordinary result of the system is a constant change, which prevents the families from being easily brought within the influence of the clergyman, and interferes with the education of the children. Many of the clergy complain that the greater part of their parishioners change every year. "A kind of vagrant population is created, who lose all home ties." Yearly hiring.

197. A far greater objection is that character is seldom, if ever, taken into account. Mr. G. W. Latham puts this very forcibly:—

"There is no incentive to any well-doing, character becomes valueless, and so long as the year can be scraped through somehow, master does not care to attach servant to him, nor servant to please his master: as long as a case for the interference of the magistrate does not exist, the two must go on together." (Evid. 154.)

Cheshire in fact furnishes the strongest possible instance of this. The dairymaids are hired because they can make good cheese, and the immorality so prevalent among them is no hindrance to their obtaining a situation.

198. Again, it is a one-sided arrangement. Payment is almost always partly in money and partly in kind, the latter mode of payment introducing, as I have already pointed out, an element of uncertainty and leaving the labourer too much at the mercy of the employer. In North Lincolnshire I heard few complaints of this, which may be attributed to the far greater independence of the labouring class in

* This feeling is far too common even in a higher class of life. In Cheshire and Shropshire, where many farms are small, and the occupiers little raised above the labourer, this habit is grievously complained of. The drunkenness on market day is lamentable.

† Great complaint is made of the overcrowding of cottages in the Christmas and holiday week, when all the members of a family return home to visit their relations.

G.

that county, than in the south or west of England. In Dorsetshire and Shropshire on the contrary, it is said that injustice arises not only from the inferiority of the food supplied in part payment, but sometimes also from the increased amount of labour exacted from the man, or from his wife and children.

199. On the other hand the system has great and undoubted advantages. One of the principal hardships affecting the agricultural population is uncertainty of employment, and anything which tends to mitigate this is to be welcomed. Yearly hiring secures to the labourer regular work at a rate to which he himself has agreed, and a maintenance if sick. It prevents a chance of his having to "flit" (leave his cottage and garden) at a short notice. To the employer also it secures a certainty of labour at all times of the year. So important are these considerations that they appear to me to counterbalance, in good hands, the disadvantages of the system. But from the class of farmer still existing, and the want of independence among the labouring class in many parts of the south and west of England, it appears to me that the time has not yet come for its adoption in those districts. And in all cases a written agreement should be adopted, without which there is no security to the labourer that its terms will be properly carried out.

Want of independence in labouring class.

200. Within recent times the enclosure of commons, and the enlargement of farms have very much increased the difficulty which the agricultural labourer experiences in getting a piece of land for occupation, or in raising himself above the condition of a hired labourer. He has nothing to look forward to; no hope, as he would have in following any other occupation, of bettering his position. To this may probably be attributed the increasing want of independence which is everywhere complained of in these counties. "One never hears now what was six years ago frequently said to me, "'I brought up a large family and never troubled the parish in my life.' The poor are every day "coming to look upon *relief as their right.*" (Evid. 31.) "I am quite satisfied of one thing," says Lord S. G. Osborne, "that be the wages what they may, it is generally admitted and acted on that "good labourers, the best of them, are ever on the verge of pauperism." (Evid. 4.) "The least illness, "the confinement of the wife, or anything of that sort, sends many of them to the parish for relief." (Evid. 86.) "A labourer who is ill one day, or whose child is sick, as a matter of course, applies for the parish doctor, and a week's illness always sends him to the parish." (Evid. 178.) "Every "labourer that is ill in my district," says a Dorset relieving officer, "comes for the parish doctor. "Before they have been ill a week, they come for relief in most cases." (Evid. 70.) Much evidence might be quoted to the same effect, proving also how little shame is felt at the loss of independence which is involved.

Partly due to rottenness of "benefit societies."

201. Another cause of the decreased providence among the labouring class is to be found in the rottenness of most friendly societies. The confidence of the poor has been to a great extent shaken by the failure of the club on which they or their father have relied. In hundreds of cases, after years of patient self-denial, and saving against a day of trouble, the poor labourer has been sent on the parish, because there is nothing "in the box of his club," or because, as he and others were getting old and were likely soon to come upon its funds, the younger members of his club have dissolved it, and re-constituted it without him. More often again he is the victim of mismanagement. The money is carried off by a treasurer, whom the law in many cases cannot touch; or that which ought solely to be kept for the future requirements of sick pay, is spent upon the temporary enjoyments of the annual feast. Or else the poor ignorant man is ruined by a miscalculation. How is he to know that the monthly sum he is called upon to contribute is utterly inadequate to enable the society to fulfil the expectations it holds out? There is no one to tell him so, his neighbours are joining, and he is led to begin a sacrifice which from the first is certain to prove useless.

202. And who is to blame for this? it may be asked. It may be answered unhesitatingly that the clergy and the landowners have a great deal to answer for in this respect. On the annual feast day of a club the proceedings commence by the members going in procession to church. The clergyman of the parish is asked to preach a sermon, and is threatened in the event of his refusal with the transfer of the place of worship to the dissenting chapel. In very few cases is he firm enough to resist this pressure, and generally he not only preaches, but, in the absence of the chief landowner, presides at the dinner. Neither of them, although they subscribe to the funds, know anything, except what they are told, of the state of the funds of the club, or of its real security; but the apparent sanction which they give to its proceedings induces many men to become members without any further inquiry.

Necessity for encouraging them.

203. It may at once be admitted that a man receiving only 10*s.* a week in wages can ill afford to pay the contribution which a solvent sick club would require of him, and still less to provide for his old age, and, therefore that a large number of agricultural labourers must continue, until wages rise, to look upon the poor rate as a fund to assist in their ultimate maintenance, even if they are not obliged to rely upon it in sickness. Yet if the value of the friendly society in raising the moral and social condition of the labouring class, and in effecting a most important reduction in the poor rate (estimated at two millions), be remembered, no one can doubt that every encouragement should be given to men who are anxious to join them, and to their formation on a trustworthy system.

204. Several local attempts have been made within my district with this object. The County of Kent Friendly Society (which expends upon management only 7½ per cent. of its income) was one of the first to offer the advantages of a really sound club, and now numbers 950 members. In Dorsetshire, Shropshire, and Rutland also, similar county institutions have been formed on an equally sound basis, that in the first named county being the most successful. It is much to be regretted that hitherto these clubs have made way among the class of servants rather than the very poor.

Difficulties of sound clubs.

205. The fact is that before gaining ground in an agricultural district, these sound benefit clubs have many difficulties to contend with. They generally involve a higher rate of payment, and discountenance meeting at public-houses, in which opinion most of the clergy express their concurrence. It appears to me, however, doubtful whether so sweeping a change would be successful. To most labourers the display and the annual feast, and the monthly meeting at the public-house * constitute a great

* I am afraid I must add that the loose rules of uncertified clubs often constitute an attraction. I even found men in a superior class, such as schoolmasters, preferring to join clubs in which the expenses of the annual feast were paid out of the reserve funds, or where under a system of dividing out, they got back something every year. The following is an instance of the expenses paid on a

inducement to join the club, and the advantage resulting to them from becoming members of a benefit society is so great that no discouragement, such as would be involved in the general removal of clubs from public-houses, should be offered; nor could it be justified on other grounds. The best proof of the attraction afforded by the display of some clubs is the great progress made by the Foresters and Odd Fellows, especially in Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Kent.

206. A further discouragement to joining any benefit club is to be found in the present administration of the poor law. "Many industrious and deserving labourers appear to be discouraged from "making the effort to secure independence by self-help, from the fear of losing their presumed right "to relief from the poor rate" (Evid. 228.) It is utterly uncertain in what way boards of guardians will deal with such a case. Some never recognize, in giving relief, the fact of a man belonging to a club; others do take it into consideration, and some refuse relief altogether. More often they are guided by no fixed and uniform rule. In some parts the labourers are said "to have framed "their clubs with special reference to additional help from the rate". (Evid. 228). It is most surprising that the question, which yields to no other in importance—What is the best way of administering out-door relief so as to give encouragement to provident habits? is not only not answered by an authoritative interpretation of the principle which should govern such cases, but is actually left to be answered by each board of guardians for itself.

Necessity of further inquiry.

207. All the evidence appears to me to lead to the conclusion that to ascertain the principle which ought to be recognized in such cases, and the most effective means of offering encouragement to the formation of sound clubs an inquiry is imperatively needed. And on the present generation a no less important benefit would be conferred by a consideration of the condition of existing friendly societies. Rotten clubs are sheltering themselves under the protection of Mr. Tidd Pratt's certificate of registration, and availing themselves of the attraction with which this sham security invests them. But besides these certified clubs, it must be remembered that there is an enormous number utterly unrecognized by law, under no restrictions as to management, and whose financial condition is unknown. In the parishes in Kent where I made special inquiry on the subject, I found the proportion of uncertified to certified societies to be as three to two. And there are further questions well deserving consideration, such as that most ably advocated by the Rev. J. Y. Stratton (Evid. 228), whether a system of friendly societies might not be organized through the agency of the post office, just as annuities and sums payable at death can now be secured by it. For all these purposes a more searching inquiry than was possible under my present instructions appears most desirable.

Combinations in the nature of "Trades Unions."

208. In a few instances I have met with attempts at combination among agricultural labourers for other purposes. When machinery was first introduced into farm operations, combinations were frequently formed, but without much success, to resist it; and even now, in busy times of thrashing, strikes for an increase of wages are not uncommon in Lincolnshire. I refer, however, more especially to two instances of combination. The first was on the heath south of Lincoln, where the bad distribution of cottages compels many men to walk a long distance to work. Unions were formed and supported for some months by subscriptions, with the object of reducing the hours of work in consequence of the long distance to be traversed to it. This, however, came to an end without effecting its purpose.

209. The second case occurred in the neighbourhood of Maidstone. In May 1866, the Kent Agricultural Labourers Protection Association was formed in order "to organize the agricultural "labourers with the view to the amelioration of their social condition and moral elevation, and to "endeavour to mitigate the evils of their serfdom." At that time labour was scarce, and the first effort of the association was directed to obtaining an increase of wages; and in fact it was mainly by means of this organization that a general rise was shortly afterwards effected. As labour again became more abundant, the employers obtained more control over their men, and the result has been that the association has ceased to have any influence whatever. It is difficult to ascertain what were regarded by it as the principal steps in the amelioration of their condition. But curiously enough the one thing especially desired for them by everyone who takes an interest in them, that is, the improvement of their cottages, was not an object of this association, because they all felt that improved cottages enabled the employer to obtain more control over his men.

210. I have now, as I believe, gone through all the points immediately connected with the subject, upon which it was necessary for me to touch, but I cannot conclude this report without a strong expression of opinion that the moral and intellectual elevation of the employers themselves is after all the chief means by which the condition of the agricultural population may be ameliorated. The ignorance and narrow-mindedness of employers is still very much complained of, and the feeling of the Loppington (Salop) farmers, who sought to retain their position not by improving themselves, but by keeping down their labourers, though not openly expressed elsewhere, is by no means limited to that parish.

211. Nor can I conclude without a word of thanks to the many gentlemen, who in the course of my extended tour, have received me with courtesy, kindness, and hospitality. To their assistance and co-operation in the objects of the inquiry I owe a deep debt of gratitude.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
EDWARD STANHOPE.

10, King's Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.
July 20, 1869.

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feast day out of the funds of a club:—Band, 14*l.*; comic singer, 5*l.*; flowers, 1*l.*; total, 20*l.* Even in a club, of which the rules were certified by Mr. Tidd Pratt, and forbad such an application, "the annual feast is paid for out of the funds. This was at one "time done away with, and the consequence was that the numbers fell off, and no new ones came in. An annual statement is sent "to Mr. Pratt, *containing all particulars.*"

REPORT.—By the Hon. E. B. PORTMAN.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

H. I have now the honour to lay before you the results of the inquiry with which I have been charged in the counties of Hants, Devon, and Cornwall.

1. There being no gang system in existence in these counties, with the exception of the annual exodus of persons in considerable numbers from villages bordering on the hop district in Hants, and the occasional employment of a number of women and children for stone-picking (and these hardly come within the definition of a gang), I propose to place before you the main points of the evidence under the heads of—

1. General employment of women and children in agriculture.
2. The age at which children should be employed.
3. The education of agricultural children.
4. Cottages.

Mode of proceeding.

2. I have in the second part of this inquiry adopted a course of proceeding similar to that of the previous year, with the exception, perhaps, of having attended a larger number of public meetings in consequence of the increasing number of district chambers of agriculture and of the desire expressed by the members of them to discuss publicly a question so closely connected with their interests.

3. Out of 213 circulars of inquiries issued, 96 only have been returned to me, but, as on many occasions, those persons to whom they were sent, have attended meetings and expressed their opinions as well as given the desired information, those numbers do not convey an accurate notion of the assistance I have received from persons of influence to whom I applied. Throughout the district there was evinced a desire to aid me in my inquiry, with the exception of some instances in Devon, where a dislike to Government interference was manifested, and where I found some reluctance to afford the information for which I asked.

4. I have endeavoured as far as possible to obtain a just estimate of the real condition of the agricultural labourer, not only through the medium of his employer, or his minister, but also from the mouth of his wife, his children, and himself, and from the experience of the school teachers in many villages.

5. On the point to which Mr. Tufnell directed my attention, viz., the result of good schooling in removing the best men from the parish, I regret that it has been impossible to obtain direct statistical evidence. That the more intelligent among the agricultural labourers do migrate in search of higher wages is an undoubted fact to which many persons have borne witness, but it rarely or ever happens that you can find in a parish any record showing the position in later life of the lads who have been trained in the schools. I will in another part of my report call your attention to such statements as may throw any light on this point.

6. I have obtained the rules and reports of some of the best benefit societies in these counties, which I will set out in part. H.

7. Before going into the many points which come under the heads above-mentioned, I propose to give in detail the wages paid in the different parts of each county; as in Devon, more particularly, it is a question that has much occupied public attention lately, and on which conflicting statements have been made.

8. The northern division of the county of Hants contains in its centre a large, open and thinly populated district situated between Bishopstoke and Basingstoke, Alton, and Stockbridge, and joining the county of Wilts on the north of Andover. Throughout this portion of the division the farms are generally large. In the neighbourhood of Odiham, Hartley, and in a district called the Woodlands, to the north of Basingstoke, the holdings are much smaller, the country more closely wooded, the population greater, and I should say poorer. Hants.

9. The southern division comprises the New Forest, and the district surrounding the large towns of Southampton, Fareham, and Portsmouth, part of the valley of the Test, and the valley of the Avon on the borders of Wilts and Dorset.

10. The rate of wages in the large-farm district of the northern division, as shown by the evidence of those who met me at Lord Northbrook's (No. 3) is 10*s.* a week for an ordinary labourer and 1*s.* a day for a woman; children earning 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day when employed for bird-keeping. It was said that 15*s.* may be taken to be the average weekly earnings of a day labourer throughout the year, harvest pay and all privileges being reckoned. Wages.

11. At Kimpton, near Andover, also a large farm district, Mr. J. Fowler (No. 51), gives a statement of the wages paid by him, from which it appears that the ordinary labourer gets 10*s.* a week and pays 1*s.* for his cottage; carters and shepherds from 11*s.* to 12*s.* 6*d.* and a cottage free.

12. It may be taken as a rule that the carters and shepherds get 1*s.* a week more than the ordinary labourer, and in most instances a cottage free, but it must also be remembered that their hours of work are longer.

13. Mr. Fowler states, the total of wages paid on a farm of 1,000 acres (900 being arable), to be 812*l.* 16*s.*, about 16*s.* 3*d.* per acre; on a farm of 500 acres, 420*l.* a year.

14. In the district of Odiham and Heckfield, where the farms are smaller, a man's wages are 10*s.* and 11*s.* a week, all money, those of a woman, 8*d.* a day (Nos. 19, 21, 22). Boys get 2*s.* 6*d.* a week for bird-keeping.

15. There is in this part of the county much work to be had in the copses and in bark stripping, which is done by the piece.

16. Mr. Warner (No. 77) states, that in the neighbourhood of Botley wages for men are 11*s.* and 12*s.* a week, and a great deal of task-work, the women earning 10*d.* a day.

17. In the New Forest Union an ordinary labourer earns from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week; a boy of 8 years of age would begin with 3*d.* a day rising to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week when 10 years old.

18. In the Fordingbridge district a man's wages are nominally 10*s.* a week, but Mr. Ridley stated that the men in his employ averaged from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week through the year, including piece-work. (Vide Evid., No. 83).

19. Lads in farm service and employed with the cattle or as carter boys are hired by the year from Michaelmas, and get from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, according to age, when living at home. (Fowler, No. 51).

Those living in the farm houses get 4*s.* and 5*s.* a week and lodging, and 2*l.* 10*s.* at Michaelmas. (Mr. Tait, No. 22).

20. In Devon the wages question is one that has led to much controversy, not only on account of the directly opposite statements as to the amount earned, but also in consequence of the difficulty of ascertaining what is the real value of "the privileges" given in addition to a small weekly money payment. Devon. Wages.

21. I cannot do better than give some extracts from a paper entitled "Landowners, Land, and those "who Till it," written by the Rev. Canon Girdlestone. He says:—

"The following is a correct detailed account of the condition of an agricultural labourer in North Devon. Till within the last year the wages were seldom more than 8*s.*, in some cases only 7*s.* a week; 9*s.* a week are now usually given, though in some cases still only 8*s.* Each man has in addition his three pints or two quarts of cider a day. The horsekeeper and the shepherd have also a cottage and good garden rent free. In some cases also an agreement is made that the wages should be partly paid at a price per bushel fixed at the commencement of the hiring, in grist or tailing, being the wheat which is too small in grain to find purchasers in the market. This, when, wheat is very high, is an advantage to the labourer, but when wheat is low very much the reverse."

Again—

"Fuel is seldom supplied, except at a cost for getting it, by grubbing old hedges and such like, which is fully equal to its value. Potatoe ground is almost always paid for at a high rate."

"Women have 7*d.* or 8*d.* a day; this scarcely pays for wear and tear of clothes, and not at all for the consequent neglect of household duties, and in reality adds nothing to the welfare of a family. Many women are so well aware of this, as to decline out-door work, unless, as in some instances, which is a great hardship, forced to do it by the agreement between their husbands and the farmers, who in some cases will not give employment on any other conditions."

22. On the other hand, at a ploughing match dinner at Halberton on 28th October 1868, a farmer made the following statement:—

"The canon had said that the labourer earned 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week. Now he had gone through his labour book, and taken out the amount paid to one of his labourers from Lady Day 1867 to Lady Day 1868. Although

H. this man received nominally 8*s.* a week, he actually received, taking all the year round, 10*s.* a week in money and with grist-corn, convenience for pig and other things, he received as much as made up the wages to the value of 14*s.* a week."

23. Mr. Pearce, of Uploman (No. 114), the farmer who made the above statement, told me that the grist-corn is the same corn as that used by the farmer himself, the tailings being now used for the cattle. He further said that the wages of an ordinary labourer were 8*s.* a week and cider, of carters, &c. 10*s.* a week, &c.; that women earn 8*d.* a day with cider, or 9*d.* a day without it; and that a man can earn 12*s.* a week at task-work. Mary Arthurs, the wife of a labourer living in Uploman, said that her husband's wages were 9*s.* a week and cider, *no privileges, and rent to pay for his house.* A man named Ware (No. 118), in the same parish, who has worked as a regular man on a farm and as a jobber, says that the regular man in receipt of a small money payment, with the addition of privileges, is better off than the jobman at a higher rate of pay in money only. He doubts any labourer, except perhaps a shepherd, earning 14*s.* a week on an average.

24. The rate at Chettiscombe and Chevithorne, near Tiverton, paid by farmers (Nos. 136 and 146) is from 7*s.* a week up to 9*s.* for the best men, who with the carters get cottage and garden rent free, 20 yards of potatoe ground free, grist-corn at 5*s.* a bushel, and cider; women 8*d.* a day; boys of 13 or 14 years of age, 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, board and lodging. At Bampton for men the rate is 10*s.* a week in money, or 9*s.* and a cottage; for women 4*s.* a week; boys of 9 or 10 years 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day. At Kentisbury, in North Devon, wages for men are 12*s.* a week; for women and boys 5*s.* a week. At Morebath, Mr. Pine (No. 161) states that he gives a man 7*s.* a week, cottage and garden rent free, cider, 20 yards of potatoe ground, and bakes his bread for him; the man also has piecework.

25. Mr. Goodding (No. 162) considers that where the master is a good one the labourer with privileges is better off than if his wages were paid in full money. And he gives as his reason that if a man has his wages all in money, he must buy flour, &c. from the shop, and the tradesman has to make a living out of that money.

26. In the Budleigh and Honiton districts men's wages average 9*s.* a week with cider; women earn 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day; boys of 10 years of age 2*s.* a week. In the Honiton district the best men get by piecework 15*s.* and 16*s.* a week. In the Tavistock district, where, owing to the care of the Duke of Bedford, the condition of agricultural labourers is better than in many parts of the county, the wages for a man were stated to be 12*s.* a week (No. 92).

27. At Berry Pomeroy, for a man 11*s.* a week and cider, and 15 yards of potatoe ground dressed (No. 198).

28. In the Kingsbridge district, Distin, an agricultural labourer (No. 210) was in receipt of 10*s.* 6*d.* a week and cider; women earn 7*d.* a day.

29. Rev. A. Earle, from this neighbourhood, gives the following table of wages, which was submitted to several employers of labour, and in the main agreed to by them:—

	s.	*d.*
Weekly regular wage	10	0
Piecework, average per week	1	0
30*s.* for harvest, say	0	8
Privileges, *e.g.*, potatoe ground, straw, and house, say	0	6
Cider	1	4
	13	6

He adds, "*The employed have as a rule put a lower rate as the average.*"

30. In the district of Hatherleigh and Holsworthy, *i.e.*, the north-west portion of the county adjoining Cornwall, where as a rule the land is poor, the farms small, and the farmers not men of any capital, the wages of men are low, ranging from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a week; women earn 8*d.* a day.

31. I was told at Ashwater by Mrs. Tom (No. 271), wife of a farm labourer, that her husband earned 10*s.* a week, with no privileges, and paid 3*l.* 10*s.* a year for his cottage, and, to quote her own words, "sometimes a bit of piecework; us couldn't live if it was not for that."

32. At the meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Chamber of Agriculture, attended by representatives of both counties, it was stated that the wages of an ordinary labourer were 12*s.* a week and cider, and that 13*s.* a week might be fairly taken as a weekly average throughout the year.

Cornwall. Wages.

33. In the county of Cornwall the wages of the agricultural labourer vary according to the amount of competition that may be caused in the neighbourhood by mines, slate or granite works, or by the demands of the fishing season on the coast. There is but a small portion of this county that can be called purely agricultural. The small district west of Penzance and the north coast from Newquay to Camelford, are the best examples. Throughout the centre of the county is a backbone of moor, where quarrying, china clay works, and mines are in existence. I have confined my inquiries to those parts of the county where I was told the best information could be obtained; at the same time I have held meetings in places where the employment of the working class may be said to be mixed as at Lostwithiel (No. 297).

34. The rate of wages in East Cornwall (No. 288) is 12*s.* a week for a man, for a woman 8*d.* a day.

35. At Penzance, and in the district west of that town, 12*s.* a week is the rate for men; in some cases (Woollcombe, No. 311), 7*s.* and dinner, cottage and potatoe ground free.

36. In the Helston district from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week for men, varying according to the proximity to the mines. A boy of 9 years of age would earn 2*d.* a day if hired by the day, or 1*s.* a week and meat if otherwise hired. Women 8*d.* a day.

37. In the northern part of the county the wages are not paid wholly in money; the grist-corn system is there said to be an advantage, owing to the distance in many cases of the labourer's home from a market. At St. Columb Minor 12*s.* a week for a man is the average rate if paid all in money. Women earn 8*d.* a day; children in stone picking 6*d.* a day. Mr. Liddell (No. 352) gives the wages for men at 10*s.* a week with grist-corn and potatoe ground; for women 7*d.* and 8*d.* a day; for children

6*d.* a day. Throughout the district of Wadebridge the same rate prevails for regular agricultural labourers. At Kilkhampton (Mr. Trickey, No. 364) wages are 10*s.* a week without cottage when all paid in money; 9*s.* a week with cottage, or in a few instances 8*s.* and corn. H.

38. I have gone rather fully into the details of wages in my district, as in considering the question of legislation as to the age at which a child should first be employed, it is well that you should have before you the actual earnings of the heads of the agricultural labourers' family, in order that you may justly estimate the statement so frequently made, that without the assistance of the children's earnings the family cannot be maintained, and that the wages of the bread-winner are not sufficient to enable him to spare the weekly payment for his children's schooling. Under the head of benefit societies I shall have occasion to refer again to this question in considering the possibility of saving money out of the present earnings of an agricultural labourer.

I.—General Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture.

39. The employment of women in Hants, as shown by the returns which Captain Forrest, the chief constable, most kindly obtained for me through his district superintendents, is universal. The work is for the most part weeding corn, picking stones off the land, which is frequently done at per load, picking couch grass, and spreading dung. In the winter they are occasionally employed in the barns, or with the thrashing machines. Children under 10 years of age are not much employed; some boys of 7 and 8 years of age are sent out to scare birds, or mind pigs, and are occasionally used for weeding and stone-picking. Girls are very seldom employed, except when taken out by their parents to help at piecework, or in getting up potatoes, as in the case of Mr. Longstaff's field, near Micheldever No. 45).

40. Lads of 10 years of age are taken into the permanent service of the farmer as carter boys; they are hired by the year from Michaelmas; they do not always live in the farm houses.

41. In Devon and Cornwall it was usually stated that the women are not so much employed as formerly, and that it is often difficult to get them when wanted. Lace-making in the Honiton district, and gloving in the district of Torrington, in Devon, occupy the women and girls at home. It appears, however, that when there is a demand for a number of hands for stone-picking, they are forthcoming of all ages and sizes; but this employment is only for a few weeks in the late spring and in fine weather. They are also much employed in apple picking. With these exceptions it is rare to find a girl employed in the fields, and the testimony of women who have been themselves field workers is that such work is bad for girls, and that they would never send out their own.

42. Mrs. Nevill (No. 34) says: Field work not good for girls.

"I got no good by it, as I had to pay some one to look after the house and children, and things wasn't done, and the wear of clothes was great."

43. It is the opinion of many that the agricultural labourer would be better off if his wife stayed at home. Mr. Poore, agent to the Marquis of Winchester, goes so far as to say that the majority of the farmers in Amport parish agree with him that it would be beneficial, if practicable, to prohibit female labour in the fields altogether. Opinions differ as to the effect of the wife's work on the tidiness or otherwise of the home; but I am still inclined to adhere to the opinion which I expressed in my first Report, S. 32, that the employment of women in the fields does lead to a want of care at home, and to a neglect of the best interests of the family. Or for women.

44. There are, however, cases where a prohibition of all female labour in the fields would fall hardly, *e.g.*, in the case of widows with one or more children, and in the case of those young women with illegitimate children who are debarred by their misfortune from obtaining places as domestic servants in respectable families.

54. The evidence does not show that, as a rule, much injury to the health is caused by field work, either in the case of women or children. Exposure to wet may sometimes produce ill effects, more particularly in the case of young women, and it has been urged that girls should not be allowed to work in the fields till they have passed the age of 16 on the ground of health. Effect on health.

I think, however, that except when bird-keeping or doing such like work small children are not exposed to wet weather.

46. As to the effect of field work on morality, I am inclined to agree with Rev. R. Wolfe (No. 187), who stated it as his opinion that immorality is taken to the fields and not engendered *in* the field. On morals.

47. There being no gang system in these western counties, and consequently none of the evils attendant on the gathering together of large numbers of women and girls, or on the licentiousness of a gang-master, who has the girls in his power, it seems that with the exception of haytime and harvest there is no period in the year when the circumstances of employment would lead to immorality. We must look elsewhere for the cause; to the crowded cottages in the first instance, and too often to the want of care in domestic service.

48. At the same time there is every reason to believe that a habit of field work is bad for girls, as leading to a love of liberty in the evenings and to a dislike of the restraints of domestic service. Rev. J. O. Gifford says, "The less employment of women and female children in field labour the better. The older and worse conducted women injure the younger and purer." It is then satisfactory to find from the evidence obtained in these counties that the employment of women in the fields is gradually dying out.

49. It does not appear that there is need for placing any restriction on the hours of work or on the distance which children go to their work. Hours of work and distance to work.

50. The hours of work are seven or eight. No cases of hardship or over-working have come under my notice, with the exception of the long hours for bird-keeping in wet and fine weather for boys of 8 years old. In two cases at Halberton the hours for such boys were 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 4 a.m. to 8 p.m. The general testimony is that the labourers are, as a rule, kindly treated, though not overpaid.

51. Women are largely employed in the market gardens near Penzance; children also, as young as 7 years, who work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (No. 300 Gulval). They all work together in a "company," Market gardens; Gulval.

H. but there is no gang-master; the heavy work is done by the men, light work by the women. A few labourers will agree together for a "take;" they all consider themselves parties to the contract. Men and women have separate "takes." They rarely mix, and men do not employ women (No. 304, Mr. Thomas).

II.—Age at which Children should be Employed.

Application of Factory Acts to agriculture.

52. The next question is whether it is desirable or practicable to apply to agricultural labour the principles of the Factory Acts with regard to the age at which children should commence work. As I have already stated, the evidence does not show that, with the exception of the hours for bird-keeping, any need exists for legislative enactments for the protection of the young or of females from ill-treatment or excessive labour. It is, therefore, merely a question how far the education of the agricultural labouring class is affected by the early employment of children, and at what age they should commence work, taking into consideration not only the interests of the employer, but more especially those of the labourer himself.

Need only on ground of education.

Age below which children should not be employed.

53. Throughout my district, with the exception of the New Forest Union, in Hants, where it was thought that children might commence work at 8 years of age, the age of 10 was considered to be the right one to be fixed as that below which children should not be permitted to work in the fields. The general feeling in Devon was that up to 10 years Government might make such regulations as they thought fit, but that above that age no interference was at all necessary in the matter of labour. I was constantly told in that county, both at public meetings and in private, that with them no interference was needed; but I beg most distinctly to differ from that opinion, inasmuch as the state of education is most lamentably deficient throughout the agricultural community. It is to a certain extent true that except at special seasons, there is not much employment of young children in Devon, and the apathy and indifference about education are therefore all the more to be deplored.

Opinions in Hants.

54. At the meetings of the Hants Chamber of Agriculture, at Basingstoke and at Winchester, it was resolved that it is not expedient to employ boys under 10, or girls under 13 years of age. At Fordingbridge that boys should not be employed under 10 years. At the New Forest Board of Guardians that 8 years would be the proper limit to fix. At a meeting at Mr. Fowler's house, at Kimpton, near Andover, it was said that no boy should be employed under 10 years of age.

In Devon.

55. In Devon, at a large meeting at Tavistock, it was resolved that children should not be employed under 10 years of age. At the Devon Chamber of Agriculture meeting at Exeter in October 1868, many of the speakers considered 10 years as a sufficiently early age for children to commence work, though at the same time the Chamber deprecated Government interference in the matter.

56. At Kingsbridge it was the unanimous opinion of a meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture that boys should not commence work before 10 years, nor girls before 13 years of age.

57. At Newton Abbot Board of Guardians it was resolved that no boy should be allowed to work in the fields under 10 years of age, nor any girl under 16 years in the fields or in outdoor work.

At Plymouth.

58. At a meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Chamber of Agriculture, held at Plymouth, it was resolved that no legislative restriction on the age at which women and children are employed in agriculture is necessary in Devon and Cornwall, the opinion of the meeting being that Government should not interfere with the work of children after 10 years of age.

In Cornwall.

59. At a meeting at Lostwithiel, where the mining element as well as the agricultural was represented, it was the opinion that boys under 10 years of age should not be employed in agricultural labour, but that at the same time there might be cases in which legislation on the matter might cause hardship to the poor. The meeting was not in favour of any legislative interference at present; it was thought that with the existing facilities for education in that district labour and schooling might be combined during the earlier portion of the labourer's life.

60. At St. Colomb, at a large meeting of the North Coast agriculturists, it was resolved that it is not desirable that children under 10 years of age should be constantly employed in agricultural pursuits.

Rule in unions.

61. In many unions in the counties of Devon and Cornwall I found that it is the custom to withdraw out-door relief from children of 10 years of age, in some not till 11 or 12 years, as it is then considered that they are able to earn something. The rule is not a strict one, but in the case of strong healthy children it is usually enforced. The agricultural employer being fully represented on all County Boards of Guardians, it may, I think, be fairly assumed that, if they have themselves fixed on 10 years as the lowest age at which children should begin work if their health permits, there is a good reason for such a limit being adopted by the Government should it propose any legislation on the subject.

Opinion of farmers as to effect of such limit.

62. It was generally the opinion of farmers that legislative interference as to the age at which children should commence work would not affect them, 10 years being the limit, but that if any hardship was caused by it, it would be to the head of the labourer's family, in consequence of the loss of the children's earnings.

63. It seems that owing to the more general use of machinery in agriculture, and in consequence of an altered system of driving horses in plough and harrow, boys under 10 are not in such demand as they formerly were. They used to be employed to look after the leader of the team, whereas now the horses are driven with reins by the ploughman. In some of the hilly parts of Devon there is still occasional employment for a boy, with a spare horse to help the load up the hill.

Work for boys under 10, and wages.

64. There remains then the work of bird-keeping, pig-tenting, stone-picking, and potatoeing, sometimes of singling turnips behind a man, which can be done by a small boy under 10 years of age. And for these operations what are the wages? From 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day, in some cases only 3*d.* a day.

Will the loss of earnings of children under 10 years be felt by the labourer.

65. Will the loss of such earnings as these be really felt by the labourer when the clothes bill is considered? I give one piece of evidence taken from the lips of a girl (Sarah Roe) 11 years old in Chevithorne School, near Tiverton. "I went out stone-picking with mother at 8 years old. I was out "a month, and earned 6*s.* I wore out a pair of *new* boots in the time, they cost 6*s.* 6*d.*" Her father is an agricultural labourer, earning 7*s.* a week, with five children at home.

66. A few extracts from the evidence giving opinions on this point may be of service.—

The schoolmasters at Milton Green, and Gulworthy, near Tavistock, state:—

"That the gain to the families by the earnings of children under 10 years is imaginary, the cost of wear and tear of clothes, exceeding the incomings."

Rev. T. G. Clarke, of Odiham, says:—

"A limit of age for commencement of field work would be opposed by the farmers, and objected to by the labourers on account of the loss of earnings, and the parents would not send their children to school any the more, if prevented from sending them to work."

Mr. Eggar, steward to Sir H. Mildmay, thinks:—

"The loss to the parents would be very trifling."

Mr. Tait (Lord Eversley's steward), says:—

"The loss of earnings of children under 10 years of age would not be of any consequence to the parents."

Mr. Mark White, farmer (No. 23), says:—

"The earnings of little boys under 10 years of age, in the case of a large family of an able-bodied man, are in my opinion a very great consideration and assistance."

Mr. Adnam, of Stratton (an old man who commenced life as a shepherd boy), says:—

"I think 10 years would be a good age at which to fix the limit for work, and the loss of earnings under that age would not be serious to the parents."

Mr. Potter (schoolmaster for 52 years in Stratton), says:—

"The question of a restriction as to the age for commencing work is really a question of earnings, the 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week against the schooling. I do not think the parents would lose as much as they think by the stoppage of the children's earnings. The labourers *might* object to the Government controlling their children."

John Matthews, a carter at Kimpton, thinks:—

"It would be hard to keep children from work till they were 10 years old. Though the earnings are hardly "more than the wear of clothes, still they are glad of the money;" he adds, "my eldest boy began work at "6 years, *he cannot write, and can only read a little.*"

Mr. Geo. Morrice says:—

"That one of his labourers, with a family of six children, insisted on his employing the boys in preference to their being sent to school."

Effect of early labour on education.

67. The effect of the withdrawal from school of children at a tender age, even for the few weeks during which they may be employed, is said by school teachers to be, that they not only lose much they had previously learnt, but also that they become rough in their manners, and less subject to discipline than when in regular attendance.

68. Miss Strickland, mistress of the Micheldever Girls' School, says:—

"That children who go to field work lose much of the knowledge previously acquired, and in some instances do not regain their former place in the school for nearly six months."

69. Tallach, an agricultural labourer at Budock, in Cornwall (No. 336, says:—

"My children began work at 7 or 8 years of age. I should have liked to have kept them at school, they forget what they have learnt very soon when they have left it; there is no occupation to make them keep up their education. They are all the better for it, and are qualified for better occupations than without it."

Benefit of education in securing better wages.

70. On the other hand, in accordance with your instructions, I have endeavoured to obtain evidence as to the result of good schooling, in removing those who have profited by it to a higher sphere than that of an agricultural labourer; and though, as I have before said, direct proof is difficult to obtain, still it is clear that the best educated lads do go into the police, to the railways, and into the towns where they can command a higher price for the services which their education makes them capable of rendering. The case of Abbott's Ann parish, in Hants, where the Hon. and Rev. S. Best has for years past maintained a very high-class school, and given a course of education above the ordinary run of country schools is a good example.

Mr. Parsons, a farmer in that parish (No. 52), says:—

"Farmers in Abbotts' Ann cannot get carter lads in the parish, and are forced to seek them elsewhere, as those in Abbott's Ann are too highly educated for agricultural labour, and go away from the parish."

Rev. T. G. Clarke (No. 19), says:—

"Young men who have had some education go off into the police and to other employments not agricultural."

Mr. Stoneman, a farmer at Morebath in North Devon (No. 160), says:—

"That the best young men, *i.e.*, those who are the best educated, go away to the police, railways, &c.

3.—Education.

The state of education not such as is desirable.

71. Throughout my district I have put the question, is the state of education among the labourers such as you would desire? And I believe I may fairly say that it is admitted not to be so, though great progress has been made in late years, and it is said that the labourers are beginning to realize how great a loss to themselves is the want of education, and consequently are becoming more anxious about sending their children to school as long as they can afford to do so. This remark applies more to the better class of labourers, for there is unfortunately too large a number who are utterly indifferent about it, not only in the towns, but also in the small rural villages.

Mortality and marriages. Par. paper.

72. I have before me a parliamentary paper, entitled "Mortality and Marriages," dated 13th July 1867, which was moved for by Mr. Hastings Russell, and to which Lord Fortescue referred in his speech at the Devon Chamber of Agriculture, at Exeter, in October last. I have some doubt whether it can be taken as accurate evidence of the state of education; but I subjoin extracts relating to Hants,

Devon, and Cornwall from a table, showing the proportional numbers per cent. of marriages of men and women that signed the marriage register with marks in 1855 and 1865:—

	1855.		1865.	
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.
Hants - -	26·3	29·2	17·3	16·2
Devon - -	27·1	33	18	22·5
Cornwall - -	35·6	49·3	30·2	38·4

The numbers for Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire are:—

	1855.		1865.	
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.
Cambridgeshire -	40·3	42·6	31·3	27·1
Yorkshire—				
West Riding -	28·8	50·8	22·3	41·3
East Riding -	20·6	34	17·9	26·2
North Riding -	20·9	31·4	17·4	21·9

These numbers show at any rate that a certain progress in writing has taken place, and it may be fairly concluded that more attention has during those 10 years been paid to the education of the young. There is much, however, yet to be done, especially in Devon, before you can say that even a fair amount of elementary education is given generally throughout the country.

Causes of defective state of education.

73. In answer to the question contained in our instructions as to the causes of the defective state of education, it is I think to the indifference of parents, and to their indisposition, in some cases, perhaps, to their inability, on account of low wages, to forego the children's earnings, that much is to be attributed.

Causes of irregularity of attendance at school.

74. The irregularity of attendance at the schools is universally admitted, but it is not entirely to be attributed to the employment of the children themselves in the fields, in very many cases it is more caused by the employment of the mothers, who keep the older children at home to look after the little ones. Poverty, *i.e.*, inability to pay the school fee, is sometimes pleaded as an excuse, but I think not often with much reason, for when the fees are paid for them the children do not attend any the more.

75. The Rev. S. Berkeley of Morebath most kindly took great pains to obtain the best information on the causes of this irregularity of attendance, and sent to all the school managers in his district of diocesan inspection a circular to this effect: "To which of the following causes do you mainly attribute the "irregularity of attendance at elementary schools?

"1. Fair claims of labour for hire.
"2. Fair home claims.
"3. Caprice or indifference of parents.
"4. (Any other cause to be named)."

A very large proportion of the answers assigned No. 3 as the main cause. One correspondent, a diocesan inspector of considerable experience in the adjoining county, modified this opinion by attributing the prevalence of cause 3 to the apathy of teachers and clergy, and a consequent indifference to the efficiency of their school or their people's estimate of the benefit of education.

76. Mr. Berkeley adds—

"No doubt this was painfully true in past years, and may be true in some districts still, but I do not think it is more than exceptionally the case in this district."

It would seem that there is still in many instances a want of consideration or care for the educational wants of the labouring class, in spite of the efforts made and the good example set by many of the leading and most influential owners of property in the county. When the narrow majority in the Devon Chamber of Agriculture declined at Exeter to give any assistance to the inquiry, which under your instructions I was endeavouring to carry out, the old leaven of stagnation, of hatred of inquiry, arising probably from a consciousness of their real position, came out to the full, and was duly commented on by "the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette" in these words—

"Once again the old feeling takes possession of them, and they say 'Let us alone, we are doing what we can for the benefit of the labourers and their children.'"

The time has gone by for such as these to be "let alone," if the legislature wait till *they* propose to advance, it will be a long long time before any step is taken to enable the agricultural labourer to rise above the level of a "clod."

Supply of schools.

77. The supply of schools in my district differs considerably. In Hampshire there is no dearth of schools, though in some parts of the northern division a better arrangement is required, and it was suggested at the meeting held at Mr. Fowler's at Kimpton (No. 48) that one good school for two or three small parishes if conveniently situated would be sufficient for the educational wants of the district, and the Hon. and Rev. S. Best suggests that that school should be fed from dames' schools in each parish for the very small children before they are able to walk to the big school. The population of many of these parishes is so very small that such an arrangement would apparently be a good one.

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78. Mr. Benson (No. 104) says aid is wanted from Government to start a good school in a centre of small parishes. Schools being also placed so as to suit outlying districts for the small children.

Central schools.

79. Milton Green school and Gulworthy school, in the neighbourhood of Tavistock, are instances of a central school with a high class master, at the former of which boys attend from distances at a diameter of six miles, and at the latter some children as young as 9 years come five miles. Mr. Christie, the master at Milton Green, says it is not a larger supply of schools that we want, but some mode of getting the children to attend at those already existing.

Grouping of schools.

80. In a letter which the Rev. A. Earle, of West Alvington, wrote to me (No. 207), a portion of which was devotod to the question of education, he suggests a plan of improvement for schools in small agricultural parishes.

"I believe we might improve our present schools at small expense in the following way :—If the schools could be brought into union and grouped, say 25 or 30 together, in connection with a Committee of Education formed out of the Agricultural Chamber and placed under a competent organising master, who should give all his time, under the direction of the committee to whom he should report every month, to organising the said schools, teaching in them, and assisting the present teachers to a better method and discipline, the schools would be sure to improve. The cost would not be great and the salary of the organising master could be paid by contributions from each school in union. The Government inspector could inspect and report, and a smaller grant might be given according to results, and if these results are satisfactory, I do not see the justice of insisting on a certificate. To pay for *results* only and to insist upon a preliminary certificate is, I think, a contradiction, and if a good system of organisation, whereby present educational agencies in remote and small agricultural parishes could be fostered, is possible, I believe it would be the duty of Government to give such aid as the inspectors reports might justify. I believe some plan of this kind in connection with chambers of agriculture would do more to make education general than any compulsory measures connected with an educational rate."

81. The want of schools is much felt in the Holsworthy part of North Devon, and in the neighbourhood of St. Columb in Cornwall, where it was stated that there was scarcely an efficient school in the district.

Great need of alteration of regulations as to grants-in-aid.

I would now call your attention most particularly to the fact that it has been the openly expressed opinion of landowners, clergy, and farmers at almost every public meeting which I have attended in my district, that if the Government would relax the stringent regulations as to grants-in-aid to schools only where there is a certificated teacher it would be most beneficial to the rural parishes. Vide Evid. No. 1, Mr. Chute; No. 2, Resol. 2, Hants Chamber of Agriculture ; No. 48, No. 51, No. 84, Rev. W. Owen; No. 92, Mr. Parris; No. 186, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Creed, Mr. Wade ; No. 187, No. 206, Mr. Cornish, and Mr. Earle, No. 253.

82. One of the strongest cases is that stated by the Rev. R. Wolfe in his address to the Devon Chamber at Newton Abbot, and at the meeting of the Board of Guardians at Newton. He is the clergyman of one of the Torquay parishes, and as chairman of the Newton Board of Guardians is thoroughly well acquainted with the wants of the small rural parishes adjoining Dartmoor and elsewhere in the union, and he says,—

" Under the present system of granting aid rich localities who are able to pay certificated masters get all, the poorer who are not able, get none. Torquay under the present system is in receipt of State aid to the amount of several hundreds a year, while the poorer parishes in the neighbourhood get nothing. The present system is most objectionable and must be modified, because it is diametrically opposed to common sense and justice, giving all to the rich and nothing to the poorer districts."

83. It is the universal cry throughout the small rural parishes that aid is needed, there is no want of willingness to set up schools, but there is too often a want of funds ; the parish cannot afford to pay a certificated master, and therefore cannot have any aid from the Committee of Council. What can possibly be the objection to putting all schools under inspection and making a grant for results on the report of the inspector, putting aside the question whether the teacher is a certificated one or not?

84. I do not for a moment wish to detract from the good work that has been done throughout the country by the institution of trained teachers, but I think there are also many teachers who from force of circumstances have been, after receiving a certain amount of training, debarred from completing their course and obtaining a certificate, and who are excellent teachers producing probably as good results at their schools as many of the certificated teachers. A great good has been done, a large number of excellently trained teachers are abroad, let those large and rich places which can afford to pay for them employ if they please the certificated teachers; but if education is to spread and to be encouraged throughout the small rural parishes, this rule must be relaxed and aid be given to keep up the schools which are now struggling against hard times and which will otherwise soon share the fate of many I have seen and be *shut up for want of funds.*

85. Turn to the case of Lostwithiel school (No. 294) in a small town in Cornwall where in winter there are on the books 175, and in summer 190 children. The mistress has one teacher to help her, and though complaining of the indifference of parents to their children's education, she states in evidence that 104 children attended 200 times during the past year, of these 31 are in the first class, 19 in the second, and 23 in the third. Not one shilling of Government aid is given to that school because she is not certificated: surely the State ought to countenance so good a school as this in a poor town as well as the schools in rich Torquay.

86. The inquiry with which I have been charged has led me into many small isolated parishes ; and this want has come under my notice not only in the southern and western counties which I have visited this year but also in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire. In S. 53 of my first report I called your attention to it and I beg again to do so, inasmuch as the cry for a reform on that point has come up louder and with hardly a dissentient voice from those in Hants, Devon, and Cornwall who are really interested in improving the educational state of the agricultural labouring class. There should not in justice be so heavy a burden on the shoulders of the clergymen who in too many instances now have to provide nearly all the means of education in the parish.

Street arabs in small rural towns.

87. Attention was called in the House of Commons to the large numbers of children in Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, growing up perfectly uneducated, except in the ways of vice and crime ;

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and I have from time to time been told that the rural districts are far superior in point of morality to the towns. I daresay they may be, and if the surveillance of the ministers of religion or of the employers of labour among a limited population is worth anything they certainly should be better; but at the same time all who are acquainted with the agricultural districts know perfectly well that as a rule there is in every district a small town or large village in which are congregated the worst portion of the population of that district. In those centres are a mass of children growing up not only with insufficient education but without any education at all and subject to the influences of a vicious home; and it seems to me that this is the most difficult class to deal with. Mr. B. Snell said at the Plymouth meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture "he should like to see neglected children committed to some establishment for education up to a certain age," extending in point of fact the provisions and usefulness of the Industrial Schools Act. It is quite useless to imagine that anything short of direct compulsion most rigidly enforced will ever get those children to school, and as Mr. Gifford of Hartley (No. 35) says:—

"Even if you did force them to school it is questionable whether you would do them much good, such is the evil influence of a vicious home."

Their parents care nothing about their education and can only be made to feel by the pressure of penalties for their neglect.

Compulsory education.

88. Doubtless a compulsory system would act most beneficially in the cases of towns large and small, but the expression of opinion in the rural districts has not been favourable to the introduction of it there. There is a great fear of any increase in the rates and in some cases a dislike to the control of the children being taken out of the hands of the parents. I am bound to say that I found considerable willingness on the part of the farmers to aid in improving the present state of education, but I think that the evidence goes to show a preference for retaining the present voluntary system with more state aid and consequently more inspection, or for placing the schools under local management supported by local rates and still under Government inspection.

Preference for voluntary system.

Support of compulsion.

89. On the other hand at Newton Abbot in Devon there was a decided expression of feeling on behalf of a system of compulsory school attendance, not only on the part of Mr. Wolfe the chairman but also by Mr. E. Ford and Mr. Stook, both farmers, the latter giving as his reason that before the present apathy about education among the labourers could be removed it is necessary thoroughly to educate a whole generation. An opinion to the same effect was expressed by Mr. Eld. Brown at a meeting at Plymouth on the 27th March (Evid. No. 286). Mr. Wills also supported it on the ground that it is the duty of the State to provide for the moral health of the children and for the prevention of crime. These were the only public meetings where I found the system advocated. Many have privately expressed their opinion that eventually compulsion must be resorted to, and the schoolmasters are in favour of it on account of the difficulties under the present system of advancing the children in learning, owing to the irregularity of their attendance.

90. Rev. C. S. Bere (No. 112) says:—

"I see nothing short of compulsory education as a real and effective antidote to the present indifference and labour interests of the parents; by labour interest I mean the interest which parents have in keeping their children at home that *they* may work."

91. Rev. G. W. Proctor (No. 256) writes:—

"I suspect nothing would prevail or produce with rapidity the desired effect among the employed but compulsory education of the young, which means education provided by the State out of a rate assessed on all kinds of property. I have grown out of my former fears of an elementary school education under the direction and at the cost of the State."

Half-time or alternate days.

92. The method of securing school attendance by half-days or by alternate days at school and work is not thought to be practicable in agricultural employment owing to the distance to and from work, the vicissitudes of climate, and the need of haste in the work in which children are occasionally employed. Mr. J. H. Veale, of Passaford, gave me an instance of the trial of the alternate day system by one of his neighbours which had utterly failed; the lads agreed to the proposal but did *not* go to school Evid. 279). If, however, a limit of age is fixed by law below which no child shall be employed at all, and that limit is fixed at 10 years, there does not seem to be any need for either of the above methods.

Continuous education above 10 years.

93. It becomes, then, necessary to consider in what way the education of a boy above 10 years shall be continued. I fear it is too true that from the time a boy goes into farm service he but rarely does much towards keeping up the knowledge he has acquired at school. The period of entering such service varies in the different counties. In Hants many go as young as 10 years; in many parts of Devon and Cornwall not till 12 years.

Night schools.

94. Night schools are considered by many to be the best mode of securing this object, and a better organized system, with an alteration of the Committee of Council's regulations as to grants-in-aid of them, was advocated by the farmers and others. I would more particularly call your attention to the opinion of Rev. Sir St. Vincent Hammick, who, in describing his own success with night schools in his parish, alludes to the chief difficulty being the requirement by Government of a certificated teacher, and the not allowing scholars under 12 to be presented for examination; but the evidence goes to show that in parish after parish these schools have been tried, have only answered for a short time, and when the novelty had worn off the lads ceased to attend, and the attempt was given up. In Devon, where the people live in scattered hamlets, the distance to and from the school has been found to be a fatal obstacle.

95. Again, it is said by the farmers that it is very inconvenient to have their carter boys going to night school at the time when they are wanted to do up the horses and fodder the cattle. The schoolmaster at Thorverton told me that lately several farm lads had been forbidden by their employers to attend night school on this ground. Lord Northbrook, on the other hand, showed me two letters from labourers on this point, which showed that the work for the horses being at an end at 3 to 3.30 p.m. the lads could well attend an evening school in summer and in winter.

96. Rev. W. Karslake, of Mesham (No. 171), says,—

Return of agricultural servants, their

"Undoubtedly there is at present great danger of young persons losing, to a great degree, the advantages they have obtained during their early school days, say up to 10 or 12 years, through subsequent neglect. I

am not fond of multiplying legal enactments, but I am inclined to believe that a statute requiring a return, as respects all servants employed in agriculture, of the number of their attendances during the past six months at school or at *some* place of divine worship would be advantageous, and would be hailed as a boon by agriculturists." H. attendance at school or worship for past six months.

97. Mr. Potter, schoolmaster at Stratton, suggests that boys earning wages should attend school from October to March.

98. The question of requiring a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance during the year or of a standard of attainment, to be produced before hiring, I have again frequently submitted for the consideration of the employers of labour. There is no doubt that the more you consider this question the more difficult does it appear to enforce obedience to any law on the subject. I still think it possible in counties where it is the custom to hire carter boys by the year to establish a joint registry of such hiring and of the required certificate, but in other parts of England, where such a custom may not prevail, a vast army of inspectors would be needed. Certificates.

99. Mr. Parsons, a farmer of Abbott's Ann, in Hants, says on this point,—

"A certificate showing too much knowledge on the part of the lad would be rather an objection than an inducement to the farmer to employ him. *Though he has been to school yet he has good moral character*, would be the words of a large class of farmers. If a certificate is required from a lad seeking employment it should comprise: 1. School attendance; 2. Moral character; 3. Proficiency in work."

100. Mr. T. S. Bolitho, at a meeting held at Penzance (No. 309), suggested,—

"That a certificate of school attendance for some hours during the preceding week should be demanded every Monday morning, and if not produced the child should not be employed by anyone; attendance at night school or Sunday school to count."

101. Mr. Spearing declared himself in favour of the production of a certificate either of attendance or examination, and thought that between the ages of 10 and 12 or 13 an attendance of six hours a week at night school during the winter months should be required.

102. I will not multiply extracts from the evidence, the above being sufficient to show that opinions on this point vary, but that there is in some quarters a disposition to give the system a fair trial. If employers would give a preference to lads who could produce a certificate, such as that given by the Southern Counties Association, or even the humbler one of the village schoolmaster, it would have a good influence in encouraging education among the children, and would overcome some of the reluctance now shown by the parents to send their children to school. Surely it must now be clear, even to the most reluctant, that in these days, when the use of machinery is daily becoming more common, the demand for labourers on a farm is for work requiring skill and care more than mere physical strength, that mind is wanted as well as brute force, and that it is to the advantage of the employer to have as his labourers men educated, at any rate, up to the pitch of reading, writing, and the four first rules of arithmetic; and the labourer is, I believe, beginning to see that in education lies the prospect of success in life for his children, and that in his capability of education he is secure of a good position if he will only put it to the test.

103. The question is, shall the State step in and insist on the duty of a man to care for his children's moral welfare being fulfilled. It may be that without some such step no progress will be made. There will still be poverty pleaded, low wages, and the necessity for the children to earn something; and there comes a question worthy of some consideration. Suppose the law says no child shall work till 10, and that from that age to 13 he shall attend school so many days in the year, will such an amount of labour be withdrawn from the market as to necessitate a higher rate of wages for the able-bodied men and older lads? And, again, taking it to be a fact that the best educated lads are *now* seeking other than agricultural employment, will not an extension of the blessings of education to a greater number by some legal action raise the position of the whole agricultural labouring class, and eventually do away, to a large extent, with the employment of women in the fields? Duty of State to interfere for moral welfare of children.

104. Farmers would doubtless say they cannot afford to pay higher wages, but, with all due submission, it is not a tenant-farmer's question. The burden must eventually fall on the landowner, in the shape of the rent which he will be able to obtain for a farm which, under such circumstances, may or may not require a larger outlay of capital by the tenant for the same return he now gets.

105. An opinion was expressed on various occasions that the children of small farmers are in a worse position in the matter of education than those of the labourers, and more particularly in those parts of Devon where the holdings are small, and the farmers, not being men of capital, are obliged to keep their children at home to do the work of the farm as soon as they are able to endure the fatigue or are strong enough to undertake the labour. I would refer you to the evidence of Mr. Parsons, a guardian of Holsworthy (No. 261), who says, State of education among small farmers.

"The children in the union are better educated than many farmers' sons. The will for education is not wanting among the farmers, but they have no capital, and are obliged to keep their lads at home to work on the farm."

106. Also to that of Mr. Sanders, a farmer at Pyworthy (No. 265), who says,—

"The farmers complain that the children of the labourers get a better education than their own; they are often obliged by poverty to keep their children at home to work on the farms. I think that the labourers' children should be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, but should not have such an education as would put them above the farmers."

107. To that of Mr. Mills, schoolmaster at North Lew (No. 280):—

"The farmers send their children to this school; many of them are very rough and ignorant, and not being able to employ labour they keep their children at home to work on the farms."

108. The same want was expressed by Mr. Mark White, a farmer at Heckfield in Hants (No. 23), in these words:—

"The children of small farmers are worse off for education than those of the labourers. There is no school of a grade between the village school and the boarding school that would meet the wants of the farmer at a cheap rate, and I think such a school is very much needed."

H. 109. Mr. Nath. Heard (No. 267), an occupier of 500 acres, who began life as a labouring man, laments his want of education in hese words:—

"I cannot write well. I would give 50*l.* to be able to write a good letter."

110. In Devonshire, at any rate, there are two examples of excellent middle class schools, capable of supplying the want above-mentioned; one at West Buckland, which was under the management of Prebendary Brereton, and supported by all the influence and power of Earl Fortescue, and whose fame is so wide spread as to require no words of mine to call public attention to it; the other at Sampford Peverell, which has been under the care and management of the Rev. C. S. Bere, of Uploman. I am happy to say that after a period of difficulty through which Mr. Bere has most nobly struggled, this school is now making rapid progress. The farmers of the neighbourhood who have children there spoke in the highest terms of it, and there is every reason to believe that Mr. Bere will have his reward in the satisfaction of feeling that he has supplied a want which is much felt, and in seeing the rising generation of farmers better educated than their forefathers, and consequently more willing to aid in the advancement of those who are dependent upon them for their daily subsistence.

Industrial schools. 111. The number of industrial schools at present existing is not great, but I have great pleasure in calling your attention to an excellent one at Old Alresford, built and supported by Miss Onslow (Evid., 72), where there are 34 girls of ages varying from 11 to 20. They are instructed in house-work, in the work of the kitchen and laundry, and also attend school. The officers are a matron, a governess, and a laundress.

112. There is an industrial school at Winchester and at Exeter. There is in the South Stoneham union-house a separate place for girls of 14 years and upwards, where eight at a time are taught cooking and household work; while at school they learn washing.

4. Cottages.

Hants. Stratton. 113. In the district represented at the meeting at Stratton, it was said that the cottages are sufficient in number for the population, but that there are not enough attached to the farms under the farmer's control; they are well supplied with gardens and allotments.

Odiham. Odiham district.—The cottages are sufficient in number, not crowded, with two or sometimes three bedrooms, with good gardens in the rural parts, and allotments where there are no gardens. Rent varies from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. (Nos. 19 and 20).

Heckfield. In the neighbourhood of Heckfield cottage rent varies from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 2*s.* a week, according to the size of the garden; mostly with two bedrooms; some of Lord Eversley's have three bedrooms and good out-door accommodation.

Hartley. In Hartley Row, a town, there are 300 cottages, nearly all of which have two bedrooms, back-house, &c., with gardens varying in size. Rev. Mr. Gifford says, some of them return 25 per cent. for the first 12 years of their existence.

N. Waltham. North Waltham.—Cottage accommodation is, on the average, very bad. Gardens are small, but allotments can be obtained when required.

Micheldever. Micheldever.—Cottages are generally good, they belong to the landowners. Cottage accommodation is being increased. Rent ranges from 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* a year.

Kimpton. Kimpton.—Many of the cottages are old but large; some have three, others only two bedrooms. Rent, 1*s.* a week. Much is done to improve them, but very much more is required.

Abbott's Ann. Abbott's Ann and neighbourhood is favourably circumstanced in respect of cottage accommodation. Several new ones have been recently built by Rev. T. Best of Redrice, on the farms. In all cases double cottages; in some, two or three double ones near each other. The old cottages are not so bad inside as their outward appearance would lead one to believe; some with two, others with three bedrooms, with a garden. Rent varies from 1*s.*, 1*s.* 3*d.*, to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Allotments. Abbott's Ann. There are two allotment fields in Abbott's Ann; one, the property of Mr. Fowler, is let at 6*d.* a lug, the other, belonging to Hon. and Rev. S. Best, is let at 2½*d.* a lug.

Amport. At Amport the cottages are not overcrowded, lodgers not being permitted. There are 90: 25 of which are modern, the remainder are old but in good repair. They all have a kitchen, pantry, and out-house; 30 have three bedrooms; 57 have two bedrooms; and 7 have but one. The gardens of the Marquis of Winchester's cottages average 24 perches each, and those belonging to other owners 16 perches, but this includes the site of the cottage. Rents are as follows:—

9	from 70*s.* to 80*s.*	a year.	
35	„ 60*s.* to 65*s.*	„	
40	at 52*s.*	„	
10	from 20*s.* to 40*s.*	„	

Much has been done here since 1845.

Old Alresford. At Old Alresford the cottages, with the exception of four, built by one of the landed proprietors, are not good. The larger number belong to a non-resident proprietor. Almost all have fair gardens. Rent is 1*s.*, 1*s.* 3*d.*, and, in a few instances, 2*s.* a week.

Chilcomb. The cottages at Chilcomb, held under the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, were much in want of repair.

In the Petersfield district cottages are generally very good, not quite sufficient in number, but not much overcrowded. They all have good gardens or allotments close at hand.

Botley. Botley.—Bedroom accommodation is insufficient. The inclosure of commons has led to the building of many more cottages than formerly existed on the same acreage.

New Forest. In the New Forest cottage rent is said to average 4*l.* a year; they are on the whole good and sufficient in number, with good gardens. Those at Beaulieu, belonging to Lord Henry Scott, have a living room, scullery and pantry, and three bedrooms; 20 perches of garden, pig-stye, privy, &c., at a rent of 1*s.* a week. I do not think a neighbouring place called Beaulieu Rails presents quite so bright a picture. There are also a number of squatters in this district whose dwellings are very miserable.

Fordingbridge. In the Fordingbridge district and on the western borders of the forest, there is not so good a class of cottage as in many other parts of the county, and rents range from 1*s.* a week to 5*l.* a year, with inadequate bedroom accommodation. Here, also, there are usually good-sized gardens attached, or allotments to be obtained.

114. Budleigh.—The cottages are bad, but improvements are being made. Those on the farms are reckoned at 1*s.* a week rent. H. Devon. Budleigh.

Broadclyst.—The cost of a double cottage with two rooms down and two up, built of brick and slate, is about 200*l.* Supply of cottages sufficient. Broadclyst.

In the Honiton District the amount of cottage accommodation and the quality is unsatisfactory. The cottages by no means generally have gardens. Honiton.

In Halberton sleeping and cottage accommodation is generally bad. Few have more than two bedrooms, many have only one, and they are overcrowded. Rents vary from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Halberton.

At Uploman and Huntsham they are better; in the latter village they are usually built in pairs, one cottage containing three, the other two bedrooms. A pair costs 200*l.* Rent, with a quarter acre of garden, 1*s.* a week for each cottage. Uploman and Huntsham.

On the property of Mr. J. Heathcote Amory, M.P., in Bolham and other parishes adjoining Tiverton, great improvements are being made in the dwellings of the agricultural poor. J. H. Amory, M.P.

At Cadeleigh cottages are bad, and the rents from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* a year and rates. Cadeleigh.

At Cadbury are some good cottages, with three bedrooms and a garden, let at 1*s.* a week. Cadbury.

At Bampton, where there is an abundant supply of stone on the spot, a double cottage, with kitchen, backhouse, and two bedrooms in each, can be built for 120*l.*, and each will produce a rent of 4*l.* a year with a garden. Bampton.

At Morebath Mr. Montague Bere has some good cottages, with three bedrooms and half an acre of garden, let at 5*l.* 5*s.* a year. The cottages generally in that parish are in a satisfactory state. Morebath.

The cottages on Lord Portsmouth's estate have been much improved of late. They are not overcrowded and have very good gardens or allotments of land. Earl of Portsmouth.

In the district near Barnstaple and Combe Martin cottages are reported to be generally in fair condition, though in some cases there is overcrowding. Rents, with a garden, vary from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* and upwards. Barnstaple, &c.

In the district of Chagford, the Tawtons, and Okehampton the accommodation is not good, and the rents are high; in one case at Drewsteignton the rent for a cottage with one room down and one bedroom is 3*l.* a year, and 3*s.* for rates; these people have an allotment of 20 yards, for which they pay 6*s.* 8*d.* a year, and they also had to pay last year 1*s.* a yard for their potatoe ground in a farmer's field. Drewsteignton.

In the Newton Abbot district the cottages are fair, though many are very old; there are gardens attached to most of them. Rent about 1*s.* a week for those of agricultural labourers. Newton Abbot.

In the district of Kingsbridge cottage accommodation is very indifferent. It was stated at the meeting that there were many cottages with only one bedroom, not enough with two, and very few with three bedrooms. The average rent is 2*l.* to 3*l.* a year. There are usually gardens attached to them. At Stokenham and Tor Cross I found the dwellings very bad, and the people complained of the difficulty of getting the landlord to do any repairs. Kingsbridge.

In Plympton St. Mary union the cottages are altogether inferior and the accommodation inadequate. Rent varies from 2*l.* to 6*l.* a year. In some of the villages which I visited in that union there was hardly a privy to be found belonging to any cottage. Plympton St. Mary.

The Duke of Bedford's cottages at Tavistock and in the neighbourhood are very good. Mr. G. Martin kindly supplied me with the number of cottages in Tavistock parish and the rent, viz., 386 cottages, rented at 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. There are also upwards of 400 allotments averaging 20 perches, each let at about 2*l.* 15*s.* an acre. Tavistock.

He says that the cost of erecting labourers' cottages on this property is about 280*l.* or 300*l.* per pair, this sum includes ground work and all other costs. If more than two are built together the cost would be somewhat reduced. Many of the duke's cottages in the county have cost much less than the sum I have named, but with the increased price of labour and materials together with the enlarged accommodation now given they cannot now be built for less than I have stated.

The district around Holsworthy, including Clawton, Ashwater, &c., &c. is very badly off for cottages. They have for the most part one living room and one bedroom, with an earth floor in the living room. There is generally a garden. Rent is about 1*s.* a week. Holsworthy.

Cottages in this district are not good, with the exception of those on Lord Clinton's property. The village of Merton contains some excellent dwellings of all ages, with gardens and an abundant supply of allotments. Rents varying from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* a year. Hatherleigh. Merton.

115. In Cornwall a very large number of the cottages are held on leases for lives; the landowners in such cases cannot be held answerable for their state, it is well known that as a rule when cottage property of this kind comes into the hands of the landowner it is usually in a most delapidated state, and requires a considerable outlay of money before the dwellings can be made fit for a new tenant, and such improvements must of necessity be made by degrees. Cornwall.

The relieving officers of the Liskeard union report that in the Liskeard district the cottages are in some parts crowded. In the Looe district that many houses have but one sleeping apartment, even in cases of large families, more especially mentioning the parish of St. Martin. In the Callington district that the cottages are not crowded. Rents with a garden vary from 50*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.* a year. Liskeard Union.

Cottage accommodation is very insufficient and bad; there is not sufficient bedroom accommodation. Rents vary from 4*l.* to 6*l.* *Very little would be got for* 4*l.* Gulval.

At Trelowarren the average rent of a cottage and garden is 3*l.* a year. At Grade the cottages are very much crowded, owing to the increase of population attracted by the Lizard Serpentine Works, and to the difficulty of getting any land for building. At St. Keverne the cottages are not sufficient in number, and there is a great deficiency of gardens, and no allotments, also a great want of privies. Average rent is 3*l.* a year. Helston District.

The cottage accommodation in this district is very indifferent. Many are without gardens; the allotment system does not prevail, but the labourers generally take land for their potatoe crops every year. St. Columb.

At St. Minver the state of the cottages is not all that could be desired; they mostly have two bedrooms, but few have privies. Nearly every one has a garden. Rent 40*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year with a garden. St. Minver.

H. Michaelstow, &c.

At Michaelstow and its neighbourhood slate and granite are close at hand, and the cottages are consequently substantial and good; they usually have two bedrooms, but are often overcrowded. Rent with a garden 1*s.* a week to 3*l.* a year.

Kilkhampton.

At Kilkhampton the Rev. Lord John Thynne has some excellent cottages, some with two bedrooms, and some with three, outhouses and privies. Rent with a garden 3*l.* a year, and sometimes "outs" also 6*s.* a year.

Suggestions as to improvement of cottages, &c.

116. In accordance with your instructions I have endeavoured to obtain opinions as to the best mode of improving the condition of the cottages, and generally as to the working of the Lands Improvement Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79.), and I subjoin extracts from the evidence of some practical men, many of whom are agents for or managers of properties, and who are well capable of giving a sound opinion on the matter.

117. Mr. J. P. Fowler, of Kimpton (No. 51), who in addition to a holding of 1,000 acres, is manager of the Tedworth estate, says,—

"I think many landlords might avail themselves of the power given to the Enclosure Commissioners by the 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. to advance money for the improvement of land, &c. very much to the benefit of the labourer. If gentlemen would build good cottages on their estate and let them to their tenants they would find it add so much to the value of their property that farmers would pay a good per-centage on the outlay. It would give the farmer more interest in the labourer, for instead of finding, as they often do now, bad cottages occupied by men who have no interest in the farmer's welfare or the farmer in theirs, a much better feeling would exist. Good cottage accommodation will always be self-supporting, it is a great advantage to the farmer, and tends more to improve our class of labourers than any government legislation."

118. Mr. W. Warner (No. 76) says,—

"If landlords would be content to receive the same interest for their money on cottages as on the land, it would be an advantage to both landlord and tenant, as cottages might be built to pay 3½ to 4 per cent. interest."

119. Mr. J. W. Kemp, agent to Mr. Troyte,—

"Thinks it impossible to provide good cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms and involving no disadvantage to the tenant."

120. Rev. C. Bere,—

"Thinks it impossible for good cottage accommodation to be provided on self-supporting terms, unless groups of eight or six, or at least four, could be built together.

121. Rev. Canon Girdlestone says:—

"Just as the landowner always provides a good house and out-buildings for the tenant farmer, which form part of the let for which the rent is paid, so he ought to see that on or near the farm which he lets to his tenant farmer, there is a sufficient number of good cottages for the labourers employed on the farm, which he, and not the tenant farmer, ought to keep in repair. These should form part of the let for which he receives his rent, the value of which ought to be included in the let, for which he ought not to expect any separate profit, and the control of which, he should, to a certain extent, keep in his own hands."

122. Rev. W. Karslake (No. 171), says:—

"It is believed that no system can be devised by which cottages can be made really self-supporting as the habitations of agricultural labourers, but that landowners must be content to provide cottages for the labourers on the same principle as they provide for the stock on a farm, and a residence for the farmer, as necessary, that is, to the profitable occupation of the land."

123. Mr. J. H. Holley, of Oaklands, a gentlemen of vast experience in agricultural matters not only in Devon, but formerly in Norfolk, writes thus:—

"As regards the erection of cottages and the moral improvement of the labouring classes, I do not see my way clearly to legislative interference. The erection of cottages depends on the requirements of three parties, the owner of the land, the tenant, and the labourer. As soon as the tenant discovers that it is necessary for the profitable cultivation of his farm that the labourer should be resident on it, he will induce the owner to build the residences, as well as the barn, stabling, and other buildings, previous to this period considered requisite. There is a sort of partnership existing between landlord and tenant; the one finds the capital for the working of the land, the other the capital and knowledge for the tillage. There must be a prospect of remuneration to these two parties in realising the anticipated improvement in the position of the labourer."

124. Mr. R. Fulford, solicitor, says:—

"It is the interest both of landlord and tenant to provide sufficient accommodation to the farm tenant for his labourers. I think a tenant would gladly pay 5*l.* per cent. on the outlay for cottage accommodation for his labourers, and would underlet, to insure permanent labourers, at a reduced rental to his men."

125. Mr. J. F. Delmar, of Stratton, agent for several landowners in the neighbourhood, says:—

"The present mode of borrowing money under the Lands Improvement Act is very cumbrous and expensive, the expenses being much, and unnecessarily increased by surveyors' visits, &c. during the progress of the work. I would not advise having recourse to those means unless it was unavoidable."

126. Mr. W. J. Woollcombe (No. 287), a solicitor at Plymouth, and well acquainted with the management of estates, thinks that the principle of the Labouring Classes Dwelling House Act, 29 Vict. c. 28., might be advantageously applied in rural districts:—

"What is wanted, is, I think, to afford to landowners the greatest possible facilities for the erection and improvement of labourers' dwellings without large expense, and without any further interference than is actually needful to secure the due expenditure of the money lent for this purpose. In order to secure this, it seems to me essential that the loan should be on such easy terms as would enable the landowner to let his cottages, when built, at low rents, and further, that the Act should extend to trustees and persons having limited interests, *e.g.*, tenants for life."

Inspection of cottages.

127. It was suggested by Mr. Soltau, of Little Efford, near Plymouth, that cottages should be placed under inspection, and that, for the purpose of putting an end to the present overcrowded state of many of the labourers' dwellings, the inspector should give a certificate of the number of persons that each cottage was capable of containing with due regard to decency and health.

General state of cottages in district.

128. It appears from the above extracts from the evidence, that in Hampshire there is not much cause for complaint as to the state of the cottages, and that much has of late been done towards their improve-

ment. The probable reason for this satisfactory state is, that there are many large resident landowners in the county who devote their attention to the welfare of the labouring class living on their properties, and that in many parts of the county there is a class of farmers holding a great number of acres, and willing to aid in the march of improvement.

129. On the other hand, the accounts of cottages in Cornwall and Devon are not, with some exceptions, at all satisfactory. In the first-named county it would seem that the tenure by leases on lives does not conduce to a good state of dwellings, neither the lessee nor the landlord being interested in repairing them.

130. In Devon, with the exception of the estates of a few landowners, the cottages are in a deplorable state, more especially in the Honiton Union, and in the district near to Holsworthy. The farms are for the most part very small, the occupiers men of no capital, and last, but not least, the possessors of the land are too often absentees, so that the profit of the land is spent elsewhere, and bestows no benefit on the district from which it is drawn.

131. It may be that the untidiness within the cottages is partly to be attributed to the natural indolence and slothfulness of the labourer himself; the evidence of some farmers who have come from other counties (Evid. Nos. 205 and 265) tends to show that the Devon men are bad workers, and the want of energy in the field which causes that impression probably affects equally the regard for comfort in the home.

Difficulties in dealing with cottage question.

132. In dealing with this cottage question it is necessary to consider the case of the owners of such property, who regard it as an investment and look for actual money interest from it, as well as that of the landowners, by whom cottage property is considered more as an adjunct of the land than as a property that is expected to pay directly.

133. I would specially invite your attention to the paper which Lord Northbrook kindly sent to me (No. 46), and in which he sets forth how the present system of wages, combined with the tenure of cottages, operates injuriously to the labourer who is not fortunate enough to live in a cottage on the farm of his employer at a rent far lower than that charged by those persons who cannot let their cottages at an unremunerative rent. He concludes his remarks in these words:—

"My strong impression is that the condition of the agricultural labourer, as regards cottage accommodation, will not be put on a sound footing so long as this artificial system continues; at the same time it would be a work of extreme difficulty to change it, for it would require the co-operation of landowners and farmers over a large extent of country

Alteration in provisions of Land Improvement Act needed.

134. The evidence which I obtained in Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire, as well as in the counties on which I am now reporting, as to the working of the Lands Improvement Act, and the companies which are in existence for the purpose of advancing money under its provisions, most clearly shows that an alteration may be most beneficially made in the terms on which money can now be borrowed for the improvement of estates. The present system is far too expensive; and on this point, Mr. Delmar, who manages estates in that poverty-stricken district of Stratton and Holsworthy, may be taken as a good opinion.

135. You have various classes of estates to deal with. The most favourable is the one free of encumbrance and unentailed, but still not yielding an income sufficiently large to enable the possessor to spend more than a small sum annually on improvements. There are small estates in good order, but incapable of bearing such extra charges as would be required under the existing law; there are large and scattered estates that have been entailed for generations, and are considerably encumbered; and you have ofttimes the estates of negligent absentee landlords.

Enlarged powers to holders of life estates.

136. It has been suggested to me that not only should the present regulations as to the borrowing of money be altered so as to make the process less expensive, but that in some form more enlarged powers should be given to owners of life estates to charge their property within certain specified limits for improvements and for cottages.

Desirable form of legislation.

137. I would venture to suggest for your consideration whether it is not expedient that legislation should take place in such a direction as to bring into the market these large tracts of encumbered land, enabling those who have capital to acquire such land if they desire so to do, and conferring a boon on those who now possess them by giving them money to spend on such an amount of territory as they wish to concentrate round their homes, while at the same time the curse of poverty and misery will be removed from those districts whence all the profit is drawn, and to which none returns. Bad cottages, would, I think, then become more rare; a portion, at any rate, of the profits would be spent upon the spot; a more contented race of farmers and of labourers would be found; and the education of the people, now flagging for want of funds, would progress.

138. Some may say that this question of the dwellings of the poor in agricultural districts is a passing question of the hour, and that it is not really so great an evil as is represented. I would answer, Go into the country and see for yourself. Use your common sense, and call to mind the effect of absenteeism on Ireland; and then say whether or not in those portions of England where poverty and misery arising from the same cause meet you at every step, there is not urgent reason for dealing with the evils now existing, by some legislative enactment, which shall put an end to a state of apathy and indifference in many holders of encumbered estates, and open the doors for the spending of capital on the land by those who *are* able, in the place of those who are now unable to do so.

Miscellaneous.

Benefit societies.

139. I trust that the following extracts from the rules of the two most important and flourishing benefit societies in my district may be of service to you in considering that subject.

Advantages of a deposit system.

The point in connexion with benefit societies, on which those with whom I have discussed the question lay much stress, is that it would be most beneficial that a deposit system should be introduced into them, whereby the widow or children would reap some advantage from the subscription which the man has been paying annually through a great part of his life, that is to say, a combination of savings' bank and club. The poor people are quite awake to this, many a labouring man has said to me, "If I "had to begin again, I'd put into the savings' bank instead of the club."

H. 140. It is, doubtless, an immense advantage to the poor man to get his medical attendance cheap, and a weekly allowance while he is ill and incapacitated from work; but suppose a case of a man who never has a day's sickness, but who has a large family, he makes his monthly payment to the club for many years, and at his death there is a sum given for his funeral, but all the hard-earned savings of his life having been paid into the club are lost to his family.

141. There is also required, I think, some better security for the money deposited in the clubs. Dr. Willis, of Horrabridge, says:—

"In my opinion a valuable aid to the improvement of the labourer and the diminution of taxation for the maintenance of the poor, would be the establishment of a benefit society under the control of the Government, and attached to *every* post office as the savings bank is, at which every labourer with wages not amounting to more than 20*s.* a week could pay, to receive in sickness a sum being 2*s.* or 3*s.* less weekly than he earned in health, and not being a member of any other benefit society; the sum so paid for such benefit to include an annuity after the age of 60."

Hampshire Friendly Society.

142. The following is the notice of the deposit principle adopted by the Hampshire Friendly Society:—

This branch of the society is established on the same principle that has been adopted in the county friendly societies of Wiltshire and of Surrey.

It is a benefit society, because it provides—

1. Medical attendance.
2. An allowance in sickness.
   [A member on joining, fixes his own daily sick pay, and this sum he must pay monthly to the common sick fund.]
3. Old age allowance at 70.

It is a deposit society, because—

1. The members receive back annually to their own private account or deposit, also called their Rest, whatever sums remain over from the common sick fund, after providing for the above objects, of sick, old age, and medical allowance; and they thus have all the advantages of a sharing club, without its risks.
2. They may pay in to their own deposit or rest, any further sum they please, as into a savings bank.
3. They may withdraw any sum they please from their deposit, as from a savings' bank.
4. Deposits receive interest, as in the Post Office Savings' Bank.
5. The balance of the deposit remaining at a member's death is paid to whomsoever he appoints.

The society admits women as well as men, and persons of doubtful as well as of sound health.

All members, but especially those in doubtful health, should pay in as much as possible to their own deposit, as into a savings' bank.

Parents will find it of advantage to pay in for their children until they are old enough to become members, that is, begin to earn wages, when they will have a deposit or rest to begin with.—Rule 75.

Members are divided into four classes:—A, B, C, and D, according to their age and health on admission. The larger a member's deposit or rest, the longer he can draw upon the common fund in case of sickness, because every member must draw a certain proportion of his sick pay from his own deposit; thus a sick member in class A, having a deposit or rest of 10*l.* of his own, can draw 30*l.* more in sick pay from the society; if his own deposit were 20*l.*, he could draw 60*l.* more from the society, and so on in proportion. Unless members in classes C and D (that is, members in doubtful health), are able to keep up a good deposit by means of their own savings, over and above what they pay monthly to the common fund, it will not answer their purpose to join the society.

143. The report of this society for 1867, says:—

"The object of this deposit system is to enable persons of any age, and in any state of health to secure the advantages of a benefit society in sickness, old age, and death, combined with those of a savings' bank, and an annual division of their funds, which are carried to the account of the several members, in proportion to their respective interests in the same at the end of every year, and bear interest at the same rate as the Post Office Savings' Bank."

Western Provident Association.

144. The Western Provident Association is the other important benefit society existing in my district. The objects of this society are to enable the industrial classes:—

1. To provide a certain fixed weekly allowance during sickness, also medical attendance and medicines.
2. To secure deferred annuities (old age pay), to commence at certain given ages, not exceeding 30*l.* a year.
3. To secure a certain sum at death, not exceeding 200*l.*
4. To secure sums not exceeding 200*l.* (deferred sums), payable at given ages, or immediately to the family or representative, in the event of death.
5. To secure endowments for children on attaining the ages of 14, 18, or 21 years.
6. To secure life assurance on the deposit system to the extent of 200*l.*
7. To secure annuities on the same system to the extent of 30*l.* a year.

145. The report for 1868 says:—

"That the number of members is steadily increasing, although the want of more general information as to the principles on which friendly societies can be safely founded, retards, and will, doubtless continue to retard the growth of any society having the certainty of payment of the promised benefits as its chief recommendation."

Milton Abbot penny bank.

The number of members admitted in 1867 was 238, in 1868, 268; but the receipts in 1868 were a trifle below those of the previous year.

146. At Milton Abbot, Sir St. V. Hammick has a penny bank under his own management. No person is allowed to have more than 5*l.* in all deposited (the deposits being 1*d.* or more at a time). The money is then transferred to the Post Office Savings' Bank, but the depositor may continue to pay to the penny

bank if he chooses. Interest is paid on every 10*s.* deposited before July 1 or January 1 in each year, and remaining in the bank for six months at the rate of 2½ per cent. H.

March 23rd, 1869.

147. Mr. Richd. Foster's Lostwithiel Penny Bank. Lostwithiel Penny Bank.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
On the first Monday in March 1869, 180 balances were brought forward, amounting to	342	12	9
On 84 accounts, interest was allowed at 2½ per cent.	6	14	0
	£349	6	9

Throughout the year 1868–69, 238 accounts had been open, and 115*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* withdrawn by the customers.

29 accounts	between 1*d.* and 2*s.* 6*d.*
21 ,,	2*s.* 6*d.* and 5*s.*
38 ,,	5*s.* and 10*s.*
20 ,,	10*s.* and 1*l.*
72 accounts	above 1*l.*
180	

148. Mr. Potter, the old schoolmaster at Stratton (No. 44), says that friendly societies and clubs if on a proper footing do much good in a village. Opinions as to societies.

149. At the meeting at Broadclyst it was said that the labourers do not save much money; they have their clubs and get allowances in sickness and for funeral expenses. The payment to the club is 1*s.* a month, and when this payment is made the public-house keeper deducts 1½*d.*; this club has been in existence for 100 years and has 180 members.

150. Mr. Coplestone says that men prefer clubs to savings banks.

151. Ware, a labouring man at Uploman, gives this evidence,—

"Some clubs part the money every seven years, keeping back some in the box to pay for sickness. I think a deposit system with a repayment to the family of a portion of the money at the death of the depositor would be acceptable to the poor. Men pay 12*s.* a year to the club. There is not much to spare out of a poor man's earnings for a savings bank.

152. Mr. Goodding, farmer, Morebath,— Savings by labourers.

"Does not think much money is saved by the labourers except perhaps by a few young men; the single men do not stay long in one place."

153. W. Melhuish, Esq., of Clawton, (No. 266), is a receiver for the Devon and Exeter Savings Bank. The deposits of agricultural labourers and of a few small farmers from the parishes of Clawton, Ashwater, and others near Holsworthy average over 300*l.* a year. Farm servants deposit perhaps more than the labourers.

154. Rev. J. C. Kempe, of Merton, stated that as receiver for the Devon and Exeter Savings Bank he received in his parish from 200*l.* to 300*l.* a year, chiefly from young men in farm service and from labourers.

155. Mr. Balkwill, at Kingsbridge, a receiver for the savings bank stated that there was a fair proportion of agricultural labourers among the depositors, that the wives now come with money in purses, whereas formerly they used to bring 1*s.* 6*d.* at a time in the corner of their pocket handkerchiefs. He considered the agricultural labourers were now far better off than they were 30 years ago.

156. Mr. Corin, of Tolver, near Penzance, a large market gardener, says,—

"Labourers cannot save anything; the benefit clubs are mostly going down."

157. It would seem that the agricultural labourer has not much chance of saving, except during those years when as a farm lad he lives and is boarded in his master's house or in that of the foreman, and when, with the exception of the outlay for clothes, his wages should accumulate. He may during those years, if prudent, lay the foundation of a small store; and having become accustomed to thrifty habits he may be induced in after life to put by some portion of his earnings for the benefit of his family or to improve his position in the world.

158. It is the custom in Hants to give, in addition to the weekly wage of 4*s.* or 5*s.*, a sum of money, say 2*l.* 10*s.*, at the end of the year of hiring. Mr. Dear (No. 74) says that a lad of 16 to 18 years of age will get 7*s.* a week and 6*l.* or 7*l.* at Michaelmas, younger ones 5*s.* a week and 3*l.* at Michaelmas, but in that case they pay for their board though lodged free of expense.

Mr. Warner's (No. 76) boys of ages varying from 12 to 16 get from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a week; one boy of 17 years working on Sundays gets 7*s.* a week.

159. Lads in Devon who live in the farm houses do not at first receive much if any money, but frequently have their clothes given them besides board and lodging. At 12 years of age they get 1*s.* a week, food and lodging, and their wages are raised at the rate of 3*d.* or 6*d.* a week per year till they become men; at 20 years and upwards the pay is 4*s.* a week board and lodging.

160. In Cornwall, Mr. Grigg, near Morval, says boys of 8 or 9 years of age go to farm service for their meat and sometimes lodging. When the boy arrives at 12 or 14 years of age he gets meat and 40*s.* a year. At St. Minver, North Cornwall, lads of 12 and 13 years of age begin with 2*l.* 10*s.* a year board and lodging, and the pay is raised perhaps a 1*l.* a year as they get older.

161. It does not appear at first sight that much can be saved out of these earnings, but I was assured by Mr. Appleton, a surgeon at St. Keverne in Cornwall, that he knew many instances of men beginning as agricultural labourers who had risen by their industry and frugality to become small farmers, and he has kindly placed the names of these men at my disposal. The evidence also of Mr. Melhuish, Mr. Kempe, and Mr. Balkwill, goes to show that there is an increasing desire among the labourers to avail themselves of the savings banks.

162. In the two western counties there are, perhaps, more small holdings within the reach of saving men than in many other parts of England, and there is a class called dairymen in Devon and in Dairymen.

H.

the part of Cornwall west of Penzance, who rise from the position of a labourer to that of a farmer by the following means:—

A labouring man takes a dairy from the farmer at so much per cow, depositing a quarter's payment in advance. If the dairy is 20 cows he does no other work, if under that number he usually works on the farm three or four days in the week; he keeps a horse on the same land; if he has 15 cows and upwards, he also keeps pigs. The take is by the year: each cow being in the dairy 40 weeks the dairyman gets the calf. The usual rent per cow is about 10*l.* Mr. Goodding says, this is the only way in which a labourer here can rise. A man who lived with me as a labourer raised himself in this way, is now renting a farm at 100*l.* a year, and has put by some money.

163. At St. Minver, in Cornwall, Mr. Liddell gives two instances of this kind; one now farming from 50 to 60 acres, the other 100 acres; both began as farm labourers. The first had lived with Mr. Liddell for seven years, the other for three years, and had then gone to the mines.

164. Though these instances do not quite come up to the cases vouched for by the Rev. Scott Surtees of Sprotburgh, in Yorkshire, to which I referred in my Report of last year (s. 137), still I think they are sufficient to show that there is some possibility of saving a little, even out of the low rate of wages current in Devon, and perhaps that if the inducements of an improved system in the benefit societies, such as the deposit system alluded to above, were more commonly held out to the labourers, they might gradually become less improvident.

165. Dr. Budd (No. 94) thinks that under the present system and at the present rate of wages, the labourer must come eventually on the parish for maintenance and relief. It is precisely because of the existence of the feeling in his mind, that in his old age the parish will provide for him, that there is so much difficulty in making him understand the advantages of prudence and of laying by something "for a rainy day." Whether by any alteration in the present system of relief under the Poor Law a beneficial change in this direction might be effected is, perhaps, a question worthy of consideration by the authorities of the Poor Law Board.

Piece-work.

166. Piece-work and harvest-pay ought to contribute somewhat to the bettering of the labourer's condition, and it is, I imagine, usually the case that an ordinary labourer, by which I mean others than foremen, carters, and shepherds who are better paid, has opportunities of getting piece-work, and thereby adding to his usual earnings. But in this, so much depends not only on the physical capability but also on the *energy* of the man himself. In Devon, if the account of the powers of a labourer given by Mr. Benson (No. 104), for many years steward to the late Duke of Bedford, be a true one, and I feel sure it is so, the piece-work is not very vigorously done; he says,—

"Whereas in Lancashire a man would get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and in Devonshire 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, the former would do for 7*d.* the same amount of work as the latter for his 1*s.* 8*d.*"

Bark stripping.

167. Both in parts of Hants and of Devon there is a good deal of money earned in the season of "bark-stripping" or "rinding." In Hants, a man can earn 4*s.* a day at felling oak and bark-stripping.

Acorn-picking.

168. In the course of last autumn a considerable amount of money was earned by women and children at acorn-picking; it was a second harvest for them. I heard of families gathering from 60 to 100 bushels, which they sold at 1*s.* a bushel; the price varied from 8*d.* up to 1*s.* It was doubtless an exceptional year, and I only mention this to show, that in looking at the question of the possibility of an agricultural labourer putting by any money, or being able to forego the weekly earnings of his little children, there are ways and means by which the income of the family is increased, and that it is not only on his weekly wages that he has to depend. And beyond these fortuitous sources of income, there is throughout the district which I have this year visited generally a garden of a fair size attached to the cottage, and in some cases a piece of allotment ground in addition, to be had at a reasonable price. They are both of great value to the labourer, but where the position of the cottage admits, there is no doubt that the garden is preferable.

Additions to labourers incomes.

Potato ground.

169. The system of giving a certain quantity of potatoe ground in the field of the farmer, when free to the labourer, is also a benefit; it is usually manured for him. Sometimes, if he hires it, he puts on the manure of his pig in lieu of rent. Even when he has to pay 1*s.* a yard for it, it was considered an advantage to get it. This is one of the much-talked-of "privileges" of the Devonshire labourer, which is, I believe, *really* a privilege. As to the cider and the grist I am not of that opinion.

Lace making.

170. As inquiries have already been made in the lace-making district of Devon, I need not refer to it further than to say that education is there at a very low ebb, especially among the women, the girls being taken away from the day school at 7 and 8 years of age to be sent to the lace school.

General Remarks and Conclusion.

171. It only remains for me now to sum up, as best I can, the bearing of the evidence on the question of applying to agricultural employment the principles of the Factory Acts, and to make such suggestions as are justified by the facts and opinions that I have gathered during the period in which I have conducted this inquiry as your assistant commissioner.

172. The principal object being the securing a better and more continuous education for the labourers' children, it seems to me that the first step is to prevent the withdrawal of children from school at an early age, and for that purpose I think that the age of 8, as fixed by the Agricultural Gangs Act, is too young, and that they might without injury be forbidden to work in the fields, except at hay time and harvest, before the age of 10. I would, however, to a certain extent, modify this suggestion.

173. The age at which boys are first taken into permanent farm service varies in different counties, as do the requirements, at certain seasons, of juvenile labour for some operations of the farm. I would, therefore, venture to suggest, that if legislation takes place on this point, power shall be vested in magistrates at petty sessions, or in such other authority as may seem best, to give permission for the employment of children under 10, on its being clearly shown, that for a limited period their labour is really necessary for certain farm operations, such as weeding corn, stone-picking, &c., which require to be done with rapidity and within a given number of days. Where the supply of hands is sufficient, the alternate day system might, perhaps, here be adopted with success by the united action of the school managers and the farmers; but, in any case, due precaution should be taken not to interfere too much with the attendance at school.

174. There is, however, I fear, too much reason to doubt whether the mere prohibition of working in the fields will secure the attendance at school. In the case of well-disposed parents I believe the boys would be sent to school, but with the indifferent and the careless some form of compulsion or quasi-compulsion may be found necessary. By quasi-compulsion, I mean the requirement of the production of a certificate of a given amount of school attendance before hiring, or some other inducement to the parent to consider the ultimate benefit to his child of a good plain education.

175. One of the causes of apathy on the part of the labourers in the agricultural districts in the matter of education is well put by the Rev. Sir St. Vincent Hammick:—

"There is a want of some premium to be held out to well-educated boys in agricultural districts; in mines or factories there are places of trust and prospects of promotion which act as a spur."

176. At present it would seem that the better educated lads do not remain on the farms; it might therefore be possible that by the stimulus of a certificate, or by a graduated scale of wages according to the value of the labour supplied or of the capability of the lad to take a place of greater trust, some further encouragement would be given to education, while, at the same time, the employer would not lose, as he now does, the services of those who by their education are capable of being more useful to him than the uneducated.

177. There is a growing feeling among the farmers in favour of having their labourers residing in good cottages on their farms. I think this feeling is not to be attributed solely to the known advantages of the man being close to his work, or of his being more absolutely under the control of his master, but that there is this higher reason for it, viz., that the employer is well aware of the great advantage of having a labourer attached to his farm, not only by the ties of home, but also by the existence of a mutual understanding and good feeling beween man and man. To promote this, it is surely desirable, I might say necessary, that the labourer should be educated so as to take more interest in the matters of his daily life, and not merely to consider that life as purposeless beyond the earning of so much a day.

178. But the mere school attendance up to 10 years of age will not effect this. It is clearly shown that those lads who go to farm service at that age, and have either no opportunity or no desire to continue their education, soon forget all they have learned. It is, then, well worthy of careful consideration how this evil can be avoided.

179. The night-school appears to afford the easiest solution, at any rate for the older lads from 13 years and upwards. Between the ages of 10 and 13 years, it may be that the usages of many counties would *now* permit of the attendance of boys at school for a given number of times during the year; certainly I think in Yorkshire such a system might well be adopted, perhaps, also in Devon and Cornwall, and probably if such attendance was required by law, many of the difficulties would be found to be imaginary.

180. Such attendance may, as a rule, be obtained in the winter months, when the labour of children, not being yearly farm servants, is but little required; and I am quite sure that it is most desirable that, be the number of attendances in the year 150, as proposed by Lord Shaftesbury, or 100, as shown by the evidence (No. 244), to be more feasible, such attendances should be as regular and continuous as possible. As I have already said, the night schools are not at present well attended. More aid is wanted for the teaching power, more inducement to the lads to come and be taught. Too much depends now on personal attachment to the clergyman or the teacher. The success of the night school at Walton in Yorkshire, and of the art classes at Gulworthy in Devon, shows that, if other subjects than the mere routine of reading, writing, and arithmetic are introduced, if some trouble is taken to meet the tastes of individuals, and to allow them, within bounds, to study such subjects as best suit them, a great deal may be done towards improving and keeping-up the education of these older lads.

181. If attendance at night school is made compulsory, the number of attendances required must be somewhat regulated by the distance to the school, or the supply of such schools must be considerably increased.

182. In the open districts of light land, where farms are large, and the population scattered, and again, among the outlying hamlets of the south-western counties, it might be possible, by a system of grouping, and by a travelling teacher, to bring to the doors of these lads the means of education. It is hardly to be expected, that in bad winter weather, and after a hard day's work, they will go any great distance to the school.

183. The education of girls differs widely from that of boys. The latter must be trained for his out-door occupation at an age when he is amenable to discipline, and must begin at a reasonably early age to learn that on which his future existence as an agricultural labourer depends. Girls should not, for their own good, be employed in the fields at all; and I think it might fairly be laid down that no girl shall be employed in farm work before 13 years of age; some think they should not begin before 16. It is most desirable that they should not acquire a taste for the so-called "liberty" of field work, as it is clearly shown by the evidence of old field-working women that things at home do not prosper when the wife is absent all day from the cottage.

184. I have already referred fully to the cottage question.

185. I have endeavoured to keep as closely as possible to the main object of this inquiry, and to set before you facts bearing upon it, as well as the opinions of those, in their particular districts, who were thought to be best acquainted with the present condition and with the requirements of the agricultural labourer.

186. In conclusion, I beg to express my best thanks to all those in every class, who, by their hospitality, by their courtesy, and by their willingness to aid me in my work, have enabled me to present to you what, I trust, is a fair and truthful report on the subject which you have entrusted to me.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

EDWIN B. PORTMAN.

3, King's Bench Walk, Temple,
July 20, 1869.

REPORT.—By Mr. F. H. NORMAN.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

1. Since presenting to you my report on Northamptonshire in July 1868, I have, in further obedience to your instructions, visited successively the counties of Surrey, Wilts, Warwick, Worcester, and Hereford. I was occupied in making inquiries in Surrey for 34 days, during the months of June, July, and August 1868; in Wiltshire for 46 days, during the months of September, October, and November 1868, besides four days in January 1869; in Warwickshire for 36 days, during November and December 1868, and January 1869; in Worcestershire for 24 days in February and three in May, and in Herefordshire for 31 days in April and May of the present year. Counties visited. Time occupied.

2. I have endeavoured to collect reliable evidence as to the condition of the agricultural* labouring class in the various districts of these counties, and I have caused to be printed in the Appendix to this Report such portions of the evidence thus collected as I think will be sufficient to convey a tolerably accurate idea of what that condition is. Object in view.

3. The greater part of the evidence I have collected has consisted of verbal statements obtained in conversation with persons of all classes, but in addition to these statements I have distributed a considerable number of the printed circulars of questions with which I was provided to gentlemen who I was informed were able and willing to supply the information asked for. I distributed 36 of these circulars in Surrey, 54 in Wiltshire, 43 in Warwickshire, 17 in Worcestershire, and 19 in Herefordshire, and of these I have received 21 from Surrey, 22 from Wiltshire, 17 from Warwickshire, 11 from Worcestershire, and 7 from Herefordshire. Evidence obtained. Number of circulars distributed and returned.

4. The amount of information contained in the answers contained in these circulars varies very much. Replies which are substantially similar are often given to particular questions in a great number of the returns sent in. I have not thought it necessary to have the whole of these replies printed; I have therefore made a selection which I think fairly represents every class of opinion expressed in each county. The answers so obtained are printed in Appendix E. to this Report. Lastly, I attended meetings of the Chambers of Agriculture at Swindon, Warwick, Worcester, Upton Snodsbury, and Hereford, as well as a large meeting of landowners, clergymen, and farmers specially convened by Mr. J. Ravenhill, at his house at Ashton Gifford. At each of these meetings the principal questions I now have to report upon were discussed.

5. Before proceeding to lay before you the results of the evidence which I have collected, and of my own observations, it will probably render what I shall have to say more intelligible if I give a short description of each of the five counties I have visited, touching upon those points only which affect the condition of the agricultural labourers and the employment of women, young persons, and children in agriculture. I will throughout this Report when alluding particularly to the five counties, refer to them in alphabetical order, and it may be assumed that my observations apply generally to the five counties, unless it is expressly stated that this is not the case.

6. The general condition of these five counties, as regards acreage and population, may be gathered from the following table, taken from the census returns:— General condition of counties examined.

County.	Acreage.	Total Population.		Population engaged in Agriculture.					
				1851.			1861.		
		1851.	1861.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
Hereford - - -	534,823	115,489	123,712	11,627	706	12,333	10,822	682	11,504
Surrey - - -	478,792	683,082	831,093	18,432	161	18,593	18,890	196	19,086
Warwick - - -	563,946	475,013	561,855	19,457	907	20,364	19,830	635	20,465
Wilts - - -	865,092	254,221	249,311	31,396	5,747	37,143	29,344	4,784	34,128
Worcester - - -	472,165	276,926	307,397	13,946	1,345	15,291	15,138	1,542	16,680

From this table it appears that, according to the census of 1861, Herefordshire contains only 1 person to every 4½ acres; Surrey, nearly 2 persons to every acre; Warwickshire, about 1 to every acre; Wiltshire, 1 to about every 3½ acres; and Worcester, 1 to about every 1½ acres.

It appears, also, that between the years 1851 and 1861, the population of the four counties of Hereford, Surrey, Warwick, and Worcester rose, while that of Wiltshire alone fell; the number of males employed in agriculture fell in the counties of Hereford and Wilts, and rose in the other three; but the

* It has formed no part of my duty to inquire into the condition of the manufacturing population, and I have not done so; occasionally, however, the existence of some particular manufacture in a district has an indirect effect upon the employment of women and children in the fields, *e.g.*, where women can get glove work to do they will not generally go out to field work. It is necessary therefore for me to allude to those manufactures which have an indirect bearing upon the agricultural labour.

I.

number of females employed fell in the counties of Hereford, Warwick, and Wilts, and rose in Surrey and Worcester. The total number of females employed in agriculture in these counties was, in 1851, 8,866; and in 1861, 7,839.

Herefordshire. Glove trade. Orchards. Hops.

7. Herefordshire is a purely agricultural county, and is very thinly peopled. In the western portion of the county some few of the wives and daughters of the labourers are employed in making gloves for Worcester tradesmen. A considerable quantity of the county is devoted to the cultivation of apples and pears, a large orchard being attached, as a general rule, to every farm. Hops are extensively cultivated in the centre of the county. The hop district may be roughly described as bounded by a line running from Tenbury through Pembridge to Eardisley on the north-west, and thence following generally the course of the Wye to Hereford, and thence in a south-easterly direction to the borders of the county. The quantity of hops grown by each farmer is not large, frequently not more than four or five acres, although almost every farmer in the hop district grows a few, and a few farmers large quantities. The cultivation of this crop, both in this county as well as in Worcestershire and Surrey, gives considerable employment to women and children, the nature of which will be hereafter more particularly described.

Surrey. Effect of being near London.

8. The county of Surrey is much affected by its immediate contiguity to London; that portion of the county which lies to the east of Chertsey, Leatherhead, and Dorking, cannot be looked upon as a purely agricultural district. The number of houses occupied by gentlemen who live there in order to be near London is very large, and the opportunities for obtaining employment as gardeners, grooms, &c. gives unusual chances to the male portion of the labouring class to improve their position, while the women are often able to obtain occupation by washing or charring, and thus add to the earnings of the family without being obliged altogether to abandon the superintendence of their own homes.

Effect of large commons in West Surrey. No serious loss to labourers occasioned by enclosure of commons.

9. The western part of the county is distinguished by extensive barren heaths and commons. The existence of these commons has given opportunities to a large number of squatters to erect cottages on the waste land. When first put up, these cottages are of the poorest class, but they are often sold after a time by their original proprietors to persons who either repair them or substitute for them decent dwellings. The squatters have always been accustomed to cut turf for fuel, and to turn out donkeys, geese, &c. on the commons. Many of the commons have been enclosed in the last few years, and consequently these rights have been lost. I endeavoured to ascertain whether the loss of these common rights had entailed any substantial sacrifice upon the class to whom they formerly belonged, but after having had frequent conversations both with the labourers themselves and with gentlemen well acquainted with the condition of the labouring class in this district, I am inclined to think that the squatters have no substantial ground of complaint on this score. Before the enclosure of the commons, few of them worked regularly as farm labourers, but relied mainly upon the produce of their own gardens and of the commons on which they lived for their maintenance. Their means of existence was somewhat precarious. Now they are more disposed to take work as regular farm labourers, and their means of livelihood are consequently more certain. The loss which they have suffered from not being permitted to cut turf for fuel is in a great measure compensated for by the saving of labour and by the superior quality of the fuel which they purchase in the form of coal.

Market gardens. Medical herbs.

10. In addition to the ordinary agricultural crops, some special crops are grown in Surrey; these consist of a vast quantity of vegetable produce grown in the neighbourhood of London for the supply of the London market; of carrots, which are grown to a considerable extent at Godalming and Chertsey; of medical herbs grown at Mitcham and Carshalton; and of hops grown in the neighbourhood of Farnham, as well as on the borders of Kent, those grown in the former place being noted for their superior quality.

Size and shape of parishes.

11. Another peculiarity in the county of Surrey is the size and shape of the parishes. Some of these are very extensive; *e.g.*, Worplesdon is 11 miles long, while Godalming is 17, but has been divided into various ecclesiastical districts. Most of the parishes situated on the edge of the chalk hills comprise portions of lands upon the hill and in the valley. These parishes thus form long strips; *e.g.*, the parish of Abinger is nine miles long and half a mile broad.* I mention the peculiarity in the extent and form of these parishes for the purpose of drawing attention to the difficulty which thus arises in providing them with school accommodation. Parishes are generally treated separately for educational purposes, but this mode of treatment is very inconvenient when applied to such parishes as those I have described. I will allude to this subject again hereafter.

Warwickshire. Agricultural and manufacturing districts. Failure of ribbon trade.

12. The great bulk of the county of Warwick consists of rich highly farmed agricultural land. The southern portion of the county is entirely devoted to agriculture, but in the north are to be found the vast manufacturing towns of Birmingham and Coventry. In the agricultural parishes around Coventry considerable number of persons were formerly employed in the ribbon trade. The failure of this manufacture has deprived this portion of the population of their usual means of livelihood, and has consequently increased the number of applicants for agricultural employment. It seems, however, impossible for persons who have devoted the greater part of their lives to factory labour to compete successfully in farm labour with those who have been engaged in it all their lives.

No peculiar crops grown.

13. No peculiar agricultural crops are grown in Warwickshire which call for special notice, and the only domestic manufacture in the county is that of needles, which is carried on to a small extent in the neighbourhood of Alcester.

Wiltshire. The chalk district. Size of farms.

14. Wiltshire may be divided into the two distinct districts of the chalk and the secondary beds below it, which are generally known as the grass district. A line drawn across the county from Swindon in a south-westerly direction to Westbury will separate these two districts, the south-eastern district forming the chalk, and the north-western the grass. The chalk district is intersected by several valleys, the principal of which are the valleys of the Avon, the Wiley, and the Nadder. The soil in the chalk district varies from the richest water meadows, which form the bottom of the valleys, and which command a rent of 4*l.* or 5*l.* an acre, to the poorest downs which comprise the upper part of the chalk hills, and for which a few shillings only can be obtained. Between these two extremes, land of every degree of fertility is to be found. The farms are very large; one of 500 acres would be considered small. Many of 1,000 acres, and some of 1,500 or even 2,000 are to be met with.

* I give the statistics as to the size of these parishes, which were given to me at the places referred to. I believe them to be substantially correct, but cannot vouch for their precise accuracy.

I.

Almost the entire population of the chalk district live in villages which are built in the valleys on the rivers. Some few live in scattered cottages on the downs, and the number of these cottages has of late years been increasing, owing to large quantities of the downs having been broken up. More cattle are kept now than formerly; many of these are kept in small homesteads, and require the immediate superintendence of farm labourers; but on the whole, the proportion of the population who live in the scattered houses on the downs is very small. All the population concentrated in the valleys.

15. The best grass land is to be found in the valley of the Avon, in the neighbourhood of Melksham, Wootton Bassett, and Malmesbury; the district to the west of this is mainly arable. In the northern part of the county the farms contain from 100 to 500 acres; the cottages are not generally collected in villages, as is the case on the chalk, and the simple operation of making cheese causes a less demand for labour than the constant preparation of the land for a succession of agricultural crops. The grass district.

16. There can be no doubt that the county of Wilts, when compared with other counties, occupies a far less important position now than it did some time (say a century) ago. The woollen cloth and silk manufactures were formerly actively carried on; these manufactures are now conducted on a far less extensive scale, and many factories have been altogether closed. This change has, I presume, been caused by the greater facilities offered for carrying on manufactures in counties where coal is cheaper; but while the change has been going on, no new manufactures, except the railway works at Swindon, have been started in Wiltshire to give employment to those thus thrown out of work, and the surplus population has had to look to agriculture alone for their livelihood. The decrease in the importance of Wiltshire may, to some extent, be measured by the operation of the first Reform Bill. By this Bill, seven* boroughs in the county, which formerly returned two members, were totally disfranchised; four† other boroughs, which formerly returned two members each, were deprived of one member each. But, on the other hand, the number of county members was increased from two to four. The result of these operations was that the county was deprived of 17 of its representatives. The inference which I draw from these facts is that the labour market in Wiltshire has of late years been, and is now, overstocked, and that the wages in that county have consequently been low. Formerly a manufacturing county. Now overstocked with labour.

17. The county of Worcester presented greater varieties than any other county which I have visited. The whole of the northern portion is rich in manufactures, while in the neighbourhood of Bromsgrove a large population, male and female, is employed in the nail trade; and in the neighbourhood of Redditch many women are employed in making needles. The glove trade is carried on to a great extent near Worcester, and great numbers of the female part of the population, more particularly towards the Herefordshire border, are constantly employed in it. Worcestershire. Manufactures.

18. Orchards are everywhere to be met with, and cider usually allowed to all farm labourers, except just in the south-western portion of the county. The cultivation of hops is carried on extensively in the valley of the Teme and its immediate neighbourhood, under conditions very similar to those which regulate the cultivation of this crop in Herefordshire. Orchards. Hops.

19. In the neighbourhood of Evesham and Pershore the richness of the soil affords ample opportunities for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables on a very large scale. A great number of these gardens are only a few acres in extent, and are occupied by men of small means; in such cases the necessary labour is mainly supplied by the family of the occupier. In these, and to a less extent in the larger gardens, women and children are extensively employed. Gardens.

Labour.

20. In the circulars of printed questions, a private gang is defined to be "a group of children, young "persons, and women in a farmer's own employ, and superintended by one of his own labourers." In none of the counties which I have visited have I found it the general custom to employ women and children in this manner. Occasionally a few boys or women, possibly six or eight, are sent out to work together in the field under a superintendent, male or female (A. 38, 106, 108, 113, D. 23), but this system is quite exceptional. In one only of the circulars of inquiry which have been returned is the existence of private gangs recognized, and that is at Harvington in Worcestershire, where a number of women are employed for the purpose of picking peas. This form of labour, however, hardly falls within the definition given of a private gang, because the women so employed are engaged by the dealer who buys the peas, and not by the farmer who grows them. Private gangs not employed.

21. The *ordinary* employments in which women are engaged are the following:—Spring, in weeding the various corn crops, which is done either with a hoe, spade, or with the hand, picking stones, spreading manure, and sometimes in potato and bean planting. Summer, the weeding of the corn crops as well as turnips is continued, after which the hay and corn harvest, about which no information is asked, gives ample employment for women. Autumn, acorn picking, potato gathering and weeding. Winter, women are very little employed, but are sometimes engaged with the threshing machines, or in pulling up and cleaning turnips or mangold wurzel. Ordinary employments of women.

22. The above are the ordinary employments in which women are engaged, wherever no exceptional crops are grown; but in addition to these I have found special employments exist for women in almost every county I have visited. In Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Surrey they are employed in tying hops to the hop poles in May and June, and in hop-picking in September. Wherever there is much wood, as in the south of Surrey, in Worcestershire, and in Herefordshire, they are occasionally employed in stripping bark at the end of April and the beginning of May. In Surrey they are also employed in washing carrots in winter, in the neighbourhoods of Guildford and Chertsey; and in the medical herb gardens at Carshalton and Mitcham, they are employed in transplanting the plants in spring, and in assisting to harvest them in autumn. In the neighbourhood of Evesham they are largely employed in the fruit and vegetable gardens during the spring and summer. Special employments of women.

23. It will be seen from looking at the tables printed in the Appendix (E. 2) that far more married than single women go to field work, and I was told that when a woman marries, her husband expects Chiefly married women.

* These were Old Sarum, Ludgershall, Hindon, Great Bedwin, Heytesbury, Wootton Bassett, and Downton.
† These were Westbury, Wilton, Malmesbury, and Calne.

I.

Irish women.

her to contribute towards the maintenance of the family (A. 63). In Surrey very few of the native women go to field work, except during the hay and harvest time. There are, however, a great number of Irish women to be met with in this county, as well as in the north of Warwickshire and Worcestershire (A. 18, C. 130), who work a great deal in the fields, and make very efficient labourers. In the market gardens near London they are extensively employed.

Women less disposed to work than formerly.

24. There appears to be, almost everywhere, an increasing disinclination to field work on the part of women (A. 30, A. 35, E. 12). Those whom I visited and talked to often told me that although they themselves had always been in the habit of working they had made up their minds that it did not answer, and that they would not encourage their children to take to it. They seem to be arriving at a conviction that where a cottage is to be kept clean and tidy, and a family provided for, the whole time of the mother of the family should be spent indoors, and that the money she can earn by going into the fields is insufficient to compensate her for the necessary loss which is occasioned by her absence from home.

Less wanted on account of machinery used.

25. In addition to this, the increased use of machinery renders the employment of women unnecessary in many occupations in which they were formerly engaged. Wherever indoor work is to be obtained women always prefer that to going out, consequently where the glove trade is carried on, and in the neighbourhood of towns, where washing can be obtained, but few women will be found in the fields.

Indoor work preferred.

Hours of work.

Meal-times.

26. Their hours of work are generally from 8 to 5; they have an hour for dinner and sometimes half an hour for breakfast, or, as it is called in Herefordshire, "bait," and if the hours of work are extended to late in the evening, as is often the case at haymaking, they generally rest half an hour in the course of the afternoon.

Wages.

27. Their wages are sometimes as low as 6*d.* a day (D. 1), but generally 8*d.* or 10*d.*, and 1*s.* during haymaking. I found in Surrey some women who were being paid as much as 1*s.* 6*d.* a day for making hay. The women who work in the medical gardens receive 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Health good.

28. The health of the women who work in the fields is generally good; in fact, many of them like field work, because they consider it so much more healthy than passing their whole time in their cottages.

Turnip cleaning and washing carrots objectionable.

The employment which is most objectionable for them is cleaning turnips and washing carrots (A. 23, 41, C. 8); this work has to be done in the winter, and the women while so occupied are exposed to cold and wet, which is calculated to bring on rheumatism and erysipelas, but I have not found that the work done by women is anywhere of so excessive a kind as to be the necessary cause of physical injury to them.

Cottages of field workers.

The opinions of the gentlemen with whom I have communicated are divided as to whether or not the cottages and families of the field-workers are less well cared for than those of women who do not work in the fields. I have collected much evidence on both sides of the question.

Children burnt.

I have been told by two medical men that cases had often occurred within their experience of children being burnt or scalded when their mothers were at work. Mr. Bullock, of Warwick, said he had attended eight such cases, four of which had proved fatal (C. 7), and I myself conversed with a labourer and his wife, who occupied a lone cottage on the downs between Swindon and Marlborough, who told me that one of their children, whom they had left locked up in their cottage when they were out at work, had been burnt to death (A. 76), but these occurrences are very rare, considering the number of women who work in the fields; and the impression left upon my mind is that, except where a woman has a family of quite young children, the homes of those who go out to work need not necessarily be less comfortable than the homes of those who do not; the same industry and energy which induces a woman to go out to work will, in many cases, induce her to keep her cottage and children tidy, even although she may have to sit up at night to do it.

Restrictions proposed on the employment of women.

29. A great variety of opinions have been expressed to me as to the restrictions which it is desirable to impose on female labour; some think that no young women (E. 33, 34, 44, 49) or unmarried women (E. 40), or married women with families (E. 34) should be allowed to work; others that all female labour should be prohibited, except for harvest and hop work (E. 29); others that no girls should be permitted to work, except in the same field with their mothers; while one gentleman thinks that no married woman should be permitted to work unless she had a daughter of 13 who had obtained a certificate of education (E. 49); another, that women with families should not be employed at all (E. 34); and another that they should not be employed on Saturdays (A. 144). The great variety of these opinions shows how difficult it would be (assuming some restriction upon female labour to be necessary to decide what form that restriction should take; but in addition to the recommendations referred to above a great number, probably the majority of the witnesses whom I examined upon this point, expressed the strongest opinion that no restriction whatever was necessary. In this latter I myself fully concur.

No restriction necessary.

30. The field work which they perform is not of that excessive kind which was found to exist in the factories and workshops of the kingdom,* and which justified restriction in their case; and the employ-

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* Since I completed my inquiries in Worcestershire I have received the following letter from Rev. A. H. Winnington Ingram, of Harvington, near Evesham, with reference to the employment of groups of town women in pea-picking.

My dear Sir, Harvington, July 9th.

I regret that in mentioning the private gangs of pea-pickers in my return to you as Commissioner to inquire into the employment of women and children, &c., my desire not to overstate the evil led me into the contrary error, of not laying before you the full enormity, of which, however, in justice to myself, I must state I was not at the time fully aware, or rather the evil itself had not been developed as it has been this year under my notice.

In consequence of the opening of a new line of railroad the farmers have embraced the opportunity on our land of sowing peas to be used as vegetables for human consumption. They have sold them to Evesham and Alcester market gardeners at prices varying from 10*l.* to 12*l.* 10*s.* an acre. The peas are picked by women, children, and men brought principally from Evesham and Alcester in carts. Some gangs have consisted of about 40 women and children, and men in smaller proportions (one Evesham gardener has now a gang of 140). There is one field of peas in this parish being picked by about 60 women and children and men (in smaller proportions). They are brought into the parish in large carts about 5 o'clock in the morning, and go away in the same conveyances in the evening. The price of picking peas is 7*d.* a pot. The good hands from Evesham (women) pick six pots a day and get 3*s.* 6*d.* I am sorry that some of our women have been induced to work in the fields with them. They go to work later in the day, and some pick four pots.

The excitement of this new opened harvest for labour is such that my school, which generally has an attendance of between 50 and 60, is reduced to 28 children. Each child is supposed to pick one pot a day, and earn 7*d.* The language of the Evesham and

ment of women has not necessarily an injurious effect upon their morality and on their proper training for domestic duties, and therefore it appears to me that no restriction upon their employment is necessary. I.

Age at which boys are first employed.

31. The age at which children are first employed varies so much that it is impossible to state accurately what that age is. A glance at the tables printed in Appendix E. will show that but few are employed under 10 years of age. The result of the evidence upon this point may, I think, be fairly stated to be the age at which that boys commence to work regularly in farm labour is about 11 or 12 in Surrey and Herefordshire, about 10 or 11 in Warwickshire and Worcestershire, and about 9 or 10 in Wiltshire. This is a very general statement, and is subject to many exceptions. These ages refer only to the times when continuous employment first commences. There are, however, many other operations to be done on a farm which occupy only a portion of the year, and for which boys younger than the ages given above are employed.

Continuously.

Intermittently.

Employment of girls.

32. Girls are not generally employed under the age of 14 or 15 years. At that age they accompany their mothers and assist at whatever work their mothers may be engaged. In Wiltshire they work rather younger (A. 81, 106, 133). I have met with a few instances of little girls being employed in the same light work of the farm as that in which the younger boys are engaged in, but these instances are quite exceptional.

Age at which farmers require boys.

33. The great majority of farmers think that 10 is the youngest age at which boys should ever be employed. It is thought that the work which boys under that age can do on a farm is of little or no value, and that they have ample opportunity of learning the business to which their lives are to be devoted if they begin at 10. Some few maintain that unless they commence at 8 or 9 (A. 85) they never become really useful; but quite as many farmers of the greatest experience think that the age of commencing to work might be advantageously postponed until 11 or 12 (A. 39). I feel sure that an impartial perusal of the evidence I have collected will lead to the conclusion that 10 is the very youngest age at which they are wanted in any of the counties I have visited, and that the inconvenience to which farmers would be exposed would not be serious if they were not employed until somewhat older than that.

Work in which children are employed.

Ordinary occupations.

Special occupations.

34. The ordinary farm operations in which the youngest children are employed are bird-minding, planting potatoes and beans, minding cows, sheep, and pigs, picking and gathering potatoes, and collecting acorns; they are also occasionally sent out to weed, but as a general rule the weeding is done by men or women. The special occupations in which they are engaged are hop-picking, at which children of all ages are employed in every district in which hops are grown; apple-picking, *i.e.*, collecting the apples and pears which have fallen from the trees. In the fruit gardens round Evesham and Pershore, in Worcestershire, children are extensively employed from the ages of 7 and 8 upwards. Their work consists in bird-minding and weeding, tying up radishes, onions, &c., and picking currants, and gooseberries, and vegetables. In fruit picking young children under 10 years of age are of but little use, as they are likely to crush the fruit and thus render it unmarketable; but as a general rule there is work to be done by children in the gardens, of one sort or another, throughout the whole summer, and education in this neighbourhood suffers in consequence.

When not employed by farmers.

35. It is important to observe in which of the above kinds of labour the children are employed by the farmers, and in which they work independently of them. In the operations of planting beans and potatoes, and in gathering potatoes, the farmer cannot, strictly speaking, be said to be the employer of the children. In these operations the work is done by contract, and the man who takes the contract generally brings his own children to assist him, and in picking acorns children work on their own account, and sell the acorns they collect to the farmers. The importance of observing this distinction will be seen hereafter.

Boys anxious for work.

36. The boys appear to be very anxious to get employment and their parents to get places for them; in fact, the pressure for employment more often comes from the labourers than from the farmers. I have been told by farmers, not unfrequently, that they have been inconvenienced by the urgent applications for employment which they have received from parents of boys, and that they would welcome any moderate legislative restriction which would protect them from this inconvenience (A. 81).

Mode of hiring.

37. Boys are generally hired by the week; the old practice of hiring by the year and boarding boys in farmhouses is gradually dying out, although it is still practised to a considerable extent in Herefordshire and Wiltshire. The discontinuance of this practice is the necessary result of the improvement which has taken place in agriculture; the farmer who now occupies 500 acres of land is quite a different person from the farmer who formerly occupied 100, his feelings and his mode of life are different, and he will not tolerate the inconvenience caused by a troop of noisy farm boys living in his house. In consequence of this change the farmhouses which are now being built are not generally provided with the accommodation necessary for boarding labourers, and however much the science of agriculture may have advanced while this change has been going on, the friends of labourers must, I think, regret the abandonment of a system which supplied farm lads with good food, and subjected them, in many cases, to wholesome control at a time when they particularly required it, and relieved the overcrowded cottages in the villages of some portion of their inhabitants.

Earnings of boys.

38. Little boys, when employed at scaring birds, minding pigs, &c., receive from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; when they begin to drive plough they have from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week, and their wages are gradually raised as their strength and efficiency increases.

Boys who are boarded in farmhouses commence at about 30*s.* a year, besides their food.

Health of children.

39. The health of the children employed in the fields is generally good. I feel sure that, as a general rule, children are not employed in any of the counties to which this Report applies in a manner which is calculated to injure their health. In the opinion of many, early labour prevents the frame being fully

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Alcester pea-picking men and women is grossly immoral. The Harvington women, accustomed to better training, work in a lot apart, but yet they can hear the gross expressions of their neighbours. Two men I hear are employed all day to keep peace among the women from the towns.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
A. H. Winnington Ingram.

I. developed, but I have no evidence before me to show that this is necessarily or generally the case. I have also been told by Dr. Roberts, of Salisbury, that boys suffering from heart disease, brought on by rheumatism, are constantly brought to the hospital. He attributes this disease to their being employed too young. They are attacked by rheumatism, and rheumatism when it attacks the young is more likely to affect the heart than when it attacks older persons (C. 10). Another complaint which has been made to me is that boys who are kept late in the farmhouse do not have enough sleep, and that they are sometimes severely ill-used by the carters under whose control they are placed (A. 37, E. 3, 64); but I have received no medical evidence which goes to prove that the health of the boys is seriously injured by any of the causes above alluded to.

Work done on Sundays.

40. As a general rule, no work is done on Sundays, except what is absolutely necessary, such as milking the cows and feeding the stock.

Shepherd boys.

The Rev. R. Payne, of Downton, complains, however, of the constant employment of shepherd boys on Sundays. He says that after a boy once begins to work as a shepherd boy on the downs of Wiltshire he never again has an opportunity of going to Sunday school or to church. Mr. Payne thinks that this uninterrupted employment is quite unnecessary, except during the lambing season, and recommends that it should be made illegal to employ boys under a certain age for two successive Sundays (E. 73).

Hop cultivation.

41. It seems convenient here to insert a short account of work done by women and children in connexion with the hop cultivation. Although the mode in which this crop is cultivated varies a little in different parts of the country, the work done by women and children is substantially the same in all districts.

Hop-tying.

42. During the months of May and June the hop bines have to be tied to the poles; this work is done by women, who earn as much as 10*s.* an acre, where there are four poles to the stock, and less where there are only two or three. At Bromyard they earn only 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* for two pole work. This work lasts for three or four weeks, which is the time required for the hop to grow from the ground to the top of the pole. Each bine requires to be tied three or four times at increasing distances from the ground, as it gradually rises up the pole. The women are not assisted in this work by their children, except occasionally by the older girls. This is very suitable work for women.

Hop-picking.

43. The hops have to be picked about the month of September; the operation of picking generally lasts about three weeks or a month, but varies greatly. I visited Farnham last year while the hop-picking was going on, and while there I had an opportunity through the kindness of Mrs. Paine, the owner of Dippenhall farm, of making myself acquainted with the mode in which the hop-picking is conducted. I will take Dippenhall farm as a specimen, and describe shortly the mode in which the hop-picking is carried on there. There are 200 acres of hop land on this farm. Shortly before the picking season commences pickers are collected from the neighbouring country for many miles round through the intervention of agents despatched from the farm, who again employ local sub-agents. Each agent receives 4*d.* for every "bin" for which he supplies pickers, and a portion of this he pays to the sub-agent through whose aid he has secured the service of the pickers. In due time waggons and vans are sent into all the surrounding parishes to bring in the pickers, many of whom, however, do not avail themselves of this mode of conveyance. An allowance of 1*s.* 3*d.* is made to each picker for travelling expenses and refreshment up to the time of his or her arrival on the ground.

44. At Dippenhall farm in 1868 there were 760 bins; few bins are attended by less than two adults; the number varies greatly; but you frequently find a mother assisted by a whole family, composed of five or six children, and varying from those who are bordering on manhood to the infant who is rolled in a shawl or a sack and laid upon the ground at its mother's feet. I was told that I might take 3½ as about the average number employed at each bin, and calculating upon this basis the number of pickers at work on Dippenhall farm when I visited it, would be 2,660. The usual sum paid for picking is 2½*d.* a bushel; but it varies much according to the season, and is rather higher at Farnham than elsewhere, owing to the hops being more carefully picked. Money is advanced from time to time on account; but the pickers are not finally paid until the conclusion of the picking season. Women earn on an average 2*s.* a day, but a quick picker will earn 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* (A. 32). In Herefordshire I am told that it requires a very good picker to earn 2*s.* a day; few can earn much more than 1*s.* (A. 5). Work commences at 6 a.m., and continues until about 5.30; the pickers have breakfast before they commence; there is no general pause for dinner; but the work being piecework the pickers stop for refreshment whenever and for as long as they like. Those of the pickers who live within an accessible distance usually return home every evening; the remainder sleep near the hop-ground wherever accommodation can be found.

Lodgings for pickers.

45. At Dippenhall farm the accommodation is provided in a number of large sheds. I was told that the sheds at Dippenhall farm were very favourable specimens of the accommodation usually provided for the pickers. I visited them one evening after the pickers were in bed. The beds consist of heaps of straw; a pair of sheets and a counterpane are provided for each bed by Mrs. Paine; I found it difficult to count the beds owing to their being placed so close together that I could not tell where one ended and the next began. It may be sufficient to say that the whole floor was covered with beds, except the space necessary to form pathways up and down the sheds. Most of the sheds have no upper floor, and are high and airy. Other sheds had upper floors, which were inhabited as thickly as the ground floor, and these sheds are necessarily less airy than those which had no upper floors. As a general rule, there are no offices attached to these sheds and no washing accommodation. Whatever special diseases are propagated among the pickers are, I believe, to be attributed mainly to overcrowding of the sheds in which they sleep; many of these sheds are used for farm purposes throughout the year, such as cattle sheds, storing guano, &c., and are insufficiently cleansed before the arrival of the pickers; if the picking season is over rapidly no evil consequences may arise; but when it is prolonged to five or six weeks, the sheds become foul and diseases break out. The evil consequences of this state of things is not to be looked for in Farnham alone; many of the pickers contract diseases there which do not exhibit themselves until they return home, perhaps many miles away. In a wet season the evils arising from insufficient accommodation are very much increased; the pickers clothes get wet, and they have no sufficient means of drying them. The dampness is communicated to the straw of which the beds are composed, and the straw rots.

I.

46. As a general rule, there are no partitions at all in the sheds occupied by the pickers. In one or two, however, which I visited partitions were formed by means of wattle hurdles, and in each of the portions thus enclosed two or three beds were placed; the shed when thus parcelled out presented very much the appearance of the sheep pens at a cattle market. Another shed I found divided into small apartments by means of thin temporary curtains suspended to the height of about five or six feet from the ground. Much of the hop-picking at Farnham is done by gipsies, who occupy their ordinary covered carts; the labour from one farm is completely supplied from this source, and a small encampment of gipsy carts and tents is made in one of the fields adjoining the farm premises. The sheds which I visited were occupied by men and women indiscriminately; but I was told, in Herefordshire, which I did not myself visit during the hop-picking season, that there the sexes are generally separated.

Food.

47. At Dippenhall farm a number of fireplaces have been erected for the convenience of the pickers; firewood is gratuitously supplied, and here the meals are cooked before and after the day's work. No systematic arrangement is made for the supply of provisions, but the pickers are entirely dependant upon the ordinary tradesmen for their supply of food; bread, tea, and herrings are the articles principally consumed, carts full of bread being sent every day from Farnham and the surrounding villages to the distant hop-grounds. Drunkenness is not frequent, at any rate during the commencement of the picking season; the employers find it necessary to maintain a certain amount of discipline among the pickers, and discharge those who are disorderly; but as the picking draws to a conclusion, the pickers know that their money has been earned, and then disorderly conduct becomes more frequent.

Earnings of labourers.

48. With respect to the earnings of agricultural labourers, I have obtained the following information:—

The day wages paid in Surrey vary from 12*s.*, in the western parts of the county, to 15*s.*, nearer London. In Warwickshire they are 11*s.* in the south of the county, and 13*s.* in the north (D. 14). In Worcestershire they vary from 9*s.* in the west (A. 121) to 12*s.* in the east (A. 122), and sometimes 13*s.* in the gardens around Evesham (A. 119). In Wiltshire and Herefordshire the day wages vary between 9*s.* and 11*s.* In addition to the above wages cider is universally allowed in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, with the exception of the south-east corner of the latter county.

Cider allowed.

49. The usual allowance is two quarts a day between Michaelmas and Ladyday, and three quarts a day from Ladyday to Michaelmas, except during hay time and harvest, when the amount is practically unlimited, and I am told it is quite common for men to drink five or six quarts a day. The value of the cider thus allowed should of course be added to the wages; it costs the farmer about 3*d.* or 4*d.* per gallon. If the labourers had to buy it at a public-house it would cost them at least double that sum; at the former price the value of the cider to the labourer would amount to about 1*s.* a week on an average throughout the year, and at the latter price to 2*s.* Cider does not appear to be an unwholesome drink (C. 1). Rheumatism is a very prevalent disease in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, but it is doubtful whether this is caused by cider. Calculus is very rare. But whatever the effect of cider upon the health may be, there can be no question that the practice of receiving so large a portion of the family income in cider, which is consumed by the father of the family alone, shows great extravagance on the part of the labourers.*

Shepherds, carters, and milkers.

50. Shepherds and carters generally receive about 2*s.* a week more than common day labourers, and often extra allowances besides; on large farms shepherd's and carter's places are sometimes of great value, amounting to as much as 17*s.* or 18*s.* a week, including everything (A. 2, 15, 17, 112). The milkers on the dairy farms in Wiltshire generally have an extra 1*s.* per week, because they are obliged to work on Sundays.

Extra money earned by piece-work.

51. To the above common day wages should be added the money earned at harvest and by piecework. The amount of this money of course varies with the strength and dexterity of the labourers, as well as with the opportunities they have of doing piecework, much more work being done by the piece on some farms than on others. I think that the money so earned would amount† to from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week if spread over the whole year (see as to Surrey, (A. 38, 44), as to Warwickshire (A. 14, 16, D. 18, 20), as to Worcestershire, (D. 39, 40, 41, 47,) as to Herefordshire, (D. 1,) as to Wiltshire (A. 117, D. 22, 32, 39).

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* As an instance of the opinions of labourers themselves on the cider question I may refer to the statement made to me by a gardener in the employment of Mr. Varden at Peopleton (D. 46).

† I made an effort to obtain accurate returns of the precise number of women and children employed, and of the amount of their earnings. With this object in view I distributed schedules to be filled up by farmers in the several counties which I visited. Unfortunately the number of these which have been sent back to me is insufficient to enable me to make any comparative calculation of the cost of cultivation and the earnings of labourers in different counties. The only county from which I have received a sufficient number of returns to be of any value is Warwickshire, and in this county my success has been mainly due to the exertions of Mr. Thomas Horley, jun., of the Fosse, Leamington. From these returns it appears that on the 1,845 acres of arable and 1,245 of grass land, total 3,090, to which the returns apply, the following staff of labourers is employed:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*	
Males.				
94 over 18, who earn	3,533	18	0	per annum.
13 between 18 and 13, who earn	265	0	0	„
14 between 13 and 10, who earn	139	14	0	„
5 between 10 and 8, who earn	29	14	0	„
Females.				
[1]Over 18 (married), who earn	144	8	0	„
5 over 18 (unmarried), who earn	70	16	0	„
1 between 18 and 13, who earns	7	0	0	„
	4,190	10	0	
Extra for beer or cider, &c.	311	0	0	
Total cost of labour	4,501	10	0	

= about 1*l.* 9*s.* per acre.

It appears also from this table that the average earnings of every male over 18 years of age amounts to about 37*l.* 12*s.* per annum.

[1] I am unable to give the number of married women employed, as the returns are imperfect on this point.

I.

52. In addition to the above earnings, potato ground is sometimes given free or at a reduced price, fuel sometimes hauled free, and meals given when men are kept late at work. Some farmers pay their men wet and dry, and some only when the work is actually done; all these matters should, of course, be taken in consideration in considering the total earnings of the labourers; but the practices of different farmers vary so much that no rule can be laid down by which their value can be accurately estimated. When considering the money earned by piecework, it must always be recollected that the extra money so obtained is only obtained by means of a greater expenditure of time and strength on the part of the labourer, and that a proportionately increased consumption of food and drink becomes necessary. In addition to which, in many cases, the labourer has to supply himself with tools. The money so earned cannot therefore be looked upon as a clear gain.

Earnings in Wiltshire.

53. It was frequently pressed upon me by the farmers in Wiltshire that the earnings of all the able-bodied men in their employment amounted on an average to from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a week (A. 90, 92, 107, 108, 113). The farmers who made these statements to me were almost all of them rather superior men of their class. The statement does not agree with the estimate furnished by the labourers themselves of their own earnings. My own impression is that there are a great many men in the county who are able-bodied in the sense that they are not suffering from any physical infirmity (though no doubt unskilful labourers), whose earnings do not amount to more than about 11*s.* a week on an average throughout the year, including everything (D. 32, 33, 38). From this sum the rate rises gradually to 13*s.* or 14*s.* (D. 22, 28). I met with one instance of 17*s.* 9*d.* per week (D. 27). But I have not been able to ascertain what proportion of the agricultural labourers earn the lower and what the higher amount.

Purchasing power of earnings.

54. In order to form an accurate opinion as to the pecuniary condition of labourers in different districts it is of course necessary to compare the purchasing power of the money they actually receive. Two of the most important items of expense which are universally met with are rent and fuel. I will allude to the first of these hereafter when dealing with the cottage question. But I may here mention that the price paid for coal varies from 20*s.* to 25*s.*, which is paid in Herefordshire, Surrey, and Wiltshire, to from 10*s.* to 12*s.* which is paid in the North of Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Wages, when paid.

55. Wages were formerly always paid on Saturdays; many farmers now pay on Fridays. This change is certainly advantageous to the labourers. The money is less likely to go in drink.

Rise of wages in Wiltshire.

56. There can be no doubt that the wages of all classes of agricultural labourers in Wiltshire have increased greatly during the last 25 or 30 years. Messrs. Rawlence and Squarey, of Salisbury, whose experience renders their opinion most valuable, think that the wages of young unmarried men have increased about 40 per cent., and those of older men about 10 or 12 (A. 110). The reason of this difference is that married men are less disposed to move than unmarried men, and consequently demand a smaller sum as an inducement to remain in one place.

But labourers unsettled.

57. Notwithstanding this increase in their wages the labourers in Wiltshire appear to be in a more unsettled and dissatisfied condition than in any other county I visited. I received numerous complaints from farmers in all parts of the county of the difficulty they experience in getting good steady men to remain with them; "directly we find fault with a man," they said, "he leaves us." The farmers attribute this dissatisfaction on the part of the labourers to increased education. I believe the real explanation of it to be that the county is overstocked with labour, owing to the causes which I have before explained, and that the labourers are beginning to find out that more highly paid employments are to be met with in other parts of the country, and that the improved means of locomotion enables them to go where they can meet with these higher wages.

Education.

What amount can be considered satisfactory.

58. I have now to state the results of the inquiries I have made with respect to the education of the young, and the first point which by my instructions I am directed to examine in connexion with that subject is the actual state of education among the young found at work. In order to judge whether their education is or is not at present satisfactory it is necessary to lay down some rule as to what amount of education may be deemed sufficient for persons occupying the position of agricultural labourers. I quite concur with the opinion expressed by the Rev. J. P. Norris (B. 14) upon this subject; he says, "I think it desirable that all children for at least five or six years of their childhood "should be brought under the civilizing influence of a good school; the actual instruction received is of "secondary importance; but as the moral and intellectual results are generally coincident, and the "latter only can be measured by examination, I am content that the schoolwork should be tested by "such a standard as that of the Revised Code.

59. "Adopting this test, therefore, I should say that the children of the agricultural labourers should "remain at school until they can pass in the 4th Standard;* in other words, a child should read with "sufficient facility to make it a pleasure in after life, should be able to work easy money sums, and

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* As I shall have to refer frequently to the Standards of the Revised Code, it may here be convenient to state what these standards are.

Standard I.: Reading.—Narrative in monosyllables. Writing.—Form on black-board or slate, from dictation, letters, capital and small; manuscript. Arithmetic.—Form on black-board or slate, from dictation, figures up to 20; name at sight figures up to 20; add and subtract figures up to 10, orally from examples on black-board.

Standard II.: Reading.—One of the narratives next in order after monosyllables in an elementary reading book used in the school. Writing.—Copy in manuscript character a line of print. Arithmetic.—A sum in simple addition or subtraction, and the multiplication table.

Standard III.: Reading.—A short paragraph from an elementary reading book used in the school. Writing.—A sentence from the same paragraph slowly read once, and then dictated in single words. Arithmetic.—A sum in any simple rule as far as short division, inclusive.

Standard IV.: Reading.—A short paragraph from a more advanced reading book used in the school. Writing.—A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book but not from the paragraph read. Arithmetic.—A sum in compound rules (money).

Standard V.: Reading.—A few lines of poetry from a reading book used in the first class of the school. Writing.—A sentence, slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time, from a reading book used in the first class of the school. Arithmetic.—A sum in compound rules (common weights and measures).

Standard VI.: Reading.—A short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative. Writing.—Another short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative, slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time. Arithmetic.—A sum in practice or bills of parcels.

"write and spell decently on paper. At present there can be no doubt that more than half the "children never reach this standard."

60. The opinion here expressed by Mr. Norris that the 4th Standard is the lowest which will enable the child to read and write without conscious effort has been generally confirmed by all the gentlemen most conversant with educational matters with whom I have communicated on this subject.

The actual state of education.

61. It is difficult to state accurately what the present state of education among the young is; it varies greatly in different parishes. I have had no means of taking an educational census, but I think that a tolerably correct estimate of the actual state of education may be formed from the following considerations:—

In Herefordshire.

62. The actual age at which boys leave school about corresponds with the age I have given above as that at which labour commences. In Herefordshire, as well as in Surrey, those children who have an opportunity of attending a good school and who do attend regularly up to the time they go to work, do, I think, obtain a satisfactory education, but there are many who do not go to school at all, or attend so irregularly that the education they receive is quite superficial; thus at Hentland, where there is an excellent school under a certificated master, I am told by the Rev. W. Poole, clergyman of the parish, that there were 108 children between the ages of 6 and 12 in the parish, and that of these 53 did not attend any school. The causes of absence in the case of each of the 53 children was ascertained by Mr. Poole, and is stated in his evidence (A. 12). I believe that there are many parishes, both in Herefordshire and in other counties, which, if examined, would not show a more favourable school attendance than that here exemplified. In many parishes where the schools are of a low quality, but few of those who do attend can be said to have attained a satisfactory education when they leave. Thus at Pipe-cum-Lyde I was told that the boys when they leave can generally only pass the 2nd or 3rd Standard (B. 5.); and at Withington out of 16 who left in one year only two could pass the 3rd Standard.

In Surrey.

63. In Surrey it is the opinion of the members of the Church of England Schoolmasters' Association that the children leave school at about 10 years of age; many before that age. The average given from the Dorking districts is 9 years. Very few will have past out of the 4th Standard when they leave (B. 16). At Seale, the Rev. W. L. Beynon says, "There are many parents who from indolence and indifference "never send their children to school; even those who attend regularly are quite insufficiently educated; "they can hardly read, and writing is quite unknown among them. When they come to a confirmation "class they can hardly get through the service" (A. 42); and the Rev. G. Drury, at Thorpe, says, "25 attended my night school last year: that number comprised nearly all in the parish between the "ages of 13 and 18, and out of that number nine who are in the choir are sufficiently educated, of the "remainder four could not read, seven could read a little, perhaps 2nd Standard; the other five could "read about 4th Standard. Perhaps one-third could not write well" (A. 43). This evidence is fully confirmed by that of the Rev. G. Chilton, of Wanborough (A. 44), the Rev. F. C. Fitton, of Bagshot (A. 45a), by Mr. Harrison, of Woldingham (A. 46). As before remarked, the configuration of the parishes and the extensive commons which exist in parts of Surrey offer a serious objection to education; thus, Mr. Mousley, schoolmaster at Cranleigh, says, "Only a small proportion of the children who live "in the distant cottages come to our school; those who do come often come at age of 7 and 8, and "don't know their letters" (B. 11).

In Warwickshire.

64. In Warwickshire it is the opinion of the members of the Church Teachers' Association, that "the "age of children leaving school is under 10 on the average, and that the progress they usually make is "between the 3rd and 4th Standard" (B. 20).

In this county the school age terminates, I think, rather earlier than in Herefordshire or Surrey, and the state of education is frequently defective; thus James Darlington, Esq., says, "I had many "opportunities of testing it [the education] during the recent cattle plague. I found that few of the "farm servants or labourers could read and write. Many could write only their name, and others could "not do even that" (A. 64). And I was told by James Isaacs, Esq., chief constable of Warwickshire, "that not above 1 out of 10 of those men who belong to the agricultural class, and are applicants "for employment in the police, have sufficient education to enable me to employ them" (A. 59).

In Wiltshire.

65. In Wiltshire, the members of the Salisbury Church School Masters' Association, state that the boys of the agricultural class leave school when not more than 9 years of age, when they can pass the 3rd Standard; and girls between 10 and 11, when they can pass the 4th (B. 43).

I think that in this county it may be stated as a general rule, that the 3rd Standard about marks the proficiency of the boys when they leave school (B. 38, 42); and the evidence points clearly to the conclusion that this limited amount of instruction is soon forgotten; thus, at Longbridge Deverill, where the supply of school accommodation is admirable, and the clergyman very zealous in the cause of education, 23 boys who joined the night school, of ages varying from 10 to 17, in 1867, were all placed in the 1st Standard (B. 42). At Netherhampton, where there is an endowed school, and clothes, worth at least 10*s.* a year, given away to each scholar; I was told by the schoolmistress that the boys leave between the ages of 8 and 9; they leave more often at 8 than at 9; they can usually pass the 3rd Standard when they leave; but after being absent for five or six months, have to begin again at the 1st; and that as a general rule no boy in the school could read a newspaper (B. 47). At Amesbury, where there is an excellent school, it appeared that the average age at which 40 boys, taken at hap-hazard, had left the school, was 8 years and 10 months (B. 32).

In Worcestershire.

66. In Worcestershire, the members of the Church School Teachers' Association state their opinion to be, "that the children of agricultural labourers leave school on an average at about the age of 10, at "the time of leaving scarcely any in aided schools have passed the 4th Standard of the Revised Code, or, "if in unaided schools, are able to do so; the majority are about equal to passing in the 2nd Standard" (B. 59).

The Rev. W. Lea, secretary to the Worcester Diocesan Board of Education, has furnished me with the results of the diocesan inspection. The diocese of Worcester comprises almost the whole of the county of Worcester, and all the southern part of the county of Warwick. Mr. Lea states that in the deaneries of Bredon, Evesham, Feckingham, Pershore, and Upton, out of a total number of 3,048 on the books, only 159 were equal to the 4th Standard, and also that in 24 county schools not one child reaches the 4th Standard in arithmetic (B. 52). As an instance of the indifference to education so often to

I.

be met with, I may mention the fact, stated by the Rev. A. James, of Rock, that in that parish, containing a population of about 1,000, from 28 cottages containing children of an age to attend school, none attended (A. 140). But the greatest obstacle to education in the county of Worcester arises fro m the demand for the labour of young children in the gardens near Evesham, as explained in the very interesting paper supplied by Mr. Barker, of the National schools, Evesham (B. 53).

Many parishes where education satisfactory.

67. It would not be difficult to bring forward many instances of parishes where the state of education is satisfactory; these parishes are usually the property of some large proprietor or under a hard-working clergyman, who takes an active interest in education. They must undoubtedly be looked upon as exceptions; and I think that the facts I have called attention to above will be sufficient to establish the general rule,—which, indeed, I have never found doubted by any person who has investigated the subject,—that the state of education of the young now growing up is most unsatisfactory.

To what causes defect is due.

68. It now remains to considers to what causes the defect in the present state of education is due. In the instructions issued to the assistant commissioners attention is drawn to six causes, all of which, to a greater or less extent, are answerable for the defective state of education, but in a very different degree. As a general rule, the supply of school accommodation is fairly satisfactory. I have met with very few districts in which no school is accessible.

Supply of schools generally sufficient.

69. The Rev. J. P. Norris states that he is acquainted with 400 or 500 parishes, and that, speaking generally, it may be said that half of those parishes are provided with sufficiently good schools, both as to buildings and teaching power; and that in the remainder money would be forthcoming to raise the means of education to a satisfactory condition if there were any real desire for education on the part of the poor (B. 14).

70. With seven or eight exceptions, every parish in Worcestershire is supplied with a school (B. 59).

71. In Herefordshire only two parishes with a population over 500 are without a school, but I have not been able to ascertain what number of parishes containing populations of less than 500 are without schools (A. 12); the evidence as to the supply of schools in the other counties I have visited is very similar to the above.*

* I have collected the following information with reference to the school accommodation in the five counties to which this Report refers from the "Statistics of Church of England Schools," recently published by the National Society. The very small number of parishes returned as being destitute of either separate or convenient adjoining schools fully confirms what I have stated in my Report. The very small proportion of the schools in Herefordshire (only one-fourth of the whole) which are annually aided by the State, undoubtedly indicates a low condition of education in that county. Of course I have no means of judging of the accuracy of these statistics.

PARISHES (in counties) without SCHOOLS but supplied with EDUCATION in adjoining PARISHES.

County.	Parishes with Populations under 100.	Parishes with Populations between 100 and 300.	Parishes with Populations between 300 and 500.	Parishes with Populations between 500 and 1000.	Parishes with Populations between 1000 and 3000.	Parishes with Populations between 3000 and 5000.	Parishes with Populations above 5000.
Hereford	26	20	3	—	—	—	—
Surrey	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Warwick	9	7	1	—	—	—	1
Wilts	12	6	—	—	—	—	—
Worcester	8	10	4	4	1	—	—

PARISHES (with populations) destitute of either separate or convenient adjoining SCHOOLS.

County.	Parishes with Populations under 100.	Parishes with Populations between 100 and 300.	Parishes with Populations between 300 and 500.	Parishes with Populations between 500 and 1000.	Parishes with Populations between 1000 and 3000.	Parishes with Populations between 3000 and 5000.	Parishes with Populations above 5000.
Hereford	2	9	1	—	—	—	—
Surrey	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Warwick	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Wilts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worcester	—	4	—	1	—	—	—

County.	Number of Ecclesiastical Parishes and Districts in each County.	Population at Census 1861.	Population in December 1866, as estimated by the Registrar-General.	Number of Week-day Schools, *i.e.*, Institutions.			Number of Scholars on Registers.				Average Number of week day Scholars in Attendance.				Total Average Number of Scholars under Instruction in Day and Night Schools in 1866.	Per-centage on Population of 1866 (as estimated by the Registrar-General) of such Average Attendance.	Church of England Dames' Schools and Scholars in them, not included in the previous Columns.	
							In Schools Annually aided by the State.		In Schools not Annually aided by the State.		In Schools Annually aided by the State.		In Schools not Annually aided by the State.				Number of Dames' Schools.	Average Number of Scholars in Attendance.
				Receiving Annual State Grants.	Not receiving Annual State Grants.	Total.	Day Schools.	Night Schools.	Day Schools.	Night Schools.	Day Schools.	Night Schools.	Day Schools.	Night Schools.				
Hereford	249	123,712	128,693	40	119	159	3,910	36	7,204	452	2,854	28	5,244	336	8,462	6·5 or 1 in 15·2	22	428
Surrey	295	831,093	930,105	170	106	276	40,665	1,130	15,946	3,732	29,900	679	10,960	2,515	44,054	4·7 or 1 in 21·2	6	118
Warwick	284	561,855	618,689	109	131	240	23,849	3,507	12,956	3,557	17,767	1,831	8,756	2,271	30,625	4·9 or 1 in 20·2	17	390
Wilts	364	249,311	246,536	133	194	327	17,028	2,215	10,629	3,308	13,016	1,598	7,259	2,360	24,233	9·8 or 1 in 10·1	14	380
Worcester	253	307,397	326,375	78	117	195	15,183	1,819	9,406	1,425	10,899	1,114	6,689	897	19,599	6 or 1 in 16·6	19	475

I.

72. It is a remarkable fact that the age of the first class in schools, where certificated teachers are employed, is almost always higher than the age of the first class in schools where certificated masters are not employed; this is clearly brought out by the evidence of the Rev. W. Lea, derived from the report of the diocesan inspection in Worcestershire (B. 52); Mr. Lea shows that the average age of the first class, where uncertificated teachers are employed, varies between 8 and 10½, and in those where certificated teachers are employed between 10½ and 12. It becomes important then to consider whether the children who compose the first class in the latter schools are taken from the same class of the population as those which compose the first class in the former schools.

Boys older where certificated masters are employed.

The following table will throw light upon this subject:—

Place.	In School.		In First Class.	
	Total Number of Boys.	Number of Boys of Agricultural Labouring Class.	Total Number of Boys.	Number of Boys of Agricultural Labouring Class.
Upton-on-Severn - - -	119	99	19	7
Evesham - - -	157	130	30	15
Hentland - - -	45	39	17	11
Bosbury - - -	60	45	15	12
Ashperton - -	57	51	12	8
*Bishop's Frome - -	127	88	24	12
Total - - -	565	452	117	65

This table shows that in the schools referred to, in all of which there are certificated teachers, the sons of agricultural labourers form about nine-elevenths of the whole number at school, whereas they only form rather more than one-half of the boys contained in the first classes of those schools.

73. The first classes are composed mainly of the children of small tradesmen and farmers, artizans, and persons somewhat raised above the position of purely agricultural labourers. These persons are really anxious to have their children well educated. They select schools where they can obtain what they want, and keep their children at these schools until they have made satisfactory progress; but I am inclined to think that the age at which the sons of agricultural labourers leave school is much the same, whatever may be the quality of the education given. I made particular inquiries in order to ascertain the effect of the establishment of a good school on the supply of agricultural labour. There can be no doubt that many boys who have received a good education abandon agricultural employment in consequence. This must be so as long as education is the exception and ignorance the rule. But I have never found that the supply of labour has been so far diminished from this cause as to create a rise in wages.

But not the sons of agricultural labourers.

74. It is the opinion of some gentlemen that the education given in our parish schools is bad in kind, and that it ought to be of a more practical character, but so long as the attendance at school is limited to the time to which it now extends it seems to me hopeless to attempt to teach more than reading, writing, and cyphering, which all admit must form the foundation of all education.

Some think that the education given is bad in kind.

75. The school fee charged is generally 1*d.* or 2*d.* a week. This the parents can generally well afford to pay. In some cases as much as 3*d.* a week has been charged with satisfactory results. In fact, the evidence upon this point goes to show that the poor do not value what they pay nothing for, and at the attendance improves by the imposition of a fee, where no fee has been previously charged, and y the increase in the amount of the school fee where the fee had previously been very small (B. 9).

Fees not too high.

76. There can be no question that the indisposition of the parents to forego the weekly sum that may be added to the earnings of the family by the child's labour forms everywhere a serious obstacle to education; in the great majority of instances the child is taken away from school as soon as he can earn anything, no matter how small the sum, without reference to the amount of education he has obtained, and, unfortunately, it but too often happens that employment can be obtained for boys at so early an age that their satisfactory education is impossible.

But parents unwilling to forego children's earnings.

77. In connexion with this branch of the subject should be noticed the work which children do for their own parents in their own gardens. In the spring and autumn many are engaged in planting and gathering potatoes; where the amount of land occupied by the parent is increased beyond the dimensions of a small cottage garden, it has been observed that the attendance of the children at school becomes proportionately less regular (A. 89). This fact appears to be at variance with the impression entertained by many gentlemen that the occupation of land has a tendency to raise the moral qualities of the occupier.

Work done by children in parent's garden.

78. In almost every parish will be found some parents who are utterly indifferent† to education, and never

Indifference of labourers;

* This is a mixed school, and the numbers given include boys and girls.

† I have found various plans adopted in order to improve the regularity of the attendance of children at school. At Albury, in Surrey, the attention of the parents is drawn to this matter by a report in the following form, which is sent to them quarterly:—

——	G.	M.	B.	——	G.	M.	B.
Religious knowledge - - -				Dictation - - - -			
Reading - - - -				Spelling - - - -			
Writing - - - -				General conduct - - -			
Arithmetic - - - -				Attendance - - - -			

G. Good. M. Moderate. B. Bad.

The school has been open ____ days.
Your child has attended ____ days.
Has lost ____ days.

I. send their children to school at all, but the number of these is becoming fewer every day. The parents, however, are, as a general rule, uneducated themselves; they manage their children very badly, and do not appear to be aware that continued attendance for a considerable number of years is absolutely indispensable in order that their children may obtain even a very limited amount of instruction. They seem to think that satisfactory results can be obtained if a child goes to school when he has nothing else to do, and that he can, without loss, absent himself as often and for as long as he pleases.

I have met with a case of a woman who would not send her children to a free school because regular attendance was enforced there, but preferred sending them to another school where she had to pay 3*d.* a week for each of them, so that she might be able to take them from school and send them to work whenever she pleased. The husband of this woman was a carter earning high wages (D. 42).

of farmers; 79. I fear there are but few of the farmers who take a real interest in education. There are some, but not many, who think that a man is a better labourer if he has been educated than if he has not. The great majority, if not all, while not denying that a power of reading, writing, and cyphering should be possessed by every individual for his own sake, will not admit that any advantage thereby accrues to the employer. The number of farmers who take an earnest and sincere interest in education, and who are likely to make an effort to improve it, is unquestionably very small. I may add that, as a general rule, farmers are not at all aware of what the real state of education among the children of labourers is. If there is a school in the village, they often jump to the conclusion that all receive a satisfactory education. If they see maps in a schoolroom, they think that all learn geography; and they are too apt to judge of the proficiency of the school* by the first class, in which, in fact, but few labourers' children will be found.

of landowners. 80. Landowners almost always support education in theory, and some of them contribute most handsomely to the support of schools; others deal with schools as they not unfrequently deal with cottages; in the parish in which the landlord is resident the schools will be well supported, but in other parishes where he has property, but which he does not often see, the schools will frequently receive less attention (A. 82, Wilkinson).

81. The result of the above observations is that, as I said in my Report on Northamptonshire, the two main obstacles to education are the indifference of the parents and their indisposition to dispense with their children's earnings. The other causes alluded to are far less important. The fault to be

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You are earnestly requested to send your child *regularly* while you continue him at the school.

Irregular attendance is unfair to yourself, for it wastes your school money; it is unfair to the teacher, for it wastes her care and trouble; it is unfair to the child, for she will find that during her absence much that she has learnt has been forgotten, and has to be learnt over again.

(Signed)

Manager.

'At Bramley, with a view to a more regular attendance, the two following rules are enforced :—

1. For children who have not attended at least 30 days in any given quarter (with the exception of those for whom the highest fee is paid), an additional payment of 1*d.* per week will be required for the next quarter.

2. The names of children who are absent for more than four weeks together will be struck off the books, and they will only be re-admitted on payment of a fine of 6*d.*, in addition to the extra payment as above.

* Extract from a paper by the Rev. J. P. Norris, upon the Education Bill brought forward by Sir C. B. Adderley in 1860 (reprinted from the Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, 1860) :—

" We hear much of the rapid progress of education, and in one way it is true. Schools are being multiplied, teachers are being trained, large sums are being spent.

" We, *inspectors*, examine these schools, and in each school we find a first class of fairly good scholars, and we report accordingly; and people suppose that all the children before they leave school will receive the education of this first class. But what are the facts ? I speak advisedly, and after careful inquiry, when I say that, even in places where good schools exist, not one in six of the children reach this first class. Ask the teacher of any of our annual grant schools, and he will tell you that one-third of the children of the place still prefer to go to dames' school, and of those that are entered on his books not more than one in four reach the first class. Thus it is that the work done is by no means commensurate with the means employed. The means are excellent, but they only reach one-sixth part of the population. Nor do I perceive much prospect of improvement in this respect. During the 11 years that I have been an inspector I have seen a rapid increase in the number of good schools; but in the proportion of the population that have been willing to avail themselves fully of the education so offered I have seen little or no advance. My belief is that even if every parish in England had its good school not more than one-sixth, or, at the very most, one-fourth part of the population would care to get more than their present smattering of education; and at present not more than one child in six learns to read with sufficient ease to retain or care to use the faculty in after-life."

The following table was supplied to me by the schoolmaster at Christian Malford, in Wiltshire, where there is a particularly good school. It shows the number of children who had been presented in the various standards during the four years preceding 1868. It will be seen from this that the bulk of the children never reach the upper standards; and I was told by the schoolmaster that those who did were chiefly farmers' and tradesmen's children :—

——	1864–65.	1865–66.	1866–67.	1867–68.
I. - -	26	21	25	14
II. - -	22	28	23	25
III. - -	10	22	29	15
IV. - -	18	10	15	14
V. - -	4	11	9	10
VI. - -	—	—	7	7
Infants - -	26	25	16	23
Total -	106	117	124	108

Some light may also be thrown upon this subject by examining the state of education among militiamen.

I examined the roll book of the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia, and ascertained that between the years 1856 and 1867 (inclusive) 2,425 recruits had been enlisted, and of these 1,155, or 47·74 per cent., had signed their names by mark.

In the Wilts Militia, between the years 1863 and 1867 inclusive, 1,170 recruits had been enlisted, of whom 609, or 52·05 per cent., had signed by mark.

The recruits in these two regiments were taken chiefly from among the agricultural labourers, and varied between 17 and 25 years of age. In the other counties I visited they were enlisted mainly from the towns, I therefore thought it unnecessary to obtain any information with respect to them.

I am aware that many men who decline to sign their names are often found to be able to do so when pressed; but I think it may fairly be observed that the power of writing must be of but little value to men who find so much difficulty in writing even their names that they prefer to get somebody else to do it for them.

remedied is not that the children do not go to school at all, but that they attend either too irregularly or leave at too early an age. I.

82. Having pointed out what are the main causes of the present defective state of education, I will now consider how those defects can best be remedied. Remedies.

Although a defect which applies only to certain districts I will first refer to the want of school accommodation.

83. The Rev. W. Gover points out that it is imperative that greater encouragement should be given by the State for the voluntary erection of schools. Formerly, before the introduction of the Revised Code, Government gave one-third of the cost, whilst under the Revised Code they have reduced their aid to one-fifth of the cost of erection, throwing four-fifths upon voluntary efforts. He further points out that "whereas before 1863 the annual increase of school accommodation was not only supplying "the increase of population of school age, but overtaking past neglect at the rate of 10,000 children per "annum, the effect of this unpolitic parsimony has been so to check school building that the annual "increase of school accommodation is falling behind the annual increase of the population of school "age by considerably more than 10,000 per annum." To remedy this defect he recommends "that "powers should be taken whereby, after reasonable time and notice given, adequate schools should "be built in neglected districts, the whole cost of the erection to be defrayed from local rates; such "schools when built should be under a county or union board; and so far as fees and Government "grants did not suffice should be supported in like manner from the rates, unless some approved "voluntary agency undertook to maintain them" (B. 28). The building schools should be encouraged.

84. I feel sure that any attempt to cast the general expense of the support of education on the occupiers of land alone would meet with most strenuous opposition. It is urged on behalf of the occupiers of land that the rates have been greatly increased of late years, that education is a national object, and that the cost of it should be defrayed by the owners of all property, whether real or personal. At the same time I think that the imposition of a rate for the limited object for which Mr. Gover recommends it, viz., for the supply of school accommodation in districts where that accommodation is at present proved to be inadequate, would find many supporters. Opinions as rates.

85. An important question here arises as to the most convenient position for schools. Hitherto the supply of schools has been parochial, and the children belonging to one parish are often prohibited from attending the school belonging to another parish, though such school may be more conveniently situated for them than the school in their own parish, to which they would otherwise have to go. The object of such a restriction is to secure a good attendance of children in *every* parish school. But even if every parish is supplied with a school, in many parishes where the area is large, the population extensive, and the roads bad, one school is quite insufficient. In other places, where the population of two or three villages is concentrated in a small space, as is the case in the valleys of the chalk districts of Wiltshire, a good school in a central position might well supply the requirements of the population of two or three parishes, and a superior education might thus be given at a less cost than would be necessary for the supply of separate school accommodation for each parish. Where schools should be placed.

86. The proper system on which the position of schools should be regulated is that suggested by the Rev. W. Lea (B. 52). His plan is "to have dame schools for infants in each parish, then to send the "elder children to a central school, where there should be a certificated master, at the age of 7 or 8. "It is no hardship for a child of that age to walk two or three miles to school." The school at Cutnall Green, in Worcestershire, mentioned by Mr. Lea, which receives children from four country parishes containing a population of 1,084, is an instance of what might be done in this way. The successful adoption of this plan would necessitate the abandonment by the clergy in many cases of their individual action, but I feel no doubt that the zeal of the clergy, which has already done so much for education, would prevent any difficulties arising on this ground.

87. It has often occurred to me that some greater use might be made of itinerant masters than is now the case. Possibly one such master living in the central village might visit by turns schools in the outlying districts of the parish, or might on certain evenings of the week take classes in distant parts of the parish, and the hours of work in the central school might be diminished on those evenings to enable him to do so; but I have not matured any plan for the purpose of carrying out this idea, and I only make the suggestion in order that others may take it up if it is thought of any value. Itinerant masters.

88. The next point is as to the supply of teachers. There can be no question as to the great superiority of certificated over uncertificated teachers, but very few certificated teachers go to country schools. Supply of teachers.

The Rev. Mr. Gover, giving the result of his experience as principal of the training college at Saltley, says (B. 28), "After sending out my masters for 16 years, I can scarcely look round on any "of them engaged in schools with an attendance below 50, unless where the salary is provided by an "exceptional liberality on the part of the patron." Very few certificated teachers in country schools.

89. Complaints have been made to me by clergymen in rural parishes of the impossibility of complying with the requirements of the Revised Code in order to secure certificated teachers. The result of this is that in the poorest country parishes, where but a few trifling local subscriptions can be obtained, the employment of certificated teachers is impossible. This would be remedied to some extent by the establishment of good central schools, as suggested above. But in order to increase the supply of teachers for country schools, Mr. Gover (after pointing out that a distinct standard should exist for the teachers in a remote village from that for the master for town schools) suggests that "for any "school with an area below 800 square feet (class-room included), let it be open to appoint a "registered teacher. This should be either an ex-pupil-teacher, or any person above 21 years of age, "proposed by the managers, who should pass in some paper of the pupil-teacher's examination, not "lower than that of the third year, at the district examination, under the local inspector. He should "also teach a class or conduct a school in the presence of the inspector or his assistant. And re-"examination in this or the paper of a later year should be required on every subsequent change of "school. Having passed the paper of the fifth grade, registered teachers should be allowed to rise to "the rank of certificated by examination or good service. Their schools might be visited by the "inspector's assistant." Remedy suggested, registered teachers.

I.

Low fees should not be charged.

90. I think that it is a great mistake to charge very low school fees; I do not believe it secures larger attendance than a higher fee does. Education is now generally considered a necessity for the labourers, though possibly they may not think so themselves. Their wages, therefore, should amount to such a sum as would enable them to purchase what is necessary for them, and I believe that the imposition of low fees has a tendency to keep down wages. I think that as high fees should be charged as can be exacted without diminishing the number in attendance at the school. This would make labourers more independent, and benevolent persons would almost always be forthcoming to give assistance where high fees pressed hardly on large families.

The above recommendations suggest what is thought necessary for the supply of sufficient school accommodation and teaching power. These recommendations would become far less important than they now are if the attendance of the scholars was more regular, and the co-operation of parents and employers could be secured in the manner I shall hereafter describe. It has been observed that the principal difficulty to be overcome is the difficulty of securing a regular attendance of the scholars. It becomes important, therefore, to consider what can be done in order to promote this end.

Some think present advance in education sufficiently rapid,

91. There can be no question that great progress is at present being made in most parts of the country. The Rev. John Duncan, vicar of Calne, remarks "that a great and rapid revolution appears to me to "have been going on in the English labourer these last few years; it is due to the meeting together "of two things,—the education of the poor in our village schools, which have given to the bulk of the "population the power of reading, and the penny newspaper, which has given to the labourer matter "to read, and interesting matter which he likes to read." Notwithstanding this, Mr. Duncan is in favour of legislative interference for the purpose of improving the actual state of education (A. 91). On the other hand, the Rev. W. M. Sherwood, after describing his experience as a clergyman of 33 years' standing in the parishes of White-Ladies-Acton and Broughton-Hackett in Worcestershire (to which I beg to call particular attention), comes to the conclusion that to check female labour in the fields, to prevent pauperism, to encourage education, to promote cleanliness, honesty, and general good conduct, one must not meddle too much, but must encourage self-respect and pride, and show respect ourselves to the cottagers, and he adds, "I deprecate most earnestly any attempt to force education" (A. 123).

but the main obstacles are not being removed.

92. The only question is, whether the progress at present being made is sufficiently rapid. It is probable that education will not be thoroughly appreciated until we have a generation of educated parents; and I think we may infer from the facts which I have mentioned that many of those now growing up cannot be said to be educated. The defect is mainly due to the irregularity of the attendance, and the early age at which the children leave.* I see no prospect of these evils being remedied by any causes now in operation. It becomes important, then, to consider in what manner more regular and more protracted school attendance can be secured.

Suggestions for securing regular attendance.

93. Some think that school attendance should be made compulsory up to the age of 10 or 11 (E. 104, 80), and that no attendance should be required after that age. This suggestion, however, goes beyond the principle of the Factory Acts, and I presume, therefore, that it is not within the province of this Commission to recommend it. The system of partial attendance at school has been suggested to me in a great variety of forms. Some recommend prohibition from field work up to the age of 9 or 10, and partial attendance at school between 10 and 12 or 13 (B. 28). Some would require a certain number of attendances per month (E. 95), quarter, or year (E. 100), or during the winter months (E. 92, 94), or until certain proficiency is attained (E. 84, 99, 101, 102, 103); some recommend half day (E. 89, 108, 119); others the alternate day (E. 87) system. In order to secure the attendance of idle and vagrant children it is suggested that the Industrial Schools Act should be more stringently enforced.

Various forms of part time.

Night schools.

94. Many persons, particularly farmers, attach great value to night schools. It cannot be doubted that they are very useful, and deserve to be encouraged, for the purpose of enabling lads who have received a satisfactory rudimentary education to improve themselves, but the evidence all goes to show that, except in cases of peculiar intelligence or peculiar industry on the part of both teachers and pupils (B. 19) night schools do but little more than prevent boys from forgetting what they have learnt when at the day school (B. 38, 56). This is stated by the Rev. Prebendary Morrice to be the result in his own night school at Longbridge Deverill, where every effort is made to secure success for the night school (B. 42). The great difficulties to be met with in carrying on night schools are want of teaching power, the scattered distribution of the population, and the irregularity of the hours of work. The law can remedy the first defect, but certainly cannot remedy the second, and probably not the third. Night schools, too, are attended by two distinct classes; first, those who have received a good elementary education, and desire to improve themselves; secondly, those whose education has been neglected. These two classes cannot be taught together.

No system of partial attendance likely to be successful.

95. In the last Report which I had the honour of presenting to you I expressed an opinion that neither the half-day or alternate day system could be applied with advantage to children employed in agriculture. My subsequent experience has convinced me that the opinion I then expressed was correct. I think it is unnecessary to attempt to explain at length why these systems would fail, because I do not recollect ever meeting anybody well acquainted with the management of a farm who thought it possible that either of them could be successfully carried out. I have never myself seen any attempt to enforce either of them in an agricultural parish, and the only gentleman whom I have ever met who has attempted to carry them out had given up the attempt as being impracticable (E. 79). The suggestion that school attendance during winter should be made compulsory up to a certain age has many supporters; but many farmers require boys to work for them just as much in winter as in summer. I do not myself think that any system of partial attendance at school could be enforced compulsorily upon

* So far from their being any tendency to rise in the age at which children leave school, I have been occasionally told by reliable witnesses that the age is falling. Thus Mr. R. Clutton writes to me, "I am confirmed in the opinion that the increase in the wages "of both men and boys has, instead of inducing a longer attendance at school, produced exactly the contrary effect" (A. 40). Mr. Flower, schoolmaster at Amesbury, Wilts, after an experience of 16 years, says, the age at which boys leave the day-school has fallen (B. 32.)

I.
Half-time requires inspection, which is impossible in agriculture.

those engaged in agriculture. Every such system must be enforced by systematic inspection. In factories the duties of the inspector are comparatively easy, because the children employed are collected in a comparatively small space; but how would it be possible for an inspector to ascertain from a visit to a farm in Wiltshire which extends for four or five miles across the downs what number of boys were employed upon it, and whether each of them had attended the requisite number of hours during the previous week, month, or quarter?*

If enforced, farmers would not employ boys to whom it applied.

96. But beyond this I think that even if such a plan could be enforced in agricultural districts it would be useless for educational purposes. The success of the Factory Act as an educational measure depends upon there being an active demand for the labour of children. As long as they are *employed* in the factory the law gives power to enforce their attendance at school; but in many instances it has been found that sooner than submit to the inconvenience of being prevented from employing children during their whole time, manufacturers have given up employing them at all until they have passed the age to which the Act applies. I should expect that a similar result would follow if an attempt were made to apply any similar Act to agricultural labour. I am confirmed in this view because many of the most experienced farmers whom I have met have expressed the opinion to me that the labour of young boys was most expensive labour. They appear to be very little employed in the north of England and Scotland; and if the law imposed any obstacle to their employment they would probably cease to be employed in other districts. Such a result might be welcomed on one ground; it would probably lead to the wages of the parent being raised so as to enable him to dispense with the earnings of his children; but at the same time there would be no means of securing the attendance of the children at school; and the indifference to education at present so frequently complained of would remain unopposed.

Only feasible plan would be to make permission to work depend on proficiency of child.

97. The only plan which I think would prove practically useful is that which would make the permission to earn wages dependent upon the proficiency attained by the child at school. This proposal rests upon a sound principle; it makes it for the interest both of the parent and the employer that the child should be educated; the sooner the child attains the requisite proficiency the sooner the income of the family will be increased by the child's earnings, and the sooner the farmer will have a hand to work for him. It will then be directly for the pecuniary interest of the parent that the child should attend school regularly from an early age, in order that he may the sooner earn wages, and it will be directly for the interest of the farmer that the age at which the child commences to work should not be unduly postponed.†

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* The following extract from a letter signed "R. P., Downton," and addressed to the "Salisbury and Winchester Journal" of October 10th, 1868, sums up very clearly the objections to any extension of the half-time system to the agricultural population.

"Now, as to the Factory Acts, I do not know that there is any need to quote their provisions more particularly than to say, that they have improved the education of the manufacturing districts by enacting either—

"1. That the children employed in factories should attend a certain number of times in the course of the year, or

"2. On alternate days, or

"3. On half days.

"I hardly know which of these plans would be the least inconvenient to all the parties concerned, but I think either of them would be anything but agreeable. Let me try to view them first from the employer's point of view. I could imagine that of these methods the first would be rather the least inconvenient and vexatious to him, because it would, in fact, be (taking the most cheerful view of it) only changing his carter boys, his shepherd boys, and his dairy boys twice a year. I believe that this has been proposed in places where the gang system prevails, as enabling the children to take a little schooling at seasons when their services are least required. It proceeds, therefore, on the assumption, which as far as my knowledge goes would be false in this district, that boy labour is required more at one season than another in the fields. I imagine that there may be a little bird-keeping at one time and pig-keeping at another, and a few odd jobs which vary, but the main portion of boys' labour required on a farm is required equally at all seasons.

"As to the alternate day system, I can well imagine the annoyance it would be to an employer never to know who was working for him and who not, and when anything was wrong done, to be told by John Smith, as he assuredly would be, 'That it was not he, but George Jones that did it,' or if he told George Jones to do anything to-morrow, to hear, 'Please, sir, I shan't be here to-morrow, you must tell John Smith to do that.' The half-day system would, perhaps, be a trifle worse. I pass on, then, to consider how the Factory Acts would affect school managers in agricultural districts, as well as the children, for their interests in the matter are in fact identical. The benefit proposed for the children is better education, and that is likewise the object sought by school managers. On behalf of school managers, then, I venture to protest altogether against trying to improve education in agricultural districts *merely by requiring attendance*, whether partially throughout the year, or alternate days, or half days. I cannot conceive anything more unfair to a teacher than to turn in upon his school a considerable number of fresh boys every few months, who, having been to work, will begin to feel a certain degree of independence, and will not be slow to show it off before the younger children, who, being brought there against their will, and being only obliged to be present in the body, will probably do nothing else, unless they treat the teacher and managers as *participes criminis* of having brought them there, and proceed to annoy them accordingly. This would be bad enough under a master, as by the time he had got them into a little discipline they would be off to work, to return as undisciplined again as before, and so the work would proceed much after the manner of the Danaides, the master would pour in a little instruction one six months, and the children would infallibly get rid of it again the next six months, and be no fuller than before. But bad as this would be under a master, it would be still worse under a mistress, and that is the government of a large proportion of our agricultural schools. A mistress may manage boys pretty well up to 10 years of age, and perhaps longer; if she has had them always they will submit to the discipline to which they have been accustomed, but what is she to do with a parcel of carter boys and shepherd boys turned into her school? I believe this plan has not been found to work well in the factory districts, and I am sure that it would not be more successful in the agricultural. Looking, however, at these three systems from the school manager's point of view, I imagine that the two last would be least objectionable, but still very inconvenient. How they are worked in the manufacturing districts I know not, but one can imagine that in schools wholly devoted to one class of boys, and sometimes for separate factories, that it might be managed without much inconvenience, because the scholars would be changed *en masse*, but this would not be the case in our own districts, and I cannot but think that any such plan would materially interfere with the working of our schools. The boy who kept to his own article of the creed, notwithstanding the boy who usually said the previous one was away, is a very old story, and was thought half a century ago to characterise the height of stupidity, but we shall in the alternate or half-day system have the whole teaching of our school, or the results of it, conformed to this principle. Of course the regular teaching of the schools could not give way to accommodate the alternators, therefore the result would be that each set of boys would be well acquainted with the alternate chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. One set of boys would know something about Kent, Hampshire, and Devonshire; and the other set would be better acquainted with Sussex, Dorsetshire, and Cornwall. This may seem ridiculous, but it would be really too near the truth to be pleasant. I do not see (and I can speak more confidently upon this subject than I could upon one affecting the employers of labour) how an ordinary school is to be carried on which is subject to the constant inroads of alternate day scholars, unless they were so much in advance of the every-day scholars that all the work could be done by the latter twice over, once with each set of alternating boys, and this would not be the case; on the contrary, the alternating boys would have become inferior rather than otherwise to the younger boys in regular attendance—inferior, in fact, to what they themselves were in most parts of school work."

† In my last report I recommended that, with a view to diminish the obstacle to education caused by the early labour, the employment of children under 10 years of age should be prohibited. But I have since seen that "indifference" forms such a powerful obstacle to education that I am inclined to think that it would be hardly worth while to pass a law dealing with the early labour alone.

I.

Practical mode of enforcing this suggestion. Amount of education to be required.

98. The practical mode in which this idea could be carried out would be by making it penal to employ any child under a certain age, say 14 or 15, unless the child produced a certificate, signed by a competent authority, that he or she had passed the 4th Standard of the Revised Code. I say the 4th Standard, because, as I have stated above, I believe that to be the lowest standard which represents an amount of education sufficient for persons occupying even the position of agricultural labourers. It must not, however, be supposed that this amount of education could be attained at once. As I have before pointed out, many children have never been to school at all. Time must be given to these to obtain instruction before the proposed Act requiring proficiency could be enforced. This difficulty might be overcome by postponing the date on which the Act should come into force to four or five years after it was passed, and possibly a lower standard, the second or third, might be required at an earlier date. It has been urged by many gentlemen that this plan should be accompanied by the prohibition of labour under a certain age, say 9 or 10, on the ground that children under that age are physically unfit to work, and also to prevent them being unduly forced on in their school work. I myself do not think that the minimum limit is necessary. Very few would obtain the certificate younger than 9 years of age. No doubt that is full young for them to go to work, but the success of the proposed plan depends on its simplicity; and I think it would be imprudent to introduce any clause which would diminish its simplicity unless there is some urgent reason for doing so. This prohibition might be subsequently enforced if found necessary.

Should there be a minimum age?

Where and by whom should certificate be granted?

99. The next question is where and by whom should the examination be held at which the certificates should be granted?

In my last Report I mentioned, as a serious obstacle to this scheme, that it would be very difficult to hold examinations sufficiently often. I now, however, think that this difficulty might be overcome; it would be sufficient if the examinations were held twice a year, once in the early spring, so as to admit the spring work, and again late in the summer, so as to admit of autumn work. The examination should be held in central places, so chosen that none of the applicants for certificates should have above three or four miles to walk to them. The places at which confirmations are now held would probably be convenient centres for holding examinations.

The examiners at these examinations should be selected from the best of the certificated teachers, and care should be taken that the examinations in each district should be held by a man who was not connected with that district. Those children who were unable to attend the examinations on the day appointed might be subsequently privately examined, either by means of papers (as is now done in the case of night schools), or by diocesan inspectors, or by certificated schoolmasters, resident in central spots, to whom a small retaining fee might be given to secure their services.

Up to what age certificate should be required?

100. The next question to be considered is, what should be the minimum age at which a child should be permitted to work without having obtained the certificate? This limit is indispensable, in order to allow those who were too stupid to obtain their certificates to escape from school and go to work. It must be an age considerably above that at which a child may be expected to attain the required proficiency, in order to create a motive for industry in school work.

I think 14 would be a proper age to fix, at any rate, in the first instance. The 4th Standard could generally be passed at the age of 10; and the wages which a boy can earn under 14 are, in every part of England that I have visited, of considerable value to his parents; and the sacrifice of the wages which he might earn up to the age of 14 would be the penalty he would have to pay if he failed to obtain the certificate.

101. It has often been urged as an objection to this plan that there are some boys whom it is impossible to teach.

Those mentally deficient should be excepted.

I do not believe that this would be found to be the case with any boys except those who were mentally deficient, and I would permit them to go to work without having obtained their certificates, if they could produce a medical certificate of their incapacity.

On whom penalty should fall.

102. The next question is, on whom the penalty should be imposed if the law were infringed? I think that the farmer should be fined if he employed a child under the prohibited age without the required certificate; the fact that work was done should cast on the farmer the burden of proving that he did not employ the boy; the parents and the child himself should only be punished if they misled the farmer as to the boy's age.

Informers should have half the penalty.

103. I have already stated that official inspection, similar to that now employed in factories, would be, in my opinion, impracticable. In rural districts the only alternative is to look for local information to enforce the law. Informers might be encouraged to give information by being entitled to half the fine imposed. A register should be kept at the school or some other convenient place in each parish of all those to whom certificates had been granted, and the schoolmaster or clergyman in country parishes would probably be acquainted with every child who was at work in contravention of the law.

The zeal of the schoolmaster in this respect might be stimulated by his being entitled to a fee, say, of 10*s.*, for every child who gained his certificate, and the farmers might be compelled to add a list of all the boys they employed under 14 in the returns they made for assessed taxes.

Should law apply to those only who are directly employed by farmers?

104. I have already pointed out that there are many kinds of farm work in which the children employed work not for the farmer, but for some man who takes the contract under the farmer. It becomes an important consideration whether the farmer should be finable for those whom he indirectly as well as for those whom he directly employs. At present I do not think that the work in which the children are indirectly employed by the farmer is sufficiently constant to interfere much with their education, while it gives them some insight into farm operations which is valuable to them; but the introduction of the suggested law might have the effect of materially increasing this kind of work; for instance, a farmer might contract with his bailiff to get his birds frightened off all his crops and his ploughs driven for a year for a certain sum, and in that instance the bailiff and not the farmer would be the employer of the children; if this course were to be adopted, it would be necessary to make the farmer finable for boys whom he indirectly employed; but in the first instance I think it would be sufficient to make him finable for those who he directly employed only.

This plan would encourage early

105. The advantages of the plan are that it would induce parents to send their children regularly from an early age. If they were careless in this respect, the clergyman or schoolmaster would be able to go to them and say, "Unless you send your boy regularly to school now, he will not be able to earn

"wages for you until two years later than if you do send him regularly," and if the boy were kept at home to work for the parents so frequently as to interfere seriously with his education, as is constantly now the case, it might be urged with force that the advantage thus gained would be quite insufficient to compensate for the loss which would be occasioned if the certificate were not obtained. It would at the same time encourage children to work by themselves and not simply to attend school, but to get as much information as they could while there. Another important advantage in the plan here recommended appears to me to be that it is not likely to prove troublesome in those parishes where the schools are at present satisfactorily managed; any system of half-time would require a re-organization of the school hours, but where proficiency only is looked to, the particular mode in which the school work is carried on becomes unimportant, and may be left to local school managers to arrange. I have often heard it stated that any interference by law must have the effect of checking voluntary efforts. I should expect that the plan here suggested would have the effect of stimulating those efforts. The law would supply the volunteers with a far more powerful argument in favour of education than any which they now have at their command. At the same time by making the promotion of education a matter of importance to employers, the proposed scheme would, I trust, relieve the clergy of some portion of the heavy pecuniary burden which now too often falls upon them.

I. and regular attendance.

Would encourage children to work by themselves.

106. On the other hand, it may be urged that if a certain amount of proficiency is required as indispensable it may be thought that nothing beyond this amount, which must be very limited, is desirable, and there will be no inducement to go beyond it, and thus all education will be reduced to one uniform level. But it may be hoped that it would have the effect of raising to this level many of those who never attained to it before, and that of this increased number, as many, if not a great many more than do now, will endeavour to go beyond it. I should hope that in a few years farmers will look upon these certificates as some guarantee for efficiency and respectability on the part of those whom they engage, and will for their own sake decline to engage any boy who cannot produce one.

Objections to this plan; said that it would reduce all to one level.

107. It may be also said that it would be unfair upon children who lived at a distance from a good school. This difficulty might be avoided by suspending the operation of the Act in the case of those children who lived at a considerable distance, say, two miles from a good school, but such a power should be sparingly used, because one of the great merits of the plan is that it would encourage the erection of schools where they do not at present exist, and the supply of sufficient teaching power where it is now deficient, in order that adequate progress might be made.

Would be unfair to those who lived at a distance from a school.

108. I think that the operations of harvest and hop-picking should be exempted from the general prohibition to work without certificates, because it has always been the custom for all to turn out for these operations, and children of all ages are useful to their parents and their employers, and because also a certain amount of out of door employment is highly desirable on physical grounds.*

Harvest and hop-picking should be excepted.

109. The plan here suggested has certainly more supporters among those who have studied the question of education than any other plan which I have heard mentioned. Still there are some gentlemen who think it quite impracticable. Among others, the Right Hon. T. H. Sotheron Estcourt has stated this to be his opinion. He says that the only penalty for ignorance must remain what it has always been, a lower class of labour and wages (A. 84). Of course this penalty cannot be applied to agricultural labour, which is already the lowest class of all.

This scheme is generally supported, but has some opponents.

It is important to consider whether this plan would diminish seriously the incomes of the families or the number of labourers at work.

110. According to the report of the Committee of Council on Education for the year 1867–8, the number of children who passed the 4th Standard of the Revised Code in the day schools in Great Britain was 95,960, of whom 22,389 were under the age of 10 years, and 73,571 were over that age; in 1868–9 the total number was 100,386, of whom 24,839 were under and 75,547 were over 10 years of age. There is at present no motive to get the children to pass the standards at an early age. In fact, it is for the interest of the school managers to retard rather than to accelerate their progress. If at their first examination they are presented in a standard which is easily within their capacity, the chances are that they will not fail to pass the higher standards, and thus gain the Government grant in each succeeding year; this they would probably fail to do if they had to exert their utmost powers in the first year. If the plan suggested above is introduced a motive for industry will be supplied, and the age at which the 4th Standard is passed will be proportionately diminished. Farmers almost always say that they do not want boys under 10 years of age. The great majority of children would be able

Would not cause serious inconvenience to either farmers,

* The following extract from another letter signed "R. P.," of Downton, and addressed to the editor of the "Salisbury and Winchester Journal" of October 17, 1868, explains very clearly the probable advantages of the plan here suggested:—

"Most persons, I think, who are well acquainted with agricultural districts, would ascribe in no small proportion to the fault of the parents the want of education amongst their children. Sometimes of course it is their misfortune, shoes will wear out and cannot be replaced, or the child is kept at home to earn something towards replacing them, but how often are they kept at home, or sent very irregularly, which is not much better, from sheer carelessness and indifference? How often have I been told, 'I wanted him to go an errand,' and thus a day's schooling is lost for the sake of half an hour, which might very often be obtained before or after school, even if no one else could do the errand, and what is still worse, the child learns to attach as little importance to education as the conduct of the parents shows that they do, and when at school he becomes accordingly idle. The irregular attendants at school are almost invariably the most idle when there. All this would be completely changed by the parents and children alike knowing that the school was to be attended for a definite object, and then if the education was not thought worth trying for, the certificate would be. It might very likely soon come to be regarded even as a prize and an honour, and a boy would not like to have it said of him that he could not gain a certificate at 12 years old which most could gain at 10. Besides this, the balance between managers on the one hand and parents and children on the other, which has been grievously disturbed by the late measures of the Committee of Council, would be again restored. At present the managers are really made dependent upon the parents and children. If the former keep their children at home, if the latter do not choose to come, or do not choose to learn, the managers are fined; if any offence is taken, or sometimes from mere wilfulness or carelessness a child is not present on the day of examination, the managers bear the penalty.

"All this would be changed, instead of having to be constantly begging parents to send children, and to send them regularly, the managers would only have to provide for their being taught, and the children would know that at all events some of the inconveniences of their idleness would fall upon themselves. I believe a healthy boy of 10 or 11 would sooner go to work than go to school, and a boy therefore would soon be capable of understanding and feeling the force of the argument,—if you do not take more pains you will not get your certificate. I do not like to trespass further upon your columns, but the fact really is, that some such provisions as have been suggested would prove the greatest possible blessing, not only to the agricultural labouring classes, but to all who are in any way connected with them, and not least to the managers of schools, who are now anything but comfortably situated."

The merits of this particular plan are very ably pointed out by the Rev. J. P. Norris in 'The Education of the People,' published by Thomas Laurie, Edinburgh. *See* too on this subject B. 14, 24, 28, 52, E. 112.

I. or parents.

to go to work at this age. The age at which the wages are of value to the parents must of course correspond with the age at which the boy is useful to the farmer. When in Northamptonshire, I endeavoured to ascertain what proportion of the total earnings of the family was contributed by boys under 10 years of age. The information I received upon this point was so unsatisfactory that I abstained from expressing in my Report any direct opinion upon it myself, and merely confined myself to mentioning some of the estimates with which I had been supplied. Since that time I have not been able to obtain any more satisfactory information upon this subject, but I feel convinced that the net gain to the family from this source is very trifling. Where the family happens to be composed mainly of girls, who earn nothing when very young, the whole family has to be supported by the parents, and yet I have not observed that families composed of boys are better off than those composed of girls. In the event of a restriction being imposed the consequent loss to the families would be diminished, as pointed out by the Rev. J. Duncan, by the following causes:—

(1.) Labour would be scarcer by the withdrawal of the younger lads, and therefore the wages of both the parents and elder brothers would rise.

(2.) Labour would be scarcer owing to emigration of young lads to better parts of the country, which would ensue on better education. This cause would cease to have any effect if education became general.

(3.) Labour would, perhaps, be more valuable, inasmuch as it would be in a higher measure skilled labour (A. 91).

Grant should be higher for the upper than for the lower standards.

111. It is highly desirable that as long as the period devoted to school is as short as it is at present; some inducement should be held out to school managers to get the scholars on as fast as possible. A motive might easily be supplied by diminishing the grant now paid for the scholars who pass in the lower standards, and spend the money thus saved in increasing the grant for the higher standards.

Of course it is impossible that any restriction can be imposed by law upon any class of labour without causing some inconvenience to these to whom it applies; but I think that the plan suggested above will do more good and cause less inconvenience than any other which has been proposed.

112. I found scarcely any industrial schools existing in the counties assigned to me; but I will here state the result of my inquiries upon this point.

Industrial school, Ockham.

I visited an industrial school at Ockham, in Surrey, which is conducted under the superintendence of the Misses Lushington. An account of it will be found in the evidence (B. 15). The scholars belong to a class rather above that of agricultural labourers, and therefore I think it unnecessary to insert an account of the school here.

Gardens at Godstone, Bowood, and Hagley.

113. I have met with very few parish schools where any effort is made to give any industrial training to the scholars. The schools where this has been attempted have always been under the control of some zealous parson or squire who can do what he likes. At Godstone (B. 13), at Bowood, in Wiltshire (B. 35), and at Hagley, in Worcestershire (B. 56), I found small gardens attached to the school which the older boys were permitted to cultivate, generally as a reward for good conduct; at Godstone they are obliged to keep a debtor and creditor account of their income and expenditure connected with the gardens.

Carpenter's shop.

114. At the schools at Bowood and Hagley a carpenter attends on certain afternoons in the week to give lessons. I have not met with any instance of an attempt being made to give girls any industrial instruction, except in needlework. In many cases a woman is hired to keep the school clean, instead of the girls being employed for that purpose. This seems to me to be a mistake. The girls would probably take more pride in the condition of the school if they were themselves responsible for it; and an opportunity is thus lost of giving the girls instruction in what is a very important operation.

115. No doubt it would be highly desirable, if practicable, to give a certain amount of industrial instruction in parish schools. Some knowledge of the principles of the lever, screw, &c. would be very useful to boys, and the girls might advantageously be taught to cook and bake; but it seems to me to be hopeless to attempt to give systematic industrial instruction in parish schools. The managers would require more time and money than they can usually command in order to give effect to such a scheme.

Training schools at Savernake,

116. At Savernake, in Wiltshire, there is a training school for female domestic servants which was established by the Marchioness of Ailesbury in 1852. Girls are admitted to it from all parts at from 14 to 16 years of age if they can read and write and bear a good character. They generally remain in the school for two years, and pay 1*l.* per annum if they belong to Lord Ailesbury's estate, and 8*l.* per annum if they do not. No girl ever leaves until a suitable place has been found for her; they can generally get places worth about 9*l.* a year when they first go out. Twenty is the full number in the establishment, of whom two are employed in the kitchen, one in the dairy, one parlour maid, three housemaids, and ten in the laundry. Washing is taken in and conducted under a trained laundress. The girls' clothes are provided by their parents or guardians on their admission; but a stock of underclothing is made and kept at the school and sold to them at one-third the cost price; and they are provided with a good outfit on leaving.

and Calne.

Another institution, very similar to the above but on a rather smaller scale, has been established at Calne, and is now under the superintendence of Lady Lansdowne (B. 36).

117. There can be no doubt that these institutions are very valuable; but the girls trained there are highly trained as servants, and they are accustomed to certain indulgences and a more comfortable mode of living than they are likely to meet with anywhere, except in first-class places. For these reasons they are apt to be dissatisfied with places in small households, and are sometimes not so much appreciated as they deserve.

Pauper children should be boarded out.

118. It was pointed out to me that the present system of bringing up children in workhouses does not furnish them with such a training as is necessary for their future welfare, because in a workhouse they have no experience of real life. To remedy this defect the plan of placing them out to board in the cottages of respectable labourers has been adopted with success in the unions of Leominster, in Herefordshire (B. 4), and of Swindon, in Wiltshire (B. 44). The system has been in operation for many years at Leominster; it was introduced at Swindon in 1862. At both places the results appear to have been satisfactory. The system is very generally known, and it therefore seems unnecessary to describe it in detail.*

* The plan here recommended is described in detail in a small book called "Children of the State," by Florence Hill, published by Macmillan and Co.

The system appears to have been in operation for many years in Scotland. I have before me a paper written in 1864 by Mr. G

I.

119. In connexion with the education of paupers it may be remarked that there are two Acts which are at present permissive which should be made imperative. One (7 & 8 Vict. c. 101.) is the Act for the establishment of district schools for pauper children and the other is Denison's Act (18 & 19 Vict. c. 34.) for the schooling of the children of those who are in receipt of out-door relief. This should be made a condition *sine quâ non* of the relief (B. 14).

Two Acts now optional should be made compulsory.

Cottages.

120. It is almost impossible to compress into a limited space a description of the various kinds of cottages which exist in different parts of the country. Most of the descriptions of cottages which I received in answer to the questions contained in the circulars which I distributed are printed in the evidence (E. 129 to 180). I think, however, that the following general classification of cottages will be admitted to be tolerably accurate:—

Three classes of cottages.

(1.) Cottages built by and belonging to landlords.

Those belonging to landowners.

121. The cottages which landlords are at present building in different parts of the country (and they are building a great many) are almost universally good. They are generally built in blocks of two, containing three bedrooms each, and sitting-room, kitchen, and pantry downstairs. The out-houses, &c. attached to these are all that can be wished; they do not often cost less than 150*l.* apiece. Cottages of this description have only been built during the last few years (for an instance see E. 131). Besides these the landlords own a great many cottages which in consequence of the tendency to increase the size of the holdings have been converted from old farmhouses, and are generally sufficiently commodious. Lastly, the landlords own a great many which have been built in former times, when less accommodation was thought necessary than at present, as well as cottages which they have bought up from speculators and squatters and put into decent repair or added to.

Those built by speculators.

122. (2.) Cottages which have been built by speculators are greatly inferior to those which have been built by the landlords. They are of course built *to pay*, and are consequently built much more cheaply than those from which the landlords expect no direct return. They are generally deficient in drainage and out-house accommodation, and have little or no gardens. This class is to be met with chiefly in open parishes and near towns (E. 140).

Those built by labourers.

123. (3.) The third and decidedly the worst class of cottages are those which have been built by the labourers themselves, generally on pieces of land cribbed from the waste. They are generally constructed of wattle and dab and thatched, and contain only one bedroom and one sitting-room. They are generally totally destitute of drainage, and are often, in consequence of the poverty of their owners, in very bad repair. They have, however, one decided advantage over class two, viz., that they generally stand in a garden by themselves, whereas class two are almost always built in blocks. The great bulk of the cottages in Herefordshire belong to this class, where they are scattered over the country and are rarely collected in villages; but many of the same class are to be met with in other counties, more particularly on the commons of Surrey.†

Rent.

124. The rents charged for landlords' cottages, which almost always have gardens, vary between 20*s.* and 6*l.* per annum; these sums are the two extremes, and, as a general rule, they are not let for less than 50*s.* or more than 4*l.* per annum. The rent charged for class two is generally 20 or 30 per cent. higher than that charged by the landlords. It struck me that the cottage rents were generally rather higher in Surrey and lower in Wiltshire than in the other counties I visited. The cottages are generally sufficient in number and conveniently situated with respect to the work to be done; but it is very seldom that there is a sufficient supply of cottages with two or three bedrooms (E. 128), and cases of serious overcrowding may be found if looked for in almost every parish (A. 36, 55, 76, C. 12, E. 175).

Conveniently situated, but not large enough.

Opinion of doctors as to cottages.

125. The medical men to whom I spoke on the subject are, with two exceptions (C. 7, 10), unanimous in condemning the cottage accommodation as totally inadequate to secure the health of the inmates. No doubt the evils arising from this cause would be far more serious than they are if it were not for the large proportion of their time which the labourers pass in the open air. The insufficiency of the present system of drainage in large country villages cannot be better illustrated than from the instance of Carshalton in Surrey. Although that village is blessed with a magnificent natural supply of water from the Wandle which rises there, the water obtained from this source has been poisoned by the escape of sewage from cesspools, and it has been necessary to have recourse to the next parish for a supply of pure water (C. 3).

Better drainage much needed.

126. The necessity of enforcing some more perfect system of drainage than that which is now generally to be found in country villages was constantly pressed upon me; but I think it unnecessary to enter in greater detail upon this subject in consequence of a Royal Commission having been specially appointed to deal with it.

Greig, Clerk to the Edinburgh Parochial Board, in which he states that "18 years ago" the plan was adopted in Edinburgh; that the number sent out by the parishes of Edinburgh and Leith had been upwards of 700; by Glasgow somewhat more; and by Dundee, Aberdeen, and other towns in proportion to their population.

He states that the total cost of each child thus boarded out during the previous year was 8*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* The allowance of 2*s.* 6*d.* a week to the nurse covered board, lodging, washing, and mending clothes. The clothing was supplied in addition. He states that he finds no difficulty in getting respectable people to receive the children, and adds, "Although we have 300 boarded-out, and some "years ago had 400, I have only had occasion to remove children for neglect on three or four occasions during a period of five "years."

The plan has also been adopted by the guardians of the Eton Union, where it has been attended for some time past with very satisfactory results. In 1868 a report was presented by the school committee to the guardians, from which it appeared that of 32 boys and 24 girls who had been boarded out, only three girls and two boys had turned out badly. The report also compares the expense of maintaining pauper children in the workhouse, where it is stated to be 4*s.* 2½*d.* per week; at Hanwell school where it is stated to be 5*s.* 3¾*d.* per week, and when boarded out, when it has been found at Eton to be 4*s.* 2*d.*; the last named sum is composed of the following items:—Out-relief 3*s.* 6*d.*; clothing, 6*d.*; and education, 2*d.*

† "[At Bromyard, in Herefordshire,] many of the cottages are in the last stage of senility and decay. The windows are broken, the doors are far from wind-tight, or the roofs water-tight, and the bedrooms unceiled. In a block of nine houses, some of which are unfit for habitation, the owner has provided two out-door closets for the tenants and their families, which number 53 persons of both sexes and all ages!"—Extract from a paper read on the 14th April 1868, at the annual meeting of the clergy and laity of the rural deanery of North Frome, Herefordshire, by the Rev. Nash Stephenson, Vicar of Bromyard.

I myself visited the cottages here alluded to, and can testify that their condition is not at all exaggerated by Mr. Stephenson in the passage quoted above.

I. Allotments.

127. I found the allotment system in operation in many instances, but more in the counties of Wilts, Warwick, and Worcester, than in Surrey and Herefordshire (almost all the cottages have gardens in the two latter counties). I dealt with this subject of allotments in some detail in my last Report, I therefore think it unnecessary to enter into it again. I may say generally that my subsequent experience has fully confirmed the opinion on this subject I expressed in my last Reports. There is, however, one point connected with the subject of allotments to which I wish more particularly to allude, and that is the amount of land which should be held by each man. I have found a very general opinion prevailing that a quarter of an acre only should be held by each man. I have met with a few cases where a larger amount is given. Mr. C. G. Bolam, Lord Ailesbury's agent, states in his evidence, that at "Burbage "there are a number of small accommodation holdings of from 2 or 3 to 20 and 30 acres. The "land being very rich and productive, the tenants are enabled to raise good crops at a comparatively "small outlay. They pay an accommodation rent for these lands, and make a livelihood by growing "vegetables, seed, &c., and making milk and butter for the markets. They are, as a body, almost "worse off than many of the labourers; their capital is small; their work very fitful, at times very "hard, at others very slack. The result of these intervals of comparative ease is too often the "formation of vicious habits, and their want of education and training prevents them from profiting "by the start beyond the ordinary farm labourer" (A. 111).

Large amount of land held at Burbage.

Archdeacon Stanton, vicar of Burbage, referring to these men, says, "I don't think that these men "are as well off as many who work regularly as day labourers. If they get an unusually good crop "they become extravagant; they don't save, and suffer from want during the winter when no work is "to be had" (A. 89). Mr. Bolam, however, thinks "it advisable to have a certain number of these "holdings upon an estate, and to select tenants for them only from farm labourers who have reached a "certain age and had some experience of work." He thinks that this plan would be a great incentive to labourers to earn good character, and that these men would be available as a sort of reserve force in time of harvest, turnip hoeing, &c. At Bowood, Lord Lansdowne has 580 acres on his estate let out in allotments to 832 labourers; some men hold as much as two or two and a half acres. Mr. J. Spencer, Lord Lansdowne's agent, says, that he does not consider these holdings too large in that neighbourhood, because the supply of labour is in excess of the demand; many men cannot get employment all the year round, and the large allotments serve to give them employment when they are out of work (A. 92). I have met with a few instances of regular day labourers occupying several acres of grass land with apparently satisfactory results.

And at Bowood.

Cottages let to farmers.

128. In many cases, more particularly in Wiltshire, it is the custom for landlords to let a large number of cottages to their tenants with their farms; in one instance I found 20 let with a farm of 700 acres (A. 102), in another 26 with a farm of 1,870 acres (A. 107). These are sublet by the farmers to their labourers, accompanied in some cases by a stipulation that the labourer's wife shall come out to work whenever the farmer wants her (A. 1). This plan is very much objected to by the labourers themselves (D. 22, 24, 31), on the ground that it binds them hand and foot to their employer; and obliges them to yield to whatever terms he thinks proper to exact from them. The other extreme of letting no cottages at all with the farm is equally unfair towards the farmer. If he has no control at all over his men, they will sometimes leave him at the busiest times, and he will be subjected to great loss in consequence. The plan which is probably fairest to both farmer and labourer, is that recommended by Mr. Bolam. He thinks that cottages for the principal servants, such as shepherd, head carter, groom, and bailiff should be built close to the homestead, and let with the farm. The remainder should be kept in hand by the landlord, but each farmer should be allowed to nominate the tenants to a certain number in addition to those which he takes with his farm.

Only sufficient for the principal servants should be so let.

Terms for which cottages are let.

129. I have found cottages let for every variety of period; by the week, month, quarter, half year, and year. The weekly tenure is decidedly too short; it greatly diminishes the interest the labourer takes in his cottage and garden; unless he has a landlord in whom he feels perfect confidence. The yearly tenure is too long, because it is very difficult for him to save out of weekly wages a sufficient sum to pay a whole year's rent at once. Probably the monthly or quarterly tenure is the best, but under any circumstances the value of the capital which a man has invested in his garden should always be secured to him, in the event of his being suddenly called upon to give up his cottage.

Small Tenements' Rating Act might be extended. Power to borrow money on leases. And to improve old cottages.

130. For the purpose of giving additional encouragement to persons desirous of building cottages, it was suggested to me that the Small Tenements' Rating Act should be extended to all dwellings under 6*l.* annual value, so as to except them from local taxation; that power should be given to borrow money on long leases (as well as on freeholds as at present), for the purpose of improving old cottages as well as erecting new, and that where a number of cottages are built together, the present rule, that no power to borrow should be granted unless every cottage has three bedrooms, should be relaxed.

Cannot be built on self-supporting terms.

131. No mode has been suggested to me by which good cottages can be supplied at such a price that the rent now generally paid by the labourer shall represent a reasonable amount of interest on the capital expended. Philanthropic schemes for this purpose are idle; the cottages can only be improved by the improvement of the labourers themselves. In order that better cottages may be secured, two things must concur. (1) The labourer must desire to occupy a good cottage, and (2) must be able to pay for it. If he really desired it, he could probably soon be able to pay for it; and until he does, he never will. At present there can be no doubt that labourers care very little where they live. It is clear that they do not value the good cottages landlords are now building for them; or it would be unnecessary to make the stringent regulations, which are now indispensable, for the prohibition of lodgers and nuisances. I have been told by land agents that they often have a difficulty in inducing labourers to change their old bad cottages for superior new ones which have been provided for them. I have scarcely ever myself heard labourers complain that their cottages were not good enough for them, although I have often heard them complain that their wages were too low and gardens too small.

Labourers do not value good cottages.

Said that no direct return should be expected from cottages.

132. Many think that cottages should be looked upon as farm buildings, and that no direct return should be expected for the money laid out upon them. I believe that this opinion is founded upon false principles of benevolence, and is quite inconsistent with the real interest of the labourers. If this be the true view of cottage property, we must never expect to see good cottages, except on the estates of wealthy landlords; it is well known that a large portion of the landed property of this country is in the hands of very poor men, who have no ready money to lay out; and for the supply of labour on these properties bad cottages must be continued to be erected, as they now are, by

I.

small speculators, and let at very high rents. If on the other it paid to build good cottages, capitalists might be induced to build good cottages for the supply of labour on the estates of needy landlords. My conclusion is that the only effect of charging low rents is to prevent wages from rising; and that the interests of labourers would be best consulted if higher rents were charged, which would probably lead to higher wages being paid. In the neighbourhood of London this is actually the case. Cottage rents are 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week, but the labourer is not in a worse position on that account, as his wages are 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week. Of course any sudden rise of rents would be embarrassing to the occupiers; but the tendency should be to raise the rents gradually, so as to encourage the building of good cottages. Many farmers are now willing to pay 5 per cent. for the money expended by their landlords in building cottages. I think that this 5 per cent. would do more good if spent in increasing the wages of the labourer, who might then pay a higher rent in return for the benefit he derived from occupying a good cottage. It has often occurred to me that part of the money now laid out in building model cottages, which labourers do not appreciate, would do more good if spent in endeavouring to raise the moral character of the labourer, and teaching him that it was for his interest to occupy a good cottage.

If, so none but wealthy landlords can have good cottages.

It is a mistake to charge low rents.

Money would be better spent in raising character of labourer.

133. I have found a great many friendly societies existing in different parts of the the country, to some of which I think it desirable to call attention.

Friendly societies.

By far the most important institution of this kind which I met with was the Wiltshire Friendly Society, which was established in 1827, under the presidency of the Right Hon. T. H. Sotheron Estcourt, and now carries on operations of a very extensive character. The chief offices are at Devizes, but there are about 100 branch offices in various parishes in Wiltshire, and a very few in other counties. The objects of the society are (1) to give an allowance during sickness up to the age of 65; (2), an allowance during sickness or a weekly pension between that age and death; (3), a sum payable on death; (4), a sum payable to a member, or nominee of a member, when such member or nominee reaches a fixed age. The general management of the society is under a committee, consisting of the president, treasurer, trustees, and honorary auditors, together with one honorary member and two benefit members from each division of the county. A branch office is established in every parish in which 10 benefit and 1 honorary member can be secured; and each branch office is managed by a committee, consisting of three elected benefit members, as well as all the honorary members who subscribe to the funds of that branch. A doctor and a steward are appointed for each branch. The doctor receives 2*s.* 6*d.* per annum for every member belonging to the branch for which he has to supply medicines, and the steward who keeps the accounts of the branch is paid 1*s.* 3*d.* per annum for every member belonging to his branch.

Wiltshire Friendly Society.

There are two classes of assurance members for an allowance in sickness—

(1.) Assurance members whose contributions increase according to their age at the time of admission, and are carried to the account of the society; and (2), deposit members whose contributions at all ages are uniform, and are carried to the account of the members themselves. Each deposit member must contribute each year at least 17 times the amount of days' pay which he is to receive in case of sickness, but (except when actually in receipt of sick pay) he may contribute whatever sum he can afford to lay by. The balance (after deducting the amount necessary to provide a fund for sick pay) belongs to the member, and is returnable after the 65th birthday, or at the death of the member is payable to his legal survivors. A benevolent fund is thus formed.

In 1867 the society contained 6,276 members, whose subscriptions amounted to 4,633*l.* 15*s.* The subscriptions of honorary members amounted to 326*l.* 6*s.* Total receipts, 6,348*l.* 0*s.* 2*d.* The expense fell short of the sum by 1,025*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.*, which was added to the capital, and raised it to 28,752*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.*

134. The North Warwickshire Friendly Society, the chief offices of which are at Coleshill, was founded about 25 years ago by Sir C. Adderley. The rules are substantially similar to those of the North Wilts Friendly Society. There are also clubs called Becher clubs (after the Rev. J. Becher, of Stockwell, Northamptonshire, who founded them) at Stratford-on-Avon, Alcester, and Solihull, in Warwickshire, and at Stewpony, in Worcestershire. These are all of importance in the districts in which they are situated; they are well managed, but there is no particular feature connected with these which requires to be specially noticed. The Herefordshire Friendly Society is the most important in that county. The smaller clubs, though rarely as safe, are often more popular than the larger ones, owing to the management being in local hands.

The North Warwickshire Friendly Society.

Becher clubs.

135. The effect of a registration of a friendly society is often misunderstood. An idea prevails that registration is equivalent to a guarantee of solvency. In order to make friendly societies more secure, it has been suggested that no society should be registered unless it were ascertained that the tables by which the payments were regulated were founded on reliable calculations, and further that every society should be required to obtain from time to time a certificate of solvency from a professional actuary. The prudence of giving effect to these suggestions appears to me to be doubtful; if carried out they would not be equivalent to a guarantee of solvency; but it might be *thought* that they were, and thus a fictitious value given to unsound societies in consequence of the interference of the law. Possibly the better plan is to encourage people to take care of themselves by interfering as little as possible with them. Nobody can doubt the importance of encouraging the labouring class to belong to these clubs. In fact, one gentleman, the Rev. W. Poole, has gone so far as to recommend that it should be made compulsory on all young men over 15 to belong to one, and would make it incompetent for them to give evidence or receive parish relief unless they did (A. 11). This suggestion is obviously of too arbitrary a character to entitle it to general support.

The effect of registration often misunderstood.

Proposals for improving friendly societies.

136. I have myself often felt surprise that friendly societies find as many subscribers as they do, when it is recollected that the ratepayers are bound by the poor law to make the provision for the sick and aged free of all expense to the person benefitted, whereas, what is received from the club must be paid for. To obtain this provision from a benefit society requires prudence and self-denial, which are discouraged by the poor law; in fact, there can be no doubt but that the poor law has a direct tendency to weaken those feelings of self-reliance and independence among the labouring class, on the development of which qualities the amelioration of that class must necessarily depend (see observations of Rev. J. Wilkinson, E. 188).

The poor law diminishes the inducement to belong to clubs.

137. I found that statute fairs or mops were held in all the principal towns in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire, as well in the north of Wiltshire; but none are held in Surrey. They were

Mops.

I. Fewer servants are hired there than formerly.

no doubt originally used solely for the purpose of enabling servants to be hired; but they are now mainly kept up as places of amusement for farm servants. Not nearly as many servants are engaged at them now as formerly, owing, in a great measure, to fewer servants being hired by the year, and also to the advance of education, which enables places to be obtained by correspondence. But still there are many persons, such as showmen, publicans, and shopkeepers, who are interested in keeping up the fairs, and who do all they can to make them attractive (A. 60, 62, 68). No doubt a good deal of immorality prevails at these fairs;* a year's earnings are often lost (A. 51); and to the farmers themselves they are inconvenient, by depriving them for some days of their staff of servants. At the same time it does not appear that a serious number of police cases arise out of the fairs (A. 59), although they may be troublesome to the quiet people who live in the towns where they are held.

Registration offices have failed.

Registration offices do not appear to have answered; scarcely any but domestic servants are hired there; and as they offer no substitute for the amusement of the fair it cannot be expected that they can prevent people from frequenting the fair.†

Proposal for improving mops.

The Rev. A. H. W. Ingram thinks that mops have a tendency to keep up wages by bringing a number of servants together from different parts, and enabling them to ascertain what wages are being generally paid. They should, however, he thinks, be shorn of their present immoral influences. Two large rooms should be opened in the town where they are held; one for the convenience of the female servants and their female friends and employers, and the other for the male labourers and the masters seeking to hire them. The mop, where the sexes were separated and the young servants removed from the immoral spectacles and from hearing the ribald ballads howled in the streets, would become for the day a large and well-conducted registration office, opened just at the time most suitable for agricultural hirings (E. 198). It would, however, be a very arbitrary proceeding to attempt to put a stop to mops by law; it is very questionable whether the evils which they cause are so serious as to warrant such a step; but these evils might, no doubt, be greatly mitigated by the adoption of some of the means here suggested.

Public-houses.

138. Drunkenness was everywhere pointed out to me as the main cause of demoralization among the agricultural labouring class, and I fear that this charge is not without foundation. The question of beer-houses is now being taken up by Parliament. I met with a very general opinion that excise licences should be put a stop to; but in addition to deciding to whom and on what conditions licences to sell beer should be granted it seems to me most important to endeavour to put a stop to the adulteration of beer. A man who asks for a quart of ale at a public house is clearly entitled to have what he asks for, whereas now he too often can only obtain a thick and heavy beverage which stimulates instead of allaying the thirst. Whether or not it is possible to make men sober by Act of Parliament is a doubtful question, but if an attempt is made to do so the new Act should undoubtedly deal with the article sold as well as with the person selling it.

Conclusion.

139. I have now stated, I hope clearly and in sufficient detail, the results of the inquiries I have made in the district assigned to me; and I will now sum up briefly the conclusions to which these inquiries lead.

(1.) It does not appear that either women, young persons, or children are engaged, either occasionally or continuously, in any parts of the district I have visited in any kind of agricultural employment which is the cause of serious physical injury to them. No legislation is therefore necessary to protect them from physical injury.

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* Extract from the report of a meeting of the Swindon Chamber of Agriculture, held on March 30, 1867, when the subject of "Hiring Fairs" was discussed. The following is a portion of the address delivered by the Rev. H. G. Baily, who introduced the subject:—I have taken some pains to ascertain the opinions of those best qualified to form a truthful estimate, I mean the county police, and I can safely say from documents now in my possession (from Durham, Yorkshire, Worcestershire, Berkshire, and Gloucestershire, besides our own officers) there is but one, and that a most decided testimony against the prevailing profligacy and immorality which prevail on these occasions. One superintendent writes thus: "What is the practice? As soon as the hiring is over the "dancing booths and public houses are besieged, every species of revelry (and often of the most indecent nature) is indulged in "men and women get excited with drink. I have often found women helplessly drunk, and have found them a place of safety "and shelter until they have been in a fit state to proceed to their homes." An inspector writes: "Hiring fairs are in my opinion "very demoralising. To say nothing of what takes place during the time of hiring, almost immediately after the bargain is made "the young man and woman adjourn to the public house to drink, dance, and sing, and frequently I have seen young girls led "away intoxicated. The girls lose the moral power over themselves, and young men's passions are inflamed by drink, and the "natural consequences follow; hence many a young woman dates her ruin from the hiring fair." Hear the testimony of a highly respected and valued superintendent: "With reference to the statute fairs and mops held annually, I have no hesitation in saying "that the debauchery, drunkenness, and vice which occur at these times, in a great measure tend to demoralize the labouring "class, both men and women. My experience has taught me that very many young girls who attend these places with the most "innocent intentions, some to sight-see, some seeking situations, are by their ignorance allured into public houses where dancing, "drinking, and drunkenness are going on. As to fornication and adultery, words cannot sufficiently express the extent to which "these are carried on, both by the married and single, who doubtless, up to the very time of leaving home to attend the fair, had "led a virtuous life. This is not all, thieves, garotters, and desperadoes of the very worst type in large towns attend the mops, "and reap in many cases booty by plundering the working classes."

Another superintendent writes: "It causes a great number of thieves, prostitutes, and suspicious characters to come into the town, "with whom the labourers are compelled to mix for want of other accommodation at the public houses. Here it frequently happens "that pockets are picked of what they have worked hard for all the year. Many of the stall-keepers are of questionable character, "and frequently afford cover for stolen property. Boxing and dancing booths are too a great evil. In consequence of the great "influx of loose and suspicious characters the low public houses and low lodging houses are unable to find accommodation for them. "They may be seen the night previous to the fair and the night of the fair sleeping in rooms with many of each sex." Although I have many more testimonies of a like nature, I will only add one more; it is that of a superintendent (in an adjoining county). He says: "So far as my experience goes I am confident that great evil is the result of such fairs, especially amongst young people, both "male and female. I have served 16 years as a police officer, and have always strongly condemned such gatherings, in consequence "of its bringing together the very worst of characters. A great amount of thieving is usually done, great riot and debauchery and "other evils too numerous to mention, and at the same time no advantage is derived by those for whom the statute fairs are "instituted." Now, gentlemen, I could greatly multiply these statements, but I will not weary you further by repetitions of similar opinions which expose the frightful nature and extent of the prevailing evil. I must say, though I was prepared to receive decided expressions of opinion, I was utterly unprepared to be furnished with such astounding revelations as those I have referred you to. I will, however, observe that evil like good has its reflex character. Does not evil of this kind brought into any town increase and strengthen the evil which has existed there previously? Does the young girl who has sacrificed at the hiring fair the most precious jewel of a character hitherto unstained, or the lad who on the same occasion has learnt the first lesson of excess of sensuality, do these, I ask, return from the fair as they came to it? No, they become in turn the corrupters of others, and so the moral plague spreads like a fearful gangrene among the lower orders; all the efforts that the clergyman, the schoolmaster, and the philanthropist can bring to bear are powerless against this gigantic system of profligacy and crime.

† The Herefordshire Registration Society, of which J. H. Arkwright, Esq., of Hampton Court, is the honorary secretary, has been in existence for two years. It has established registry offices at Hereford, Leominster, Ledbury, Bromyard, Ross, Pembridge, and Wigmore. The result of the first exertions of the society has been as satisfactory as could have been expected. The registrations effected have comprised 260 employers and 323 servants. I am unable to say what proportion of the latter were in-door and what out-door servants.

(2.) I do not think that the women who are engaged in agricultural work are necessarily more demoralized or that their homes are necessarily less well cared for than the homes of women who are not so engaged. I think, therefore, that no legislative restriction is necessary on this ground. I.

(3.) The state of education among the young now growing up is very generally defective; this is owing mainly to the irregularity of the attendance at school or the too early withdrawal of the children. I can see no prospect of the influence of these two causes being mitigated within any reasonable time except by legislative interference. If it is thought desirable to pass an Act of Parliament for the purpose of remedying this defect I think that the principle of the new Act should be to make the permission to earn wages depend on the proficiency of the child at school.

I beg to thank you for the kindness which I have always received at your hands,

And have the honour to remain,
Your obedient Servant,

Temple, August 1869. F. H. NORMAN.

[In section 55 of my Report on Northamptonshire I referred to a statement made to me by Mr. Hughes, of Brampton Ash, Market Harborough. I appear to have mistaken that gentleman's meaning, as the following letter, which I received from him as soon as he saw my Report, will explain:—

Brampton Ash, Market Harborough,
14th December 1868.

DEAR MR. NORMAN,

I SEE you misapprehend my meaning in setting the average wages paid to a family on account of work done on the land at 80*l.*

By this I mean that in taking as a standard for cottage accommodation the amount actually paid in wages in the district it becomes necessary to know what could be or what is amassed in the shape of wages for work done by one industrious family provided with such cottage accommodation as would enable them to hold together until they are of an age and independence to set up for themselves.

I have men in my employ who exceed the amount I have named. I give you the particulars of one, as he only occupies the position of day labourer, and is in every respect a fair representative of his class.

In seeking to reform we must level up to these men, and we shall have children educated, rents paid, and lift from their present degradation the most contented, tractable, and loyal class in the kingdom.

I hope if you have an opportunity you will set this right, &c. &c.

Believe me, &c.
ALFD. HUGHES.

PARTICULARS referred to in the above LETTER.

EARNINGS of a Family engaged in ordinary Labour and at ordinary Wages on Mr. Hughes' Farm at Brampton Ash, Northamptonshire.

Head of Family, JOHN LEE, about 48 years of age.

Father's Earnings.

	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
46 weeks at 12*s.*	27	12	0			
4 weeks, harvest	6	0	0			
2 weeks, hay	1	15	0			
Extra, 10 weeks' piecework	3	0	0			
Extra, 20 days' threshing and chaff-cutting by steam	0	10	0			
				38	17	0

MANNING LEE, eldest son, 19 years.

52 weeks at 10*s.*	26	0	0			
Extra for harvest	4	0	0			
Extra for hay	0	9	0			
Extra for piecework, 10 weeks	1	0	0			
Extra for overtime	0	5	0			
				31	14	0

TOM LEE, second son, aged 16.

52 weeks at 8*s.*	20	16	0			
Extra for harvest	1	0	0			
Extra for hay	0	9	0			
Extra for overtime	0	5	0			
				22	10	0

JOB LEE, third son, 14 years.

52 weeks at 4*s.*				10	8	0
Total Earnings of Family				103	9	0

My waggoner and his two sons, engaged with horses, earn more; shepherd and two sons, ditto; and another ordinary labourer nearly 90*l.*

Therefore I think that if the occupier of a large farm had the selection of the occupants of the cottages, and some arrangement such as I have proposed for the accommodation of bachelors in his village, that one cottage for every 100*l.* paid in wages would be sufficient in this district.

A. H.]

REPORTS by Mr. CULLEY on OXFORDSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE, and HERTFORDSHIRE.

OXFORD AND BERKS.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

J. 1. I have the honour to lay before you the evidence which I have obtained in the counties of Oxford and Berks on the mode of employment and general condition of the agricultural labouring class. Such evidence being especially intended to illustrate how the manner of employment bears upon the question of adopting for the regulation of farm labour rules analogous to those of the Factory Acts, and to what extent the general condition of agricultural labourers and their families make legislative interference desirable or otherwise.

Time of collecting evidence.

2. I entered Oxfordshire on the 13th of October 1868, and quitted Berks on the 19th of the following February, having spent the intervening time, with the exception of three weeks at Christmas, between the two counties in collecting evidence. The agricultural employment, therefore, which came under my personal observation was that which is common to all arable farms throughout the country, whether wholly performed by male or partially, as in these counties by female labour, during that season of the year when the staff of a farm is reduced to its smallest dimensions, when catch workmen can with difficulty make full time at the reduced winter wage, and when many women and children cease either from choice or necessity to add their share to the diminished family purse. It must be remembered also that I am speaking of a winter succeeding a summer which, owing to the great failure of root crops, the very small growth of weeds, and the extraordinarily early and quick harvest, had afforded the labourers an unusually small opportunity of providing by summer piecework against the lower earnings and heavier wants of winter. On the other hand, the winter itself was exceeding mild, female labour was more than commonly in demand, agricultural work was seldom if ever interrupted by the

state of the weather, and the price of bread, though not low, had fallen considerably since I visited the neighbouring counties upon which I have already reported. I had an opportunity, therefore, of seeing female employment in farm labour at that season which is considered least suited for it, and of ascertaining better than after a summer of full work to what extent, if at all, thrift enters into the composition of the labourers of Oxfordshire and Berks. J.

3. The evidence from each county is arranged separately, beginning with a summarry (See Appendix A. in each case) of the answers to questions (exclusive to those which refer to the state of cottages and supply of garden ground,) contained in such of the "Commissioners' circulars of inquiry," as were returned to me in time for insertion in these summaries, and of labour returns from 37 farms in Oxfordshire and 49 in Berks. Arrangement of evidence.

Appendix B. in each case contains a description of the cottage accommodation and supply of garden or allotment ground in the parishes for which circulars of inquiry were returned, or which were visited by me, evidence about schools, especially industrial schools, which could not be inserted in the summaries, evidence on the rate of wages and earnings of agricultural labourers and their families, evidence given by the labouring class themselves, and such other evidence as is more or less peculiar to the parishes from which it was obtained.*

Appendix C. in each case contains evidence applicable to areas larger than parishes, such as resolutions of boards of guardians, evidence given by chairmen of boards of guardians for their respective unions, evidence given by medical and relieving officers of unions, school teachers' evidence, evidence on benefit societies, on the state of pauperism, on yearly hiring, on statute fairs, and evidence on the general objects of the Commission contributed by persons residing in the counties of Oxford and Berks.

Appendix D. contains evidence on subjects of general interest to the Commissioners, as well as some evidence which reached me too late to be inserted in its proper place.

You will observe that I have adopted the same arrangement of evidence as I did for the counties of Bedford and Buckingham. I have done so chiefly to facilitate references for comparison; comparisons are said to be odious, but they are the only lights available for the solution of some of the difficult social questions with which the Commission has to deal.

4. I issued 102 of the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry in Oxfordshire, and the same number in Berks, of which there have been returned to me, up to the time at which I write, 82 from the former county and 86 from the latter; 168 in all; of these 75 have been returned by clergymen for their parishes, 31 by landowners, 54 by occupiers of land (of whom 49 are also guardians of the poor for their respective parishes), and eight by other persons. The answers contained in these circulars, which are given in as concise a form as possible in the different summaries, together with the evidence obtained at meetings of boards of guardians which I attended by appointment in 11 different unions, the evidence given by medical officers, relieving officers, and school teachers, and the evidence I obtained as to the mode of hiring and rate of wages, give a very complete history of the position of the agricultural labouring class in these counties, as well as valuable suggestions on the best manner of counteracting the evils which most commonly beset the labourer and his family, whether arising from drunkenness, improvidence, bad housing, low wages, or ignorance, or from a combination of any or all of these his greatest enemies. Circulars distributed.

5. In collecting evidence I adopted very much the same course as I had previously done in Beds and Bucks, selecting one union in each county for close examination into all the circumstances influencing the condition of the labouring class, and paying short visits to other unions at the time of keeping my appointments with their boards of guardians, using, in fact, the board meeting as the best introduction to the employers of labour in the district. When keeping these appointments, where the time at my disposal would permit, I selected the nearest group of contiguous parishes for the sake of illustrating the condition of cottages as well as of receiving evidence from the labourers themselves; although, therefore, I have to submit to you evidence on the state of cottages in villages situated in most of the unions in both counties, the evidence on this subject, as far as my own personal observation is concerned, is chiefly confined to the unions of Woodstock in Oxfordshire and Wantage in Berks, and to groups of parishes in Abingdon and Bradfield unions, the former being all situated in Oxfordshire, and the latter in Berks. Mode of collecting evidence.

6. I am anxious to show by this sketch of the plan I adopted in collecting evidence that the state of cottages, whether good or bad, had nothing to do with the selection of the districts which I visited, and that the quantity, quality, and proprietorship of the examples which are given of this kind of accommodation may be taken as fair samples of both counties; there can scarcely be better labourers' dwellings than some of those which I visited, while others present a condition both externally and internally than which it would be difficult to conceive anything worse. Evidence on state of cottages.

7. My reasons for selecting the unions of Woodstock and Wantage for special examination will better appear if I give a slight sketch of the agricultural and geological features of the two counties; a glance at the map will show that when taken separately they are of very irregular shape, and dovetail into each other as their boundaries follow the windings of the Thames, when taken together they form a very compact district, which if bounded to the south by the line of the river Kennet would rest entirely on the cretaceous and oolitic formations, and would present only the agricultural features common to these formations. Geological formations, however, only produce what I have called agricultural features where they are so widely developed as to influence by their peculiarities a large extent of surface soil leading to a more or less uniform system of cultivation. Leaving then to the south of the Kennet the stiff clays and blowing sands of the tertiary formation, the first agricultural feature we have to deal with is the cultivation of the Berkshire downs and Chiltern hills, where the soil is light or heavy, according to the presence or absence of plastic clay, which here and there overlies the chalk, or forms with it a useful mixture of chalk flints and clay. Such land is usually described in the labour returns as "clay and flint on chalk," and is farmed generally in four course husbandry, with few other than the usual variations to prevent the too frequent repetition of clover seeds. When clay is absent from or Geological and agricultural features of the two counties.

* It will be seen that evidence of some or all of these descriptions is given from 64 parishes in Oxfordshire and 65 in Berks.

J.

only present to a very slight degree in the surface soil overlying the chalk, the clover seeds are allowed to remain two years, thus reducing the cost of labour and lengthening the ordinary four course to what is described in the labour returns for farms on such soil as five course, a course of husbandry which, however, must not be confused with the five-course system practised occasionally on the stronger and better soils in these counties, and which is, as it were, a lengthening of the four course by taking two white corn crops in succession after clover seeds and beans, thereby increasing the labour bill, and let us hope the value of the produce in a corresponding degree. Regularity of cropping is scarcely to be found on any two adjoining farms between the chalk downs and the stonebrash, a natural consequence of the frequent and very marked changes in the nature of the soil. The most noticeable features in this district are, 1st, the rich wheat soils composed of green sand, or the drift of green sand on gault and kimmeridge clay, lying in a line from Wantage to Wallingford, where owing to the comparative absence of root crops the cost of cultivation does not exceed that of the better down land; and 2nd, the active cultivation of the gravelly loams of the Thames valley, which by the continual interpolation of catch green crops into a four or five course husbandry sends up the cost of labour per acre on farms, with say one-fourth of their acreage in good grass, to from 40*s.* to 50*s.* an acre.

Moving northwards, the next agricultural feature arising from the geological formation on which the surface soil rests is the stonebrash district, covering a large area in the north of Oxfordshire, where the better land is usually cultivated in four-course husbandry. North of the stonebrash and covering a comparatively small area comes the "red land," which Arthur Young calls the "glory of the "county," where two white corn crops in succession in five-course husbandry is the most usual mode of cropping.*

Of these agricultural features, the most largely developed are the stonebrash farming in the north and the down farming in the south, the former receiving its best representation in Woodstock union and the latter in Wantage.

Effect of geological formations on health and habits of labouring

8. Besides giving examples of agricultural employment on land which covers the larger part of the surface of the two counties, these unions give good examples of the effect of geological formations on the habits and health of the labouring poor; the absence, for instance, in these two counties of the richer minerals which give rise to manufacturing industry, coupled with their inland position, compel the labouring class to depend almost entirely on their earnings as agricultural labourers, and to a certain extent shut them out from the opportunities possessed by labourers in other counties of obtaining higher wages in neighbouring manufacturing towns, and of so thinning the agricultural labour market as to raise the price of farm labour in proportion to the increased cost of living. As education advances and the old parish-dependent feeling dies out, aided by increased means of locomotion, and may be by a better administration of the poor law, this difficulty will no doubt be overcome. At present, however, the only accepted movement of the overgrowth of the agricultural population is what would be understood in these counties as the upcountry movement of lads and young men who seek service, many of them as grooms, in the direction of London, and the absorption as domestic servants of almost the entire girlhood of both counties. In this last respect these two counties present a great contrast to the straw plait and lace district of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, where a native female domestic servant was rarely to be found. The influence of the geological formations on the health of the labouring class is observed in the more active and independent habits of the hill-men, who only suffer occasionally from the want of water, as compared with those of the vale-men who may be said to suffer from too much water.

Arterial drainage.

9. No district which I have ever visited in this country suffers more from the state of its arterial drainage and a general misunderstanding of the uses and abuses of water than the basin of the Thames, whether taken as affecting the success of agriculture or the health of its inhabitants, and no district requires a closer attention to these subjects to insure at least the second consideration, by providing wells on the chalk hills, where such luxuries are expensive, as has been done by Lord Macclesfield at Shirburn, and by preventing the pollution of the shallow wells on the stonebrash and Thames gravels, as has lately been done in one or two cases, given in evidence, under pressure of serious attacks of typhoid fever.†

Hiring in Oxfordshire.

10. Boys from about 13 years of age, lads, and unmarried carters are generally hired by the year throughout the county of Oxford, and where shepherds, cattlemen, and carters are not actually hired by the year there is usually a Michaelmas fee or mutual understanding which amounts to yearly hiring in so far that they are regularly employed throughout the year though at weekly wages, so that the farmer is not compelled to support them in case of sickness. This yearly hiring does not necessarily prevent them from increasing the weekly wage (usually 1*s.* a week more than ordinary day men in consideration of their Sunday work and longer hours by piece work), but as they are generally in charge of horses, cattle, or sheep, their opportunities of adding to the weekly wage are ordinarily confined to about a fortnight's reaping or fagging in harvest, and an increased wage of 4*s.* a day for about another fortnight when leading corn: the total addition under these heads would be about 5*l.* for the year, raising the average wage for carters and cattlemen to about 3*s.* a week more than the nominal weekly wage of day men. Shepherds have allowances, as at shearing and lambing time, &c., which increase their average weekly wage to 4*s.* or 5*s.* more than that of day men. Where hired men, as they usually do, receive Michaelmas money the sum given in that shape is calculated

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* Course of cropping most commonly practised in Oxfordshire and Berks, where farming operations are best conducted, omitting the interpolated catch green crops, such as stubble turnips, rye, vetches, trifolium, mustard, and rape:—

1st. A four course, on good soil of all descriptions, except the very stiff clays, the wheat land of the green sand drift, and the best of the red land, consisting of ¼th roots, ¼th barley or oats, ¼th clover and beans, ¼th wheat.

2nd. A four course, on very stiff but drained clays, ¼th fallow, ¼th oats, ¼th beans and clover, ¼th wheat.

3rd. A five course on strongish deep land in high cultivation, ⅕th roots, ⅕th oats or barley, ⅕th clover and beans, ⅕th wheat, ⅕th barley or oats.

4th. A five course, on poor land (on stonebrash, sand, or flints on chalk), ⅕th roots, ⅕th barley, ⅕th clover and grass seeds, ⅕th second years seeds, ⅕th wheat or oats.

5th. A four course, on the green sand drift, ¼th fallow, ¼th wheat, ¼th beans, ¼th wheat.

6th. A six course, also on the green sand drift, ⅙th fallow, ⅙th oats, ⅙th clover, ⅙th wheat, ⅙th beans, ⅙th wheat.

On the stonebrash and stiffer land of the chalk downs, ⅓th of the arable land of a farm is often in sainfoin, which lies 4 or 5 years.

† As to wells on the stonebrash, Mr. A. Batt, M.D., Witney, says, "On the oolite, wells are often very near the surface, with privies and "pigsties too near them; it is very difficult to keep pollution out of wells on the stonebrash, where houses and wells are near "together."

to bring up the weekly wage to the standard I have described, and the object of making "the wage," as they term it, fall due at that time is evidently to secure the services of the labourer for harvest. The yearly hiring is from Old Michaelmas day (Oct. 11), and takes place at statute fairs which are also attended by grooms and female domestic servants for the same purpose. J.

The following are examples of evidence on wages and earnings received from occupiers of land in Oxfordshire who were obliging enough to extract it from their labour books for my use.

Examples of wages and earnings of agricultural labourers in Oxfordshire.

11. On three of the largest farms in Woodstock union, occupied by Messrs. R. J. Newton, Thos. Taylor, and Jas. Bulford, the average earnings of the different classes of men, exclusive of beer allowances which are only given in haytime and harvest, and journey-money given to carters, are:—

Enginemen	18*s.*	per week.
Head carters	16*s.* to 17*s.*	„
Shepherds	16*s.* to 17*s.*	„
Cattlemen	15*s.* to 16*s.*	„
Carters	14*s.*	„
Daymen	12*s.* 6*d.* to 13*s.*	„

The weekly wage for day-work upon these gentlemen's farms was, at the time of my visit (Nov. 1868), 11*s.*; on many, especially of the small farms in the neighbourhood, it had shortly before been sunk to 10*s.* for the winter months.

12. On the Duke of Marlborough's farm at Blenheim, according to a statement kindly given to me by Mr. Jas. Napier, the average weekly earnings of 35 able-bodied men, including the value of all allowances, were:—

2 foremen	20*s.* 6*d.*	per week each.
2 cattlemen	16*s.* 6*d.*	„ „
2 shepherds	21*s.*	„ „
9 carters	13*s.* 3*d.* to 15*s.* 9*d.*	„ „
20 daymen	14*s.* 6*d.*	„ „

13. An interesting return of the average earnings, including beer, age, and length of service of 24 men, comprising the ordinary staff of Mr. Jos. Druce's farm at Eynsham, will be found in Oxon evidence 30b; of these men, 22 are able-bodied, and, allowing 1*s.* a week for a cottage, and garden rent free, their average weekly earnings amount to 14*d.* 5½*d.* per man; the ages of these able-bodied men lie between 23 and 68 years; five men are over 60, one being 67 and another 68; four others are over 50, and only five of the 22 are under 40 years of age. As to length of service: one man has worked on Eynsham farm for 48 years, another for 47 years, another for 32, another for 30, another for 25, another for 24 years, and of the 24 men there are 16 who have served Mr. Druce for 10 years or longer. As an example of how long a farm labourer with fair health retains his power of maintaining himself, the average earnings of the five men who are over 60 are 13*s.* 3¼*d.* per week, the two men 67 and 68 years of age earn respectively 13*s.* 5*d.* and 13*s.* a week.

14. Mr. Jas. Scott, farm bailiff to Sir Henry Dashwood, in Bicester union, gives two examples of the earnings of daymen employed by him between Michaelmas 1867 and Michaelmas 1868:—

No. 1 (working at 11*s.* a week when at day work) earned 37*l.* 1*s.*, or an average for the year of 14*s.* 3*d.* per week.

No. 2 (working at 12*s.* a week when at day work) earned 39*l.* 16*s.* in 50 weeks, giving an average of 15*s.* 10¼*d.* a week for the year, notwithstanding the lost time.

Hiring, Berks.

15. The custom of yearly hiring from Old Michaelmas day, for plough boys, shepherds' boys, foggers, boys, under carters, carters, shepherds and cattlemen, is almost universal in the county of Berks, where boys, at least in Farringdon, Wantage, Hungerford, and Newbury unions, are not only employed younger than in Oxfordshire, but very generally seek and obtain a yearly hiring after they arrive at 10 years of age. In the down district their services are in great demand, and from some instances, which I have given in evidence, it will be seen that well-grown boys of 11 years of age commanded a wage of 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, with 30*s.* at Michaelmas; one boy of 11, whom I met in Bradfield union, was hired at 4*s.* a week, with 2*l.* at Michaelmas. These boys, as well as older lads and single men, are frequently lodged in the farmer's house, finding their own victuals, and on the large down farms are not unfrequently boarded or lodged with shepherds in "lone houses," out of the reach not only of their parents, but of any parental or educational influence which might be exerted by the clergyman of the parish. In Sparsholt parish (see Berks evidence, 26b) I found one little fellow of 8 hired for the year at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and 10*s.* at Michaelmas (this boy was living with his parents); boys, however, are not usually hired by the year till after they have reached 10 years of age.

16. The yearly hiring, besides including the whole ordinary staff of boys and lads, from ploughboys to under-carters, includes one-third of the adult labourers employed upon a farm, the greater part of whom are carters; for these the usual terms are 1*s.* a week more than the ordinary weekly wage of daymen, with about 5*l.* at Michaelmas, or the Michaelmas money takes the shape of a cottage and garden rent free, and so much less money, according to the estimated value of the cottage and garden; or, as on some farms on the downs, 30*s.* at Michaelmas, with cottage and garden free, and a ton of coals delivered free; occasionally the Michaelmas money amounts to 6*l.*, but 5*l.* is more common, and where that is the case, the hill-carter with his cottage and garden free, a ton of coals (which would cost at his door about 25*s.*), and 30*s.* in money, is decidedly better off than his neighbour who receives 5*l.* in money. Besides receiving a shilling a week for Sunday work and long hours more than the average weekly wage of the district, and 5*l.* or its worth at Michaelmas, the carter is usually allowed by piecework in harvest to earn about 25*s.* extra, so that, exclusive of beer allowance, which may be worth 26*s.* a year (as estimated by Mr. Brown, of Compton, (see Appendix B, 12 a.,) or more, his average weekly earnings exceed the day-work wage of the district by from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. I have here taken no account of such variable allowances as beer and journey money, which on some farms cost the employer a good deal, without conferring much benefit on the labourer, the road or journey-allowance, for instance, is almost certain to go to the beershop, and may take with it some addition from the carter's private purse.

J.

17. Shepherds are hired in the same manner as carters, their Michaelmas money, however, varies from 6*l.* to 7*l.* or its value in cottage and garden, &c., and their perquisites at lambing, weaning, and shearing time, make the average weekly earnings amount to from 4*s.* to 6*s.* more than the nominal wage of the district; thus, for instance, in Wantage union, where the weekly wage for day-work varied from 10*s.* to 11*s.* (being more usually 10*s.*), the carter's place would be worth from 13*s.* to 14*s.* 6*d.* a week for the year, and the shepherd's from 14*s.* to 17*s.*, exclusive in both cases of beer and some variable allowances or perquisites not of much service to the labourer.

Examples of wages and earnings in Berks.

18. The following are examples of the evidence which I received on the rate of wages and earnings of agricultural labourers in Berkshire, from occupiers of land:—Mr. John G. King, who occupies about 1,500 acres in Beedon parish (Wantage union), says, "An able-bodied man on my farm ought to and does earn about 17*s.* a week for the year. I pay my carpenter, who works only for me, 17*s.* a week, and give him a cottage and garden free."

19. Mr. John Brown, who occupies 1,400 acres in Compton parish (Wantage union), thus estimates the value of a carter's wage:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Upstanding weekly wage at 11*s.* -	28	12	0
Michaelmas wage - - -	1	10	0
Cottage and garden free - -	2	12	0
One ton of coals and leadage - -	1	5	0
Piecework in harvest - - -	1	6	0
Beer allowance - - -	1	6	0
Allowance for journeys - -	2	12	0
	£39	3	0

An average of about 15*s.* a week for the year, and Mr. Brown continues, "I think the earnings of my daymen are about the same as my carters."

20. Mr. Luke Lowsley, another large occupier in Wantage union, gives a calculation of a down shepherd's wages, which amounts to a weekly earning of 15*s.* 3*d.*, exclusive of certain perquisites which might raise the value of the wage to about 16*s.* 6*d.* a week, but as one of the items entered against the shepherd is, "*keep of dog and tax*, 52*s.*" this estimate *with* perquisites, may be reduced to 15*s.* 6*d.* (there is, however, some difficulty in estimating the value of shepherd's perquisites).

21. The following is the weekly value of the wages paid to 16 *hired* labourers on Col. Lloyd Lindsay's farm at Lockinge, Wantage:—

Head shepherd - - -	18*s.*
Under shepherd - - -	16*s.*
Head carter - - - -	18*s.*
Married carters - - -	17*s.* to 18*s.*
Unmarried carters - - -	12*s.* to 14*s.* 6*d.*
Foggers - - - -	12*s.* to 16*s.*

Daymen on this farm received 13*s.* a week when working by the day; three of them were earning 17*s.* a week cutting chaff by the piece at the time I visited the farm.

22. Mr Castle, a large occupier in Wantage parish, puts the value of a carter's wage at 14*s.*, and that of married shepherds at from 16*s.* to 18*s.*; daymen he thinks might average 15*s.*

23. On the late Lord Radnor's farm at Coleshill, five daymen averaged 14*s.* 2*d.* a week between Michaelmas 1867 and Michaelmas 1868.

24. On Mr. Benyon's farm (Chalkpit), at Englefield in Bradfield union, six daymen averaged 14*s.* 1*d.* per week, for the year 1868.

25. On Mr. Thoyts' farm in the same union, enginemen have 18*s.* a week and no extras; carters and cowmen, 12*s.* a week, and 6*l.* at Michaelmas; shepherds 14*s.* a week and 6*l.* at Michaelmas in addition to some extra earnings in the case of carters, cowmen, and shepherd.

26. Mr. Thos. Tanner, a large occupier in Welford parish, Newbury union, gives the earnings of three daymen (whom he considers a fair average):—

	£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
No. 1 earned in 1867	39	19	8	; in 1868	36	12	4
No. 2 „ „	40	9	6	; „	36	17	6
No. 3 „ „	36	0	2	; „	32	11	2

It will be observed that these three men (with equal opportunities and no loss of time from ill-health) held the same relative position as to amount of earnings during both years, but that, "owing to the "short quantity of roots grown in consequence of the unusually dry summer of 1868" (as stated by Mr. Tanner to me), their average weekly earnings for 1868 were only 13*s.* 7*d.*, as against 14*s.* 9*d.* for 1867, and this point must not be lost sight of when measuring the earnings of daymen by the examples given which are taken for the year 1868.

27. The wages paid on Mr. Walter's farms in Wokingham union are about the same as those given above for Mr. Thoyts'; the 6*l.* Michaelmas money taking the shape of an excellent cottage and garden of 25 poles, with 2*l.* in money. Drainers working by the piece on Mr. Walter's estate were making in January last 18*s.* a week.

28. Mr. George Ross, bailiff to Captain Walter, of Tangley, Wokingham, gives the same account of carters' wages as that given on Mr. Thoyts' and Mr. Walter's farms, stating the extra allowances as 3*d.* per hour for overtime (as in leading corn or hay), 6*d.* per day in lieu of beer in harvest, and 6*d.* per day for long journeys. On this farm everything that can well be is done by the piece, and Mr. Ross states that "strong active men can earn from 20*s.* to 22*s.* a week draining, and from 15*s.* to 22*s.* "trenching, with moderately dry weather."

A great deal more evidence on the subject of wages and earnings will be found in Oxon evidence Nos. 3, 9, 12, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 53, 55, 60, 61, as given by employers

and labourers, and Nos. 73 to 82, as given by relieving officers, and in Berks Nos. 4, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 26, 27, 28, 33, 38, 48, 50, 52, 55, as given by employers and labourers other than those quoted, and Nos. 74 to 78, as given by relieving officers. J.

29. Owing to the general practice of families working together in harvest, and the manner in which farmers' books are usually kept, I found some difficulty in ascertaining the actual payments made for 12 consecutive months, and more especially for a succession of years, to individual daymen, except the cases I have quoted, several of which are from farms of which the occupiers are also the owners, and it might be contended that they are not therefore fair examples; of the six cases, however, in which the actual payments made to daymen are given, two are from the books of tenant farmers, and will bear a very fair comparison with the payments made by gentlemen farming their own land. This difficulty, however, made me go more closely into the case of hired men, especially carters, whose wives or children only enter as a disturbing cause for a week or at most a fortnight's reaping. In counties, too, where, as in these, one-third or more of the adult labourers are hired by the year, and where, from the evidence of the labourers themselves, there is not much to choose between the dayman's earnings and those of the ordinary carter, I would at once accept his wage as the probable value of the earnings in an ordinary season of at least the better class of daymen. Day and hired men.

The carter's wage, sickness excepted (owing to a mutual arrangement between master and servant at the time of hiring, which does away with an important advantage northern labourers derive from their yearly hiring), is a certainty, but so is also the weekly wage of at least three-fourths of the daymen, the only uncertainty being about the additions from piece-work, which may make his earnings for the year greater or less than the carter's, according to the nature of the prevailing weather or the development of the love of piece-work in the breast of his master. The carter, however, has longer hours and Sunday work, considerations which, coupled in some cases with a dislike of horses or love of greater freedom of action, induce many labourers in these counties to work at their own hand rather than take carter's places; if, however, the carter's wage was appreciably raised above their own average earnings, there are quite a sufficient number of daymen fit to take carter's places to bring it down to the average earning of a fairly industrious day labourer. If then I was to enter on a farm in either Oxfordshire or Berks I would take the wages of the ordinary carter as the average cost of my whole staff of adult labourers, and I think that the evidence I have the honour of laying before you proves that at least two-thirds of the permanent staff of farms in ordinary years earn from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* more than the nominal weekly wage for day-work of the district, and that the remaining one-third ought to, and I may say do earn within 1*s.* a week of the wage of their more fortunate or more able brethren. What proportion of the adult labourers whose usual occupation is farm labour this applies to will be seen from the difference between the winter and spring staff as given in the labour returns, which show that on 35 farms in Oxfordshire and 49 in Berks, extending over 16,536 acres in the former county, and 25,762 in the latter, about 5 per cent. of such labourers are thrown out of work during the winter quarter in Oxfordshire and about 3 per cent. in Berks.*

30. As far then as adult labourers who find regular employment in farm work are concerned, the earnings ought, in an ordinary season, to be:— Summary of evidence on wages:

For two-thirds of such men:

In North Oxfordshire from	13*s.* to 14*s.*	per week.
In South Oxfordshire from	14*s.* to 15*s.*	„
In West Berkshire from	13*s.* to 14*s.*	„
In East Berkshire from	14*s.* to 15*s.*	„

For the remaining one-third: of men;

In North Oxfordshire from	12*s.* to 13*s.*	per week.
In South Oxfordshire from	13*s.* to 14*s.*	„
In West Berkshire from	12*s.* to 13*s.*	„
In East Berkshire from	13*s.* to 14*s.*	„

i. e., no man in regular employment as day or hired man ought in an ordinary season to earn less than an average for the year of 2*s.* a week more than the weekly wage for day-work of the district in which he resides. This weekly wage varied at the time I was in the counties (winter) from 9*s.* in a few of the western parishes of Witney and Hungerford unions to 13*s.* in the neighbourhood of Windsor, but throughout almost the whole of North Oxfordshire and West Berkshire it varied from 10*s.* to 11*s.*, and throughout the greater part of South Oxfordshire and East Berks from 11*s.* to 12*s.* Where there was a variation of 1*s.* in particular districts, as was the case in Woodstock and Wantage unions, it arose from many farmers having sunk the wage 1*s.* a week for the winter quarter, while others, especially the larger, farmers had not made this reduction.

31. Young men of from 18 to 20 years of age who are hired earn from 8*s.* to 11*s.* a week. 7*s.* or 8*s.* a week, with 4*l.* to 6*l.* at Michaelmas, being common hirings. of young men;

32. Lads from 15 to 18 earn from 5*s.* to 10*s.* a week; 4*s.* to 8*s.* a week, with from 50*s.* to 5*l.* at Michaelmas, is the mode of hiring. of lads;

33. Boys from 12 to 15 are better paid in Wantage than in Woodstock union, the demand for their services being greatest in the down district. Their earnings in North Oxfordshire would be from 3*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a week; in the down district of Berks 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, with 30*s.* at Michaelmas, up to 5*s.* a week with 50*s.* at Michaelmas, are common hirings. of boys;

34. Boys from 10 to 12 are also much more in demand in Wantage than in Woodstock union; they are rarely hired by the year in Oxfordshire, but very generally in West Berkshire, where 3*s.* a week with 20*s.* at Michaelmas, up to 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* with 30*s.* at Michaelmas, are common hirings.

35. Boys under 10 are not much employed in either county, except for odd jobs, when they earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week in Oxfordshire, and from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week in Berks.

* The difference in this respect in favour of Berks is owing partly to the average size of the farms given in that county being greater (525 acres against 472), partly to the thinner population in the down district from which a considerable number of the Berks returns come, and partly (I think chiefly) to the much larger proportion of grass to arable land in the case of the Oxfordshire farms as compared with those given from Berks.

J. of women.

36. The ordinary wage for women employed by the day in both counties is 8*d.* for a working day of eight hours, with an increase of 1*d.* per hour for extra hours; when working with men, as in thrashing, they are usually paid 1*s.* a day. In Woodstock union some farmers pay 9*d.* a day for eight hours' work, and on the Berkshire downs nine hours' work are exacted in summer for 8*d.* In the neighbourhood of towns women can command 1*s.* a day, as about Henley-on-Thames. In harvest women do piece-work with all the other available members of their families, very small children helping to make and lay bands. A man and his wife, with the help of a child, if both are strong, can fag and tie an acre in a day, for which 10*s.* is a common price. The average earnings of a man and his wife for the harvest month will amount to about 6*l.*, or about 30*s.* a week for a month. Some couples can earn as much as 7*l.*, or even 8*l.*

Employment of women in farm labour;

37. The proportion of adult female field-workers is about 1 to 100 acres in both counties; of these about one-half in Oxfordshire and about three-fifths in the down district of Berks are employed, weather permitting, in winter, the field work therefore of one-half of the women workers in Oxfordshire, and two-fifths of those employed on the downs of Berks, is confined to about seven months, including harvest, and their earnings to say an average of 3*s.* a week for six months, and about 2*l.* for harvest; in all 5*l.* 18*s.* for the year; those who work in winter at an average of four days a week for 20 weeks would add 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to this, making a total for the year of 8*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*; few, however, I should think, average four days a week for the winter months. Girls are so little employed that it is hardly necessary to enter into their wages, which would be from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day up to about 16 years of age, when they would rank as women.

in glove sewing;

38. In those parishes which lie in a circle, with a radius of about seven miles round Woodstock women and girls (from about 12 years of age) are very much employed in sewing gloves. At the time I was in Woodstock a girl of about 16 working in a glove factory would earn from 3*s.* to 5*s.* a week, working at home such a girl would earn about 2*s.* 6*d.* and a woman 3*s.* a week. I was informed that when trade is brisk a good sewer would earn from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a week, working from 10 to 12 hours per day. Though a girl begins to sew gloves at 10 or 12 years of age, she seldom earns anything till she is about 13. A glove manufacturer in Woodstock told me that he would not employ any girl under 13 on his premises, "because the Workshops' Regulation Act is so troublesome."

in slopping.

39. Slopping, *i.e.*, finishing machine sewn clothes for working men, such as trousers, waistcoats, and smocks for railway labourers, finds employment for women for seven or eight miles round Abingdon. Most of this work is done by married women who lose time by having to attend to their domestic duties and may add from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week to the family purse; those who are not "hindered," as the glove sewers would say, by having to attend to other duties, can earn about 4*s.* a week, but have to work late to do it.

Farm management as affecting labourers.

40. Before reviewing the evidence more closely, as it serves to answer the questions asked in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry, I would like to draw your attention to some features in the management of farm labour as it affects the interest of those employed, using for that purpose the labour returns and the evidence of persons who take a deep interest in the welfare of the farm labourer, as well as the success of agriculture.

Increase in size of farms.

41. First then, as to the effect of the increase in the size of farms and greater use of machinery. It is a common complaint amongst those labourers who find themselves out of work (of whom there was an unusual number during the past winter) that this is caused by the tendency to increase the size of holdings, and in this feeling they are backed up, as will be seen from the evidence, by the opinions of several relieving officers whom I questioned on the subject; if, however, you examine the labour returns you will find that they show very little difference in the number of persons employed in proportion to the acreage as between large farms and small, say as between farms of less than 300 acres as compared with farms of from 500 to 800 acres, and the reason I believe is this, that the tendency to increase the size of farms has as yet only kept pace with improved cultivation; that, in point of fact, the larger farms are, as a rule, more highly cultivated, and that therefore the natural reduction in the proportionate staff of labourers which the extension of the area would allow has, as yet, been counteracted by better cultivation, this higher style of farming being partly caused by placing more land in the hands of a more intelligent class of tenantry, but in a much greater degree by putting it in the power of a farmer to employ profitably all or many of the more expensive mechanical aids which are out of the reach of the ordinary tenant of a small farm.

Agricultural machinery

42. The great improvement which has recently taken place in agricultural machinery has, no doubt, enabled the farmer to do by its aid many things which he formerly did by the more costly and tedious process of manual labour, but it has at the same time enabled him to do many things which he certainly would have left undone if he had had only manual labour to depend upon, and the result is that "as far as we have got yet," as the natives of the country to which we owe many of our most useful farm implements would say, the things formerly left undone and which are now done are so many that the manual labour necessary to serve the machinery which does them, requires as many hands as were needed to do the few things which were formerly done.

The greater use of machinery and the increase in the size of farms, which may be said to run in couples, have not only conferred a great benefit on the farmer and the country at large by increasing its productive power, without, at any rate as yet, diminishing in any appreciable degree the number of persons for whom agricultural labour finds employment, but they have also tended to equalize the manual labour required during the different seasons of the year, and to provide more skilled labour at higher wages for industrious and intelligent labourers, than which no greater benefits could be conferred on the agricultural labouring class.*

* The following is the opinion of Sir Henry Dashwood on this subject (see Oxon evidence 93). "Whatever improves the agriculture "of a district must also improve the state of the people living in the district. Improved agriculture implies improved cultivation, "expensive and often complicated machinery and implements, superior horses, valuable stock, &c.; all these require responsible and "intelligent labourers, who can only be retained by fair wages and cottages within easy distance of their work."

Mr. Thos. Tanner, a large occupier in Newbury union (see Berks evidence 59) says, "I do not think a scarcity of labour would "injure to any great extent the employer or the employed, as we should bring machinery to our assistance, and we should soon get a "more intelligent class of workmen."

Mr. Simmons, bailiff to Mr. Walter (see Berks evidence 62) says, "The use of the steam plough reduces the number of horses and "therefore of carters; it makes way however for some labourers at higher wages."

J.

It has been often said to me that the great increase in the size of farms is to be regretted, as it deprives the provident and industrious labourer of the old inducement to save money in order that he may himself become a farmer and a master, large farms being altogether out of his reach. An increase in the size of farms no doubt has this tendency, but for one man who was induced to be provident by the hope of reaching the grade of a farmer through the agency of a small farm, 10 I feel sure, will be benefited by the increase in wages which the use of machinery offers to intelligent men and the whole class encouraged to make more use of their brains.

I think, however, the custom of increasing the size of farms may be easily carried too far, and happily the power of hiring the steam plough and thrashing machine will soon enable the occupier of a very moderate sized farm to compete on fair terms with his richer neighbour in showing that increasing difference between the cost of production and value of the produce which is the measure of successful farming both for the farmer and the country.

as used in Oxfordshire and Berks shows agricultural labour market is overstocked.

43. In both Oxfordshire and Berks the use of agricultural machinery has evidently made great progress since Mr. C. S. Read wrote his prize essay on the farming of Oxfordshire (in 1854), with, however, one or I might say two notable exceptions, viz., the comparatively little use that is made of either mowing or reaping machines. It would certainly strike most farmers with wonderment that the same men who possess the fee simple of a steam cultivator, frequently, I may say generally in these counties, are the owners neither of a mowing nor reaping machine. When I mentioned this, as I did to several farmers, their answer was either that they could get plenty of hands to cut their corn, or, that if they reaped their upstanding corn with machines their men would refuse to cut what the machines could not. Judging from the number of men I found out of work in winter in the open villages, there are no doubt many hands available for haytime and harvest, which can find very little farm work to do at other seasons, but it seems to me that one of the great advantages of using mowing and reaping machines would be to drive away these surplus labourers who drag out a miserable existence depending almost altogether on a payment, part of which might be saved to the farmer and the rest better spent in increasing the wages and thereby improving the quality of his permanent staff. The action of the farmer has, however, for years past had an opposite tendency: before the Union Chargeability Act came into force the farmers helped such men through the winter by giving them odd jobs at the lowest wage which would induce them to remain, and serve at the same time to keep them off the rates; now, since rates have become a district charge the inclination is, by a pretty free use of outdoor relief, to help these men to tide over the winter by the aid of public instead of private charity, and so it comes to pass that an Act of Parliament which ought only to have done unmitigated good to the labouring class is made the means of encouraging pauperism.*

Plough-reins versus ploughboys.

44. Another peculiarity in the farming economy of Oxfordshire and Berks bears upon the educational question, and perhaps oddly enough, as it is a question of horses. That there is land in both Oxfordshire and Berks which no two horses of whatever breed could break up at certain seasons of the year, no man who has seen and felt the tenacious character of the soil in winter would, I think, for a moment doubt, but the evidence of facts on all the farms occupied by landowners which I visited and on many occupied by tenant farmers, as well as the strong opinions expressed by practical men who know the counties well, warrant me in saying that one-half of the ploughboys might be dismissed and sent to school on the back of one of the horses along side of which they used to crack their whips, leaving the remaining two horses with the aid of a pair of reins and a larger allowance of corn to sharpen the steps of the ploughman.†

Private gangs.

45. Passing now to a closer review of the evidence as it bears upon the questions asked in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry, and treating the subjects in very much the same order as they are presented in those circulars. It will be seen that the only return I received of children, young

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* In a paper on the systems of local rating in England, Scotland, and Ireland, read by Captain Dashwood, a large occupier of land in Oxfordshire, at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club on the 5th of April, he says, "I need scarcely point out to you that the main "blot on our poor law management is the great abuse made of outdoor relief, which resolves itself in many instances to relief in aid "of wages."

† Extract from Mr. Sewel Read's prize essay on the farming of Oxfordshire.—"The farmer of the old school delights to see his five "horses elaborately doing the work of two; and points with exultation to the instances in which men who started with pair horse ploughing, "no doubt strangers, ignorant of the nature of the soil, in making the attempt to plough heavy ground with a pair of half fed cobs "failed of their object. They started on the wrong soil with the wrong horses, and wrong feeding for pair horse ploughing. On a "great portion of Oxfordshire land two strong horses are enough in a plough, but they must be active and well fed. On the stonebrash "may be seen three or four horses crawling over three quarters of an acre in the day, while on the other side of the hedge two horses "are ploughing their acre with ease."

Mr. John Hedley, bailiff to Mr. Wroughton, of Woolley Park, Wantage, says, (see Berks evidence 76), "I plough with two "horses abreast and use short carts instead of waggons. You will see in Mr. Wroughton's field four ploughs going, with eight "horses and four men, and over the fence on another farm four ploughs with 12 horses, four men and four boys, on the same "kind of land, our ploughs doing the work quicker. There is nothing in which the northern system beats the southern so much as in "the management of horses. Our horses are kept in the stable, our neighbour's lie out in a yard; our horses are well fed, and two of "them do more work than three of the neighbour's, and we don't require the ploughboy. It would be a far better system if the plough-"man had charge of his horses as ours have, and received the boys wages in addition to his own, the boy remaining at school. The only "difficulty I have in carrying out the two-horse system is that we have no cottages for ploughmen."

Mr. Hardy, bailiff to Col. Lloyd Lindsay, Lockinge, Wantage (see Berks evidence 236), says, "We use very few boys, as we plough "mostly with reins and a pair of horses, and I have sent for tackle to use three abreast with reins when we want more than two, as we "do sometimes. It's all nonsense about three horses abreast doing more harm than three or four in a line on wet land; the surface "you turn over is less trodden with three or four in a line, but they make a fine water bed in each furrow, that is forgotten, because it is "out of sight. Some of our land is as stiff as any in the neighbourhood. We have two Clydesdale mares; they will plough as heavy "land as any three of the ordinary Berkshire horses and do it quicker."

List of farms visited by the Assistant Commissioner on which plough-reins are used and plough boys dispensed with in Oxfordshire:—

The Duke of Marlborough's farm at Blenheim, Woodstock.
The Earl of Macclesfield's farm at Shirburn, Thame.
Sir Henry Dashwood's farm at Kirtlington, Bicester.
Colonel Bowyer's farm at Barton, Woodstock.
Captain Dashwood's farm at Kirtlington, Bicester.
Mr. Newton's farm at Begbroke, Woodstock.

In Berks,—Her Majesty's farms at Windsor.
Col. Lloyd Lindsay's farm at Lockinge, Wantage.
Mr. Wroughton's farm at Chaddleworth, Wantage.
Mr. Benyon's farm at Englefield, Bradfield.
Mr. Thoyts' farm at Sulhampstead, Bradfield.
Mr. Walter's farm at Bearwood, Wokingham.
Captain Walter's farm at Tangley, Wokingham.
Besides several on lighter land.

It will be apparent to anyone who knows the district that these farms, adding the light land about which there is no dispute, represent the surface soil of at least three-fourths of the two counties.

J. persons, or women employed in private gangs (there are no public gangs employed in farm labour in either of these counties) was from Kirtlington parish in Oxfordshire, where an occupier of a large farm employs two mixed gangs of boys and girls for four or five weeks in May and June hand weeding corn which has been horse-hoed; these gangs are composed of about 30 boys and as many girls, and of the 60 who were so employed during last summer, there were—

14 boys and 5 girls under 10 years of age.
11 boys and 13 girls between 10 and 13 years of age.
5 boys and 12 girls over 13 years of age.

About one-third of these children live on the farm, and the remainder come from a village two miles off; the hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an hour allowed for dinner. The 60 children are divided into two mixed gangs, each gang being under the charge of a steady married labourer.

Speaking of the manner in which these children are employed, their employers say:—

"I thought of dividing the sexes, but found it was not advisable, as the children of a family came togther and brought their meals together, the elder children taking charge of the younger; they are not subject to any ill-treatment, nor are they in any way injured by the nature of their employment; they are never employed in weeding high wet corn. . . . I do not think that any legislative enactment is necessary for such private gangs as these. . . . The state of education of the children is, however, unsatisfactory; there are schools, but the children are not very regular in their attendance."

In point of fact, the temptation of earning a little money by pulling charlock for seven hours on a fine day in May or June has its natural effect on the school attendance, and I perfectly agree with the employer of these gangs to this extent, that no legislation is necessary to protect these children from the chance of suffering physical injury, and that a rule for separating the sexes while at work would interfere with the family arrangements without giving any moral protection. As to legislative interference for the sake of education there is this to be said about the employment of children in gangs, that inasmuch as it is the only profitable way of employing children under 10 years of age, such institutions are serious temptations to both employers and parents to forget that children of that age might be even better employed than in earning 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day in light summer work.

their effect on education.

Tabulated labour returns.

46. The tabulated labour returns (Oxfordshire evidence, Appendix A., and Berks evidence, Appendix A.) will show the age at which children begin to be employed in farm labour, to what extent youthful and female labour is employed in comparison with adult male labour, and to what extent the demand for manual labour varies throughout the year. These forms will also indicate to what extent the manual labour on a farm is affected by the proportion of arable and pasture land, the course of husbandry, the nature of the soil, and the use of steam cultivation and the more expensive machinery which is generally confined to the larger farms.

Extra harvest hands omitted.

47. As it is the custom in both counties for families to work together in harvest, taking the reaping and binding by the acre, it is very difficult for a farmer to give a return of the age, sex, and number of persons employed on his farm during harvest, and the same remarks will apply to hay-time, very few of the persons making the returns (8 out of 36 for Oxford, and 10 out of 49 for Berks) made any attempt to include "extra-strappers" in harvest, and if they had done so it would only have been to show that every available man, woman, and child in the rural districts is at work for a longer or shorter time in hay-time or harvest as the state of the weather shortens or protracts the work. The Oxfordshire return for autumn is slightly confused by one or two farmers having treated harvest as autumn work, while others who gave extra harvest hands put them in the summer quarter. In the Berkshire autumn return extra harvest hands are entirely excluded, and it will be seen that the spring and autumn staff are practically the same, and that the spring returns give very accurately the whole number of persons who are regularly employed for three-fourths of the year; the difference between that and the winter return showing how many of those persons whose usual occupation is farm labour are thrown out of work during the winter months.

Ordinary staff employed on 42,298 acres during three-quarters of the year.

48. The following is the return of the labourers, male and female, employed during the spring quarter (and which may therefore, as I have explained above, be taken to represent the age, number, and sex of persons employed for three-fourths of the year) on 16,536 acres in Oxfordshire and 25,762 acres in Berks.

—	Number of Farms.	Acres Arable.	Acres Pasture.	Total Acreage.	Males.						Females.						
					Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Oxfordshire -	35	11,238	5,298	16,536	—	8	89	113	554	764	—	—	1	10	130	20	161
Berkshire -	49	18,920	6,842	25,762	—	10	107	245	747	1,109	—	3	4	23	257	17	304

Parish labour returns of males under 18 years and females.

49. Taking the returns made by clergymen for their parishes, as given for nine parishes in Oxfordshire (seven of which are from Woodstock union), which returns include females of all ages, but only those males who are under 18 years of age, we have,—

—	Population.	Acreage.	Males.				Females.					
			Under 8	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.
Nine parishes in Oxfordshire -	3,124	14,490	2	16	66	91	—	—	1	2	84	9

J.

These parish returns only differ from the farm returns by showing a rather larger proportion of boys under 10 years of age, young boys occasionally employed on odd jobs being given by the clergyman and omitted by the farmer. The few parish returns which I received from Berks in no way affect any inferences which may be drawn from the farm returns.

The 42,298 acres chosen give a fair representation of the quantity and quality of labour employed in the two counties.

50. It is evident, therefore, that very few boys under 10 years of age find anything like regular employment in farm labour in either county; that after 10 they are very generally employed in both; that female labour is very generally confined to the employment of married women, by whom a good deal of the lighter farm work is done in both counties; that the extent to which children, young persons, and women are employed is very similar in both counties; in fact, it will give a more accurate measure of the distribution of agricultural labour in both counties if we add the labour returns together, and for this reason, that in collecting labour returns in Berks I kept in view the development of the farming features of the district, my endeavour being to obtain a fair proportion of acreage from each; what therefore is lacking from the down farms in Oxfordshire is supplied from Wantage union in Berks. As the vale farms in both counties contain a much larger proportion of permanent grass than the farms on the stonebrash or chalk downs, it will be some indication that by adding these labour returns together a fair sample of the two counties is obtained, that the proportion between the pasture and arable land in the 42,298 acres over which the combined labour returns extend is the same as that between the whole arable and pasture land in both counties, as given by the "Agricultural Returns for 1868," viz., a proportion of 3½ acres arable to one pasture.*

Adding then these labour returns together the account stands thus:

Employment on 42,298 acres in Oxfordshire and Berks, of which 30,158 are arable.	Males.						Females.						
											Over 18.		
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Married.	Unmarried.	Total Females.
In regular employment for three-quarters of the year	—	18	196	358	1,301	1,873	—	3	5	33	387	37	465
In regular employment for winter quarter	—	13	184	353	1,254	1,804	—	—	3	21	216	29	269

Proportion of youthful, female, and adult male labour to acreage.

51. The following, then, are the conclusions I would draw from this statement, in addition to those already stated in considering the returns from the two counties separately (conclusions which apply equally to both counties).

That the proportion of boys between 10 and 13 who are regularly employed in farm labour is about 1 to 200 acres of mixed cultivation (this proportion being greater in North Oxfordshire and West Berks than in the other parts of the counties), and that of these 6 per cent. are thrown out of work in winter.

That the proportion of lads between 13 and 18 who are so employed is about 1 to 120 acres, very few of whom are thrown out of work in winter.

That the proportion of adult male labourers who are employed throughout three-fourths of the year is, on an average, one man to from 32 to 33 acres of mixed cultivation, and that nearly 4 per cent. of these are thrown out of work in winter.†

That very few girls and comparatively few unmarried women are employed in farm labour, except in haytime and harvest.

That of adult women, nine-tenths of whom are married, the proportion employed for three-fourths of the year (*i.e.*, in spring, summer, and autumn) is about 1 to 100 acres, of whom rather less than half, either from choice or necessity, are not employed in the winter quarter.‡

Boys' work.

52. The hours of work for boys who are not carters' or shepherds' boys, are the same as those for ordinary daymen, viz., 10 hours, exclusive of time allowed for meals, in summer, and as many hours, not exceeding 10, as light will allow in winter. On some farms, however, as will be seen by the answers to the circular question, "What are the hours of work?" men and boys work for 10½ hours per day. Carters' boys, *i.e.*, those who help the carters, who have charge of horses are expected to be in the stables soon after 4 a.m., when they bait their horses, at 6 they are allowed an hour for breakfast, from 7 a.m. till 3 p.m. they drive the team in the field, having a rest of from 15 to 30 minutes for luncheon at 12 o'clock, after putting in the horses at 3 they are allowed till 4 o'clock for dinner, and are in the stables again baiting and doing up their horses till about 6 p.m.; they therefore have 11 or 12 hours work, less the 15 or 30 minutes for luncheon, according as they are in the stables at 4 or 5 a.m. As the carter usually has charge of two teams, these hours apply to nearly one-half of the boys (who are not old enough to hold a plough) employed on farms where ploughboys are used.

The long hours of the carter boy are by several witnesses considered to be injurious to his health, and it is said that where such boys are hired by the year, and lodged either with the carter or in the farmer's house (a very common custom in Berks) they are often subject to rough usage at the hands of the carter.

* The whole of the land accounted for in the Agricultural Returns for 1868, in both counties, as in permanent grass (exclusive of heath, waste, &c.), or arable cultivation, was 759,024 acres, of which 243,561 acres are permanent grass, giving a proportion of 1 acre of grass to 3·52 arable. The proportion in the acreage to which the labour returns apply is 1 acre grass to 3·48 arable.

† An inspection of the individual returns as given in Appendix A. of the evidence from both counties will show that this proportion of one adult man to from 32 to 33 acres for such mixed cultivation as is above described applies to a large number of farms on the better stonebrash and down lands where four-course husbandry is practised; that this proportion rises to one man for 25 acres where three-fifths of the arable land in high cultivation is annually in white corn, and sinks to one man for 50 acres on the poorer stonebrash and down farms where two-fifths of the arable land only is in white corn; on a few very highly cultivated farms on sandy loams or the Thames gravel it rises to one man for 25 acres in four-course husbandry.

‡ Examining the returns individually it will be found that female labour falls below this average round Woodstock and Abingdon, where gloving and slopping provide other employment for women, especially those with young families, but that in spite of these inducements to remain at home, there are a considerable number of women who prefer field work to sewing either gloves or navvies slops; see also Oxfordshire evidence 19a and 55b.

J.

The evil effect on the feet and limbs of boys, arising from the tenacious character of the soil over which many of them have to drive their team for eight hours in succession, was pointed out by several witnesses, and on this head Dr. Batt of Witney says (see Oxon evidence 72), "I think that children "are employed too young in heavy ploughed land; it tells on them in after life; when they get to be "about 50 they go at the knees and are very much bent." On the other hand, with the above exception, the medical evidence which I have received speaks very favourably of the health of the agricultural labouring class in these counties. Mr. Parry, a surgeon practising in Woodstock union, says, "I "cannot attribute any particular disease to farm labour, and the people in this district are, as a rule, "very strong and healthy, living to a great age." Dr. White, district medical officer of Woodstock union, says, "There is no reason to suppose that agricultural labour in this district is injurious to the "health of those engaged in it." That farm labourers are not so healthy as they should be Dr. White attributes, 1st, to "low wages, which will not allow men with families to procure food sufficient either "in quantity or quality; and, secondly, the unwholesome state of many of the cottages." Again, Dr. White says, "It is a rare event to find a sick child whose illness can be ascribed to its being "employed in field labour at too tender an age."

Although, therefore, I think that the long hours of the carter boy are unsuited of the age of many of those who are employed in that capacity, and attribute the peculiar gait of the male agricultural labourer in these and the adjoining counties to the effect of the sticky land (perhaps aided by tight leggings), on the feet and legs of the team boys, I am bound to confess that where these are, as I believe they are in Oxfordshire and Berks, the chief subjects of complaint, in a physical point of view, against the mode of employment in agriculture, I agree with the great majority of witnesses who say that *legislative interference for the sake of protecting children from physical injury supposed to arise from the manner in which they are employed in farm labour is not necessary.*

Female workers.

53. As very few young girls are employed in farm labour, and as the work of those few who are is of the lightest description, it is scarcely necessary to discuss the desirability of legislative restrictions on their account; any restrictions on the employment of such girls deemed necessary elsewhere might be applied here without injury either to the parent or employer.

Effect of employment of females in farm labour morally and domestically.

The complaints made, in answer to the circular questions, against the employment of females in agriculture, and the suggestions for legislative restrictions on such labour, apply generally to the case of the elder girls, young women, and married women; of the elder girls and young women it is said that field labour unfits them for domestic service or domestic duties when married, and subjects them to immoral influences (chiefly, as would appear from the evidence, from the conversation of the elder women with whom they work); of the employment of married women it is said that it leads to the neglect of their families and domestic duties.

Some witnesses speak very strongly on this subject, as, for instance, the Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, of Lockinge, who says:—

"It (*i.e.*, farm labour) is the certain ruin of the female character; they become bold, impudent, scandal-mongers, hardened against religion, careless of their homes and children, most untidy, given to drink, coarse-minded, debased, depravers of any virtuous girls who work with them, having no pride in their home or their children, and few home feelings. Their children are ragged and quite untaught, and a dirty home often drives the husband to the public house."

These are indeed heavy charges to bring against the married female farm workers of Berks, and one of them, that of using coarse language, is so often repeated that we needs must believe that coarse language is a characteristic of the adult female field worker in these counties, the Rev. G. Purdue, of Challow, says:—

"'*Field talk*,' is a common expression in this neighbourhood (Wantage) when women talk loosely."

From the opposite end of the counties the Rev. W. H. Ridley, of Hambledon, says: "It (farm labour) is very injurious to them *morally*; they gain coarse, rough, and immoral habits; it is very injurious *domestically*; their homes and families are miserably neglected."

The neglect of their families is such a natural result of the absence of the mother in field work that it is scarcely necessary to quote the opinions of witnesses on this subject; I must, however, in justice to the married female field workers state, that, as far as my own personal observations are concerned, there was not much to choose between the comfort and cleanliness of their houses and those of their neighbours' who were not engaged in field work, and it was the opinion of many labourers, as well as as labourers' wives, whom I examined on this subject, that the best wife for a farm labourer is a woman who is able and willing to do farm work.

In Wantage parish I visited the house of a labourer's wife, named Ranklin (see Berks evidence 27d) within half an hour of the time when Mrs. Ranklin, who is 65 years of age, had returned from field work (spreading dung), and I was very much struck not only with the tidiness of the house, but with the cheerful and contented tone of its mistress; the following is her evidence on the subject of female labour:—

"I have worked out since I was a girl, at first with my father. People never work out now like what girls worked when I was young. Working out in the fields is good for women; does young women good. A girl going out with married women may hear a good many things she shouldn't; it greatly depends upon whom she works with. I wouldn't like to send a girl out till she's 12 or 13; I don't think after that the eight hours' work would hurt her. It would be a great deal better for women with families to stay at home; they lose as much as they get by not looking after their families, and it would be a good thing if women hadn't to work in winter."

Effect of such employment physically.

54. As to the physical effect of field work on females the evidence shows strongly that such work, if not distinctly favourable to health, at least contrasts favourably with the other employments, such as factory work, gloving, slopping, and lace-making, in which women of the labouring class in these counties are engaged; there can be no doubt, however, that the effect for good is greatly counteracted by the miserable dress worn by most of the women workers; their husband's coat and an apron cut from an old manure bag may keep out a certain amount of rain from the upper part of their person, but the slipshod feet can rarely remain dry for half an hour on an ordinary winter's day.

J.

55. Nor do I think does any evidence which I have received show that field work has a worse moral effect upon females than the other employments in which they are engaged in the counties I have visited as your assistant commissioner. Where, for instance, as in Woodstock union, gloving is a more usual employment than field work, especially for younger women, there are as many complaints of its evil effect on the morality of the girls as are made elsewhere of the like effect arising from field labour; the same may be said of lace-making in the western parishes of Oxfordshire, and you will remember what very strong evidence was given on this subject in the plaiting districts of Beds and Bucks. In point of fact, almost every person who has had the means of comparing the moral effect of any one of these occupations with farm labour has given his opinion in favour of farm labour as producing less moral evil amongst young women.

Morally, farm labour as a female employment compares favourably with such occupations as straw-plaiting, gloving, and lace-making.

The result of all the evidence I have received on the subject of female occupations as tending to immorality leads me to this conclusion: that unhappily a disregard of chastity is very common amongst unmarried women of the labouring class (my evidence only concerns the labouring class), and that one occupation only differs from another as it affords more or less opportunity for the gratification of what after all is a natural passion, or as by its nature it encourages the development of that passion. Agricultural labour affords as many or more opportunities of evil as any of the occupations I have named, with the exception of straw plaiting, but the healthy hard work is a great corrective, and it is on this last account chiefly, I think, that the morality of the girls engaged in field work will compare favourably with that of those whose occupation is lace-making or gloving, and is, as far as the evidence I have received is concerned, decidedly greater than that of the straw-plaiter.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this subject, because, if it be true that a slight appreciation of the virtue of chastity prevails generally amongst the labouring class, in whatever occupation the girls may be engaged, the fact points to some widely prevailing cause, which deprives the young women of the safeguard of female modesty, and that prevailing cause (in spite of the inferences which may be drawn to the contrary from the supposed or really greater chastity of Irish and Highland girls) I take to be the overcrowding of cottages.

Although then I agree with those witnesses who think it a great pity that married women should neglect their families for field work, I agree also with those who think that *any legislative restrictions on the employment of females in agriculture in Oxfordshire and Berks are unnecessary.*

56. Passing now to a review of the school returns, in order to show the proportion of children of the agricultural labouring class under 13 years of age who are receiving any elementary education, as well as the effect of the employment of children in farm labour on school attendance.

School returns.

Table A. of the Oxfordshire summary of school returns gives the total number of children of the agricultural labouring class under 13 years of age *on the register*, as well as *in average attendance* at all the elementary schools in *Woodstock union*, and the account stands thus: that in a union almost purely agricultural, extending over 47,913 acres, and containing according to the census of 1861, 14,236 inhabitants, there are of the class named *in average attendance* at some elemetary school,—

Woodstock Union.

In summer	497	boys under 10 years of age.
	97	„ between 10 and 13.
	526	girls under 10 years of age.
	138	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13	1,258	
In winter	500	boys under 10 years of age.
	112	„ between 10 and 13.
	508	girls under 10 years of age.
	137	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13	1,257	

And that there are *on the register* of the same schools,—

In summer	1,542 children under 13.
In winter	1,625 „ „

Supposing that 80 per cent. of the population (the same per-centage which I allowed in analysing these returns for the counties of Bedford and Buckingham) belong to the class for which these returns are made, it would appear that there is one child under 13 years of age *on the register* of some elementary school for every seven persons, and one such child *in average attendance* for every nine persons (it will be remembered that a like analysis of a similar return for all the elementary schools in Woburn union in Beds gave one such child *on the register* of some school for every $8\frac{1}{2}$ persons, and one in average attendance for every 11 persons). Of the children under 10 years of age there are 6 per cent. more girls than boys in average attendance in summer, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in winter. Of the children between 10 and 13 years of age, the girls exceed the boys by about 40 per cent. in summer, and by about 20 per cent. in winter.

57. Taking the returns from six rural parishes in five of the other unions in Oxfordshire (Witney, Banbury, Bicester, Thame, and Henley), and allowing the same per-centage of the population to belong to the class for which the returns are made, we find (see school table B. of Oxon summary) that there is one child under 13 years of age *in average attendance* for every $8\frac{1}{2}$ persons (the exact figures being 8·6 in decimals) both in summer and winter, and that of the children under 10 years of age the attendance of the boys exceeds that of the girls by about 6 per cent. in summer and 4 per cent. in winter, whereas of children between 10 and 13 the attendance of girls exceeds that of boys by about 50 per cent., both in summer and winter.

Six other parishes in Oxfordshire.

J. Summer and winter attendance in 33 parishes in Oxfordshire.

58. To show the difference of attendance in summer and winter, take the aggregate attendance of the 33 parishes for which the school returns for Oxfordshire are tabulated, and we have :—

	Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Summer - -	695	127	711	185
Winter - -	699	144	689	185

While, therefore, for boys under 10 there is a very slight increase in winter ; for boys over 10 there is an increase of about 12 per cent.; for girls under 10 there is a decrease in winter of about 3 per cent. (due no doubt to the effect of weather); for girls over 10 the numbers are the same for both summer and winter. These tables also show that there are more than four times ($4\frac{1}{3}$) as many children under 10 as of children between 10 and 13 in average attendance (in Beds and Bucks there were respectively $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 times as many).

Some parishes in Woodstock union too small to support an efficient school.

59. It will be observed from school table A. that several of the parishes in Woodstock union are exceedingly small, eight of them containing less than 1,000 acres, and nine of them less than 200 inhabitants. In four of the smaller parishes there are no schools, but the largest of these (Rousham) has only 131 inhabitants, and in no one of the four have the children any difficulty in finding school accommodation in neighbouring parishes within easy distance of their homes.

The evil of these small parishes is, that two poverty-stricken schools are often found competing against each other and doing their work, if not badly, at least not so well as it would be done by one school supported by the funds of both ; nor does a parish of less than 1,000 acres with a complement of 100 or even 200 inhabitants offer a field for employment sufficient to induce an active clergyman to reside amongst his flock, and hence it is that it is from such parishes we hear most of the educational difficulty arising from "the indifference of parents ;" where the clergyman does reside in such a parish and bears, as he often does, a heavy share of the expenses of the school, it cannot be wondered at that he strives to keep his young flock together under a teacher who is probably one of his own people and uncertificated, rather than encourage them to go out of his parish to some more efficient school over which he has no control ; under the present rule for distributing the Government grants he suffers the loss of that aid which larger parishes can afford to purchase, and if the teacher be inefficient (which is, however, not always the case) the children suffer with him.

Schools in Wantage union.

60. Table A. of the Berks summary contains all the schools in Wantage union, for which I received returns in such a form as to enable me to tabulate them, with the exception of a return from Hampstead Norris, which reached me after the evidence was printed; by, however, excluding from this table the return from Blewbury, where large endowments attract children from other parishes not included in the table, and adding the return which I have since received from Hampstead Norris, I can treat the remainder of the returns as representing the whole attendance of children under 13 years of age at all elementary schools in an area of 59,251 acres, containing 13,993 persons, according to the census of 1861, in Wantage union, and the account stands thus: that in a district of Berkshire containing 59,251 acres and 13,993 inhabitants, there are *in average attendance* at some elementary school :—

In summer - - - - - -	483	boys under 10.
	82	„ between 10 and 13.
	473	girls under 10.
	161	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13 - -	1,199	
In winter - - - - - - -	514	boys under 10
	94	„ between 10 and 13.
	455	girls under 10.
	177	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13 - -	1,240	

And that there are *on the register* of the same schools :—

In summer - - -	1,460	children under 13.
In winter - - - -	1,633	„ „

Making the same allowance as I have hitherto done for persons who do not belong to the class for which these returns are made, it would appear that there is one child under 13 years of age *on the register* of some school for every $7\frac{1}{2}$ persons (taking the average of summer and winter), and one *in average attendance* for every nine persons. Of the children under 10 years of age there are about 2 per cent. more boys than girls in average attendance in summer, and about 5 per cent. in winter; whereas of the children between 10 and 13 there are about twice as many girls as boys in average attendance both in summer and winter.

Summer and winter attendance.

61. Comparing the summer and winter attendance, we find that for boys under 10 there is in winter an increase of about 7 per cent.; for boys over 10 an increase of 14 per cent., while for girls under 10 there is a decrease of 4 per cent., and for girls over 10 an increase of 10 per cent.; a similar analysis of the returns from four parishes in Bradfield and Wokingham unions shows a decrease in winter of 7 per cent. for both boys and girls under 10, and no alteration in the attendance of those over 10.

Peculiar shape of parishes

62. I have said that I think the system of education suffers in Woodstock union from the smallness of the parishes ; in Wantage union it suffers, though not nearly to so great an extent as the economy

of farm labour, from the peculiar shape of the parishes which on the northern slope of the downs run up in narrow strips from the vale over the ridge of the downs, those families whom the farmer finds it necessary to locate on the high ground being removed to a considerable distance from the church and school, which are invariably situated in the lower part of the parishes; the same thing occurs again on the slope of the Chiltern hills in Oxfordshire, where Pyrton parish, containing 5,140 acres, is 11 miles in length. As the better understanding of the economy of labour leads to the building of cottages on the higher parts of these parishes, the school difficulty arising from their peculiar shape will be more felt.

J. affect school attendance.

63. Returning for a moment to the comparison between the summer and winter attendance at elementary schools.

Evidence of the extent to which farm labour interferes with education as obtained from school returns.

The slight difference between the summer and winter attendance of boys under 10 at the 33 schools in Oxfordshire for which the returns are tabulated, a difference which is, however, in favour of the winter attendance, shows that a certain, though not very large, number of boys who attend school in winter are prevented, probably by farm labour, such as field-keeping, &c., from attending in summer. The increase in winter of 12 per cent. for boys between 10 and 13 shows that about that per-centage of such boys are only employed in field labour in summer. The decrease of 3 per cent. in the winter attendance of girls under 10 is only the natural decrease resulting from bad weather, which does not affect the attendance of girls over 10 years of age.

Taking the group of schools in Wantage union, the difference of 7 per cent. in favour of the winter attendance of boys under 10 seems to show that at least that per-centage of such boys are prevented by farm labour from attending in summer, and that boys of that age are more frequently employed in farm labour in this union than in Woodstock. The winter increase for boys over 10 is about the same as in Woodstock union and for the same reason; the attendance of girls under 10 is not affected by any labour, and shows a slightly higher decrease in winter on account of the distance which some children have to walk to school. The increase of 10 per cent. in the winter attendance of girls between 10 and 13 is caused I apprehend by girls of that age being employed in the hill parishes as field-keepers, pig-minders, &c.

Agricultural labour, therefore, does not, I think, interfere very seriously with the school attendance of children under 10 years of age, though it does interfere to a certain extent, especially in summer, and that more in Wantage than in Woodstock union. After 10 years of age the effect of the employment in farm labour is that the education of boys of the agricultural labouring class, as far as it is obtained at day schools, practically ceases. Of the 23 parishes in Woodstock union where there are day-schools, the returns of five of these schools show no attendance for boys over 10 years of age, and in 16 of them the attendance of such boys does not exceed two; of the 21 parishes in Wantage union, for which the school returns are tabulated, four show no attendance of boys over 10 years of age, and in 10 of them the attendance of such boys does not exceed two. In Woodstock union, where gloving interferes with the school attendance of girls over 10 years of age, the attendance of girls between 10 and 13 exceeds that of boys by 40 per cent. in summer, and 20 per cent. in winter; in Wantage union, where the attendance of such girls is only disturbed by some summer field work in the hill parishes, the attendance of girls between 10 and 13 exceeds that of boys by about 70 per cent. both in summer and winter.

64. It will not be surprising, then, that the evidence of clergymen given for their respective parishes, as well as that which I myself obtained by examination of many children whom I found at work, shows that a very large proportion of the labourers' children are growing up with an utterly insufficient education; that is to say, that the education obtained by the great majority of them at day schools is of itself quite insufficient to ensure the power of reading and writing in after life.

Corroborated by other evidence.

65. Happily, however, the Sunday and night schools come to the aid of those who can be induced to attend them, or who are within reach of a night school, and in nearly every case where on examination I found that a farm boy of 14 or 15 could read and write, I was told that he had kept up his learning at a Sunday or night school, or both. This, I think, tends to prove two things, 1st, that an education ceasing altogether at 10 years of age is generally insufficient to secure in after life the power of reading and writing; and, 2nd, that granted a regular attendance at day school up to 10, very little, though some, reminder is necessary for the next three or four years to secure these accomplishments; a reminder that many children in Oxfordshire and Berks are obtaining by attending Sunday school throughout the year, and night school for about two nights per week during the four winter months for from 1½ to 2 hours per night.

Night schools and Sunday schools as supplementary to day schools.

In speaking of night schools as supplementary to day schools in my report on Beds and Bucks, I said,—

"I confess that if it was not for the ploughboy I would not second an application for Government aid "to evening schools."

Holding as I do pretty much the same opinions as are thus expressed (see Oxon evidence 106) by the Rev. H. T. Young, who says,—

"I do not advocate the cause of night schools so strongly as some do, because I think they are apt to "lead parents to neglect to send their children to school at what appears to be the most proper time, viz., "when they are two young to work; they look forward to their son getting some education at the night "school when he is earning wages, and can pay for himself, and consequently, to save themselves expense, "they neglect to send him to school, and so the boy gets no education as a boy at the day school, and he "may or he may not get any at the night school as he grows up; the matter will then rest entirely with "himself, and I think it will be found that where one avails himself of the opportunities offered by the "night schools many more do not."

66. The ploughboy is however again the educational difficulty in Oxfordshire and Berks, employed, as he is, throughout the whole year from about 10 years of age in a large part of both counties; he is in fact the obstacle in the way of applying to agricultural labour, educational restrictions, analogous to those of the Printworks Act (the only one of the three Factory Act modes of obtaining school attendance applicable to farm labour); as to insist upon his attending school for, say, four winter months, up

Yearly hiring of ploughboys from 10 years of age the great educational difficulty.

J. to 12 or 13 years of age would be to deprive him of his yearly hiring and the parents of boys over 10 years of age of about 50*s.* a year for each boy between 10 and the age at which the restriction ceased.

It is no doubt true that bigger boys (more fit to do the work) would be employed at higher wages to take the place of the smaller boys and so to a certain extent repay the loss of the younger boys' winter wages; still this relief would not be felt at the time when parents of large young families are in most need of all the help that any member of the family can give.

67. To meet the almost entire loss of education arising from early withdrawal from the day school, and in spite of all such difficulties as want of funds, want of teachers, weariness of the young after work, and indifference of parents (see evidence in answer to circular question

"What do you find to be the chief difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?")

About two-thirds of the parishes which have day schools have also night schools.

Night schools have been established in a great majority of the parishes I visited in both counties; 20 of the 30 parishes in Oxfordshire for which I received day school returns have also night schools, and 24 out of the 31 parishes in Berks for which the like returns were made, and the answers given in the shorter circulars which do not involve a school return, show that these proportions are maintained throughout the counties. That is, that about two-thirds of the parishes in Oxfordshire and Berks have night as well as day schools, open usually for from two to three nights per week for the four winter months; in some parishes for four nights per week or more (in Weston-on-the-Green, children under 16 are taught on three nights of the week, and young persons over 16 on the remaining three nights), and that about two-thirds (less those who live at too great a distance from the school) of the hired boys have it in their power to keep up the reading, writing, and ciphering which they may be supposed to have attained at 10 years of age.

No one who has not taught in a night school can appreciate the sacrifice of time and comfort which such institutions entail upon the voluntary teachers, and too much praise cannot be bestowed on those who cheerfully fulfil the weary task; but my wonder at the self-denial of the teacher is not much greater than my wonder at the perseverance of the taught, especially the younger scholars, who after a long day's work, trudge sometimes a couple of miles to a night school, undeterred by weather or the example of idler and older companions.*

Success of night schools indicate increasing desire for education.

68. The success of night schools, of which Mr. Goodlake, chairman of the Faringdon union, says, "*the increasing supply is only in answer to an increasing demand*," shows that the desire for and appreciation of education is rapidly spreading amongst at least the younger members of the agricultural labouring class; and the increase and regularity of attendance of younger children in those parishes in which a thoroughly good school is provided, proves that the old difficulty arising from the "indifference of parents," so often alluded to in the evidence, has been in such parishes in a great measure overcome. A strong example of this is seen in Mr. Walter's school at Bearwood, where an excellent teacher (uncertificated) attracts many children from neighbouring parishes, some walking more than four miles to school, and never absenting themselves without an explanatory letter from their parents, or, as in one case shown to me, a medical certificate. The National school at Wantage also attracts the elder children from two or three vilages round it. These are two examples which occur to me at the moment from among several which I could recall.

Indifference of parents.

The indifference of parents, however, has even in the cases I have named been overcome by great perseverance on the part of the promoters of education, inducements other than educational, such as participation in the benefits of clothing and shoe clubs, being held out as more tangible attractions to the parents than the satisfaction of knowing that their children can read and write,† and there is quite enough indifference left to justify most witnesses, and amongst others Mr. Ruck Kene (see Oxon evidence 91) than whom few men have worked more diligently in the cause of education, to place it in the front rank of educational difficulties.

Cases of schools and necessity for rate, &c.

69. Although there are some very small parishes in Woodstock union which have no school of their own, there are, as far as I know, no children residing in the union who are not within reasonable distance of some parish school, and with the exception of a few families living in the upper part of the peculiarly shaped parishes on the slope of the downs, the same may be said of Wantage union; in fact, judging from the parishes I visited and the evidence I received on the subject, there can be very few children in either Oxfordshire or Berks who are not within a tolerably easy walk of some school. Great progress has evidently been made within the last few years in the supply of schools, and in this respect these counties contrast favourably with those I have already reported upon.

I found, however, the same inequality in the efficiency of the schools and the same unequal pressure on the resources of their supporters. As a rule, a heavy share of the burden of the school falls upon the clergyman, who, if he possibly can, bears it without complaint rather than give any occasion for such State interference as might deprive him of the authority in the management of the school which he now possesses. In a few cases, especially of parishes owned by non-resident landowners, the burden is so great as to drive even the clergyman to ask for some legislative action, which may compel the owners of property to bear a fair share of the expense of supporting the school.

In some cases one resident landowner is obliged to do duty for his absent brethren, even though his pecuniary interest in the parish is much smaller than theirs.

Bampton Aston parish, Oxon.

I beg, for instance, to draw your attention to the state of matters educational in Bampton Aston parish, as described by the Rev. G. S. Griffiths (see Oxon evidence 27). This parish, which has, or had at the last census, 968 inhabitants, contains 3,760 acres, whose rateable value is about 5,000*l.* a year; and the following are the contributions to the National schools given by the chief landowners for some years past:—

St. John's College, Oxford, owns 410 acres, rateable value 991*l.*, has given nothing for 11 years.

A non-resident landowner owns 800 acres, rateable value 1,000*l.*, has given 5*l.* during 11 years.

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* The Rev. Jas. Fraser, of Ufton, Berks, says:—"Some of the scholars come from a distance of nearly two miles; even this wet season "has hardly diminished the attendance at all."

† I am not aware whether this has been the case with the Bearwood school, but it is a very usual expedient.

A non-resident landowner owns 1,869 acres, rateable value 2,531*l.*, has given nothing for many years. J.

A non-resident landowner owns 356 acres, rateable value 506*l.*, has given nothing for many years.

From Mr. Griffiths' account there appears to be about 14*l.* a year from charity funds and available for educational purposes.

Steventon parish, Berks.

As another example of what an absent or peculiar proprietorship sometimes entails on the clergyman, take Steventon parish, in Berks, of which the Dean and Chapter of Westminster are lords of the manor, the property being, I believe, now in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. An excellent school was erected in 1864, which with its surroundings cost 1,066*l.* 8*s.*; towards this sum the Dean and Chapter of Westminster gave 100*l.*, and the vicar 433*l.*, the other subscriptions chiefly from individuals resident in the parish amounted to 130*l.* 10*s.*, and the rest of the money was supplied by sale of old school, Government grant, &c. (see Berks evidence 46a). In fact, the vicar gave twice as much as the absent landowners and all the other residents in the parish put together. This parish has about 900 inhabitants, and contains about 2,400 acres of rich land.

Childrey parish, Berks.

In Berks evidence 10b and 10c will be found an account of an educational difficulty of a different character. I cannot, however, do more than give a sketch of the state of matters when I visited the parish of Childrey in January last:—

I found then three schools or school systems in existence: a Wesleyan mixed school, supported by an endowment, as far as I could learn, of about 20*l.* a year; a church school for girls, supported by subscription and under charge of the rector, and an endowed school *for boys*, towards which the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College, Oxford, pay 50*l.* a year, and provide a house for the master, in discharge of the condition on which they hold valuable estates in Letcombe Bassett, and other neighbouring parishes.

The Wesleyan school and Church school for girls were closed for Christmas holidays at the time of my visit, January 13, and the teacher of the Wesleyan school was absent, but I was informed that she had had about 25 children (boys and girls) before Christmas, and that about 25 girls attended Dr. Whittingham's school. The endowed school for boys had been closed for two months, and at the time of closing there were only three boys in attendance. According to the evidence of the rector there were about 25 boys, who would have been in attendance at the endowed school but for a misunderstanding between the master and the parents, neither at school nor at work; and within the last few days I have received a circular which I left in charge of the master of the endowed school from which it appears that there are still 14 boys between 8 and 10 years of age neither at school nor at work, besides boys over 10, of whom no account is given. As to the state of education in the parish, the circular says, "The majority of the parishioners are unable to "read or write;" the result is that in a parish with an ample endowment to fulfil all the educational requirements not only of its own inhabitants but of the elder children of surrounding parishes, for the male portion of whom the endowment, I think, there can be little doubt was intended, shows less educational fruit than any parish which I visited in Berks, and that chiefly, if not entirely, from the want of Government inspection. As will be seen in the evidence, the endowment was made in the year 1526, when perhaps the education of girls was considered a matter of little importance, but I think the girls might now very properly share its advantages with the boys.

Boards of Guardians and the Factory Act.

70. Passing now to the evidence which I received on the desirability or necessity for restrictions in the employment of children in farm labour for the sake of education, and the form which such restrictions, if desirable, should take, I may state first the result of the interviews which I had with 11 of the boards of guardians representing as many unions situated in the two counties, taking afterwards the opinions which I received from individual witnesses on the same subject.

Resolutions of the Woodstock board:—

"In the opinion of this board it is not customary in this union, nor is it to the advantage of the employer or the employed, that children under 10 years of age should be employed in field labour, except during the period of the harvest of hay and corn.

"Legislative interference, with a view to the restraint of such employment, is not desirable.

"It is desirable that the State should afford increased assistance towards the education (not compulsory) of children under 10 years of age, but not of children of a more advanced age."

The Witney board (13 guardians being present) resolved unanimously,—

"That the board of guardians of the Witney union is of opinion that the Factory Acts should be applied to this union so far as that children shall not be employed under 10 years of age."

The Banbury board resolved,—

"That in the opinion of this board legislative interference is not required in the education of children employed in agriculture."

This resolution was carried by 10 votes to 6 against an amendment that children under 10 should not be employed unless they can read and write fairly, in which case they should be allowed to work at 9.

The Bicester board (14 guardians being present) resolved unanimously,—

"That the board of guardians of the Bicester union is of opinion that the principles of the Factory Acts should be applied to this union, so far as that children shall not be employed under 10 years of age unless it can be shown that a child is physically able and can pass a certain school examination, *i.e.*, read and write fairly, in which case it may be allowed to work at 9 years of age."

At a meeting of the Henley board a motion in favour of restricting farm labour to children over 10 years of age was defeated.*

* (The Assistant Commissioner was present by appointment at the meeting of the board held on the 10th, but notice of his visit not having been sent to each of the guardians, the discussion was postponed till the 17th, when the Assistant Commissioner was not present.—G. C.)

J.

The Wantage board resolved that,—

"It is the opinion of the guardians that inasmuch as children under 10 years of age in agriculture are only employed during the summer in this union, no legislative interference is necessary to regulate the employment of children in agriculture."*

The Faringdon board resolved unanimously,—

"That it is the opinion of this board that children under 10 years of age ought not to be employed in agricultural labour."†

The Abingdon board resolved that,—

"Legislative interference with the employment of children in farm labour is not, as far as this union is concerned, desirable."‡

The Bradfield board resolved unanimously,—

"That no child ought to be employed in agricultural labour under the age of 10 years, unless such child could produce a certificate of being able to read with facility."§

The Newbury board resolved,—

"That is is not desirable to place any legislative restrictions on the employment of boys in agriculture."‖

The Hungerford board (18 guardians being present) resolved,—

1st. "That, taking into consideration the demand for labour in this union and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, this board recommends that some restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour."

2nd. "That the restriction should be, that no boy under the age of 10 years should be so employed, except in the case of any boy of 9 years of age who can produce a certificate of his ability to read, write and cipher."

The first resolution was carried unanimously, the second by nine votes to eight as against an amendment that boys should be allowed to work at 9.¶

The following is one of the resolutions carried at a meeting of the Newbury Farmers' Club after discussing the provisions of Mr. Forster's Education of the Poor Bill.

"That no boy should be employed in farming operations before the age of 9, unless he had previously earned to read."

Opinions of individual witnesses on application of Factory Act principles.

71. Taking now the opinions of individual witnesses on the advisability of legislative restrictions on the employment of children in farm labour for the sake of education, it will be seen from the evidence, especially from the answers to the longer circular question (22m), and shorter circular question (6), that a majority of witnesses are in favour of some restriction, and that of those who are so, the greater number are of opinion that all legislative interference should cease at 10 years of age, though several witnesses, and among them a considerable proportion of occupiers of land, are in favour of carrying the restriction up to 12 years of age.

Suggestions as to coupling educational with age test, by Mr. G. C. Cherry.

72. There is, however, amongst those who are most anxious to promote the education of the labouring class, a decided leaning to couple an educational with an age test, by way of lightening the pressure on the parents of large young families, and at the same time of holding out an inducement to careless parents to send their children to school. I don't know that the general feeling on this subject is anywhere better expressed than by Mr. G. C. Cherry, Chairman of the Hungerford union, and Vice-Chairman of the Berks Quarter Sessions, who in his answer to the shorter circular question (6), says,—

"I think it desirable to prevent boys from working at an earlier age than 10 years. Such a rule will in many cases cause great difficulties, *e.g.*, where there are large families, it may be of five, six, or more children under that age. It is not easy to say how, at the present rate of wages, a man can support such a family, no one of the children contributing to the family purse. Nevertheless, I think the rule desirable, with the view of securing some education. Perhaps exceptions to it might be permitted in cases of boys proved to have reached a certain standard of education."

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* The following are extracts from my notes taken at the meeting of the Wantage board:—"It was stated by the Chairman that one "effect of the Union Chargeability Act is that farmers instead of employing men whom they do not much want in winter, as formerly, "now let them go to the union, not caring to save the general fund as they did their own parish. The board decided against the "desirability of legislative interference for the sake of education on the ground that the facilities for obtaining education are all that "can be desired, and that children under 10 years of age are very little employed. It was generally agreed that the earning of so "much money in summer and so little in winter is a cause of mischief to the labourers, whose habits are very improvident."

† The following are extracts from my notes taken at the meeting of the Faringdon board:—"Great stress was laid by many "guardians on the desirability of encouraging night schools, and on the growing desire for education evinced by the success of night "schools in Faringdon union. A landowner, who has had considerable experience in the working of the Factory Acts, spoke very "strongly of the benefits which had been conferred by them on the children employed in large factories."

‡ The following is extracted from my notes taken at the meeting of the Abingdon board:—"The above resolution was carried by a "majority of 10 to 6 as against a resolution in favour of restricting farm labour to children (*i.e.*, boys, as girls are not so employed), "to those over 10 years of age. The chief objection to such legislative interference was that where families are large, and consist of "children all or nearly all under 10 years of age, an injurious pressure would be put upon the parents by such a restriction: it "was urged also that a restriction as to age unaccompanied by compulsory attendance at school, would only add to the number of "idlers."

§ The following is a note taken by me at the meeting of the Bradfield board:—"Several guardians complained of the difficulty of "getting ploughboys, which would be increased by any further interference than that suggested in the resolution. It was stated at the "same time that there was no lack of adult labourers."

‖ The following is from my notes taken at the meeting of the Newbury board:—"The above resolution was carried after a fair "discussion, from which some occupiers appeared to be opposed altogether to the education of farm labourers, while others only "deprecated legislative interference, on the ground that it would put an unnecessary pressure on the parents of large young families, and "would fail of doing any good unless school attendance was at the same time made compulsory. It was stated that schools now attracted "many children by inducements other than the offer of education, such as shoe and clothing clubs. The fear of an educational rate "was also frequently dwelt upon. Upon the whole the feeling of the board was in favour of a further advance in education, "but objected to a resolution in favour of a somewhat extended interference, proposed by a member of the board, who is also a "clergyman."

¶ The following is from my notes taken at the Hungerford board:—"The Hungerford union maintains the children of widows "receiving relief until the boys are 10 and girls 11 years of age, unless any boy or girl under these ages is actually earning wages, and "there was no instance on the books on the day of the Assistant Commissioner's visit of a boy under 10 earning wages. The chairman "(Mr. G. C. Cherry), in moving a resolution in favour of legislative interference for the sake of education, said, 'I have for a long "'time seen that we should have to provide against a short supply of labour; the farm work is now practically left to boys and old men, "'the younger men go elsewhere to seek labour at higher wages. . . . . The rate of wages we can only leave to regulate itself "'according to the ordinary principles of supply and demand; but in order to check this exodus of able-bodied labourers we may as "'landowners offer the inducement of better cottages. Nothing will check the desire to leave the district more than a provision of "'better houses than exist in many of our parishes.'"

Again the Rev. W. J. Dry, Chairman of the Bicester union, says,— J. Rev. W. J. Dry.

"I would restrict the age to 10, but as it often happens that a boy of 9 is physically stronger than one of 10, I would allow a boy of 9 to go to work if he could read and write fairly."

And again the following is the opinion given to me by the Bishop of Oxford, on the application of the Factory Acts principle to children employed in farm labour :— The Bishop of Oxford.

"I think that, if the Factory Act principle is to be applied to farm labour, a child should be allowed to work half time at 8, whole time at 9 (if it can produce a certificate that it can read and write well), and whole time at 10 under any circumstances. Such a modification of the principle of the Act would quicken the sense of parental responsibility, and tend less than merely fixing an age (such as 10 years) under which no child should work to make parents depend on State aid, and would cause less necessity for an educational rate, which, I think, would at once stop voluntary aid, and put an end to religious teaching in our schools.'

You will observe how closely these opinions, in the order I have given them, are followed by the resolutions of the Hungerford, Bicester, and Bradford boards of guardians.

73. In a letter addressed to me, at my request, by Sir Henry Dashwood (see Oxon evidence 93c), on the subject of primary education, he says,— Suggestions on educational schemes by Sir H. Dashwood, Bart.,

"The present state of voluntary education is not satisfactory. The maintenance of a school (if there is one) falls upon the clergyman or principal resident, not necessarily on the proprietor, and if none of these persons choose to undertake the responsibility of maintaining a school, the labouring population must remain untaught. When clergyman and proprietor undertake the entire management of a school, it is seldom they are able to enlist any assistance in the management and supervision, even from the parents. Under a rating system it may be presumed that all classes being interested, they will watch over the management, and endeavour to obtain good results for their money. The more persons who can be interested in the supervision the better, as then errors of management or misconduct of the teachers could not long continue without being discovered.

Sir Henry then goes on to suggest,—

"1st. That good primary schools for children up to 12 years of age should be established throughout the kingdom, the expenses to be met by rate (as before suggested, half from owner and half by occupier). 2nd. By payments from the children. 3rd. By assistance from Government. If the school passed the requirements of the Government inspector, who should examine at least twice a year, a grant should be made from the Consolidated Fund of one-third of the expenses. Existing endowments might go toward assisting the education of the older pupils, night schools, &c. The area for each school and general management of extra endowments might be controlled by a district board, perhaps the board of guardians might undertake these duties. As Government would contribute to the maintenance of the schools, they would also have a voice through their inspectors.

This is in the main the same scheme as was recommended by Mr. Jas. Howard, now M.P. for Bedford, in a letter which I inserted in the appendix to my report on Bedfordshire (see Beds evidence 138). Mr. Howard says,— by Mr. Jas. Howard, M.P.,

"That the local boards (educational boards) should be required and empowered to provide proper and adequate school accommodation in parishes and places *where such does not exist;* that such schools should be subsidized partly from the National treasury, and partly from local taxation, the local tax to be paid jointly by the owner and occupier."

There is between the schemes suggested by Sir Henry Dashwood not only the common feature of an educational rate, but of a rate paid in equal proportions by the owner and occupier; this half rating system for educational purposes is only part of a general scheme for dividing all rates between the owners and occupiers, upon which an excellent paper was read only the other day by Captain Dashwood, at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club. In this paper Captain Dashwood contends that rates should be levied on all classes, thereby bringing the whole intelligence and instinct of the community to aid in a better administration of the funds; on the subject of education he says,—

"Any one who has watched for several years the working of our present system in country parishes, must admit that it is most faulty and unsuccessful, as it really depends generally on either the clergyman or the chief landowner, and a system thus depending on one person must often fail, as all classes neither take interest nor share responsibility. How this may be avoided is stated in the paper read, namely, that by the half-rating plan all classes would be paying directly towards the rate, and consequently take an interest in its management; the present system being on a basis that does not enlist the interest of all classes, cannot really be improved." by Capt. Dashwood,

My review of the evidence on education has already gone to such a length that I cannot do more than call your attention to the very interesting notes on the different proposed schemes for a national system of education, contributed by the Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene (see Oxon evidence 91); indeed I could not do justice to these notes without quoting them from end to end. There are, however, features common to Mr. Keene's criticisms on all the schemes which he discusses, viz., that there should be a certain amount of State control, and therefore of State aid, and that any scheme which altogether set aside the voluntary principle would be mischievous. It appears to me that although Mr. Keene appreciates all the weaknesses of the voluntary and denominational system, he is unable to satisfy himself that any other proposed plan would allow so near an approach to a self-supporting system; this is in fact the same feeling which induces the advocates of the half-rating system to extend the payment of rates to all classes. by the Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene.

74. All the evidence which I have received from these counties on the subject of education leads me to the conclusion that children might, without in any way interfering with the cultivation of the land or putting any improper and therefore pauperising pressure on the parent, be prevented from being employed in farm labour up to 10 years of age, unless they could produce a certificate of their ability to read and write fairly, in which case they might be allowed to go to work at 9, and that between 10 and 13 years of age, or between 9 and 13 in the case of those children who obtained a certificate entitling them to work at 9, there should either be a yearly renewal of the certificate of ability to read and write, or the proof of a certain number of hours school attendance during the preceding 12 months as a condition of hiring, the number of hours being so limited as to enable the child to fulfil the Summary of evidence on the subject of education.

J.

condition by attendance at day or night school during the four winter months. If such restrictions did in any degree tend to check the employment of boys from 10 to 12 years of age as team boys, during the winter months, I cannot help thinking that the mental and physical advantages far outweigh the evil of such pressure. If the education of the labouring class is to be advanced some pressure is necessary, and the evidence leads me to believe that the restrictions I have named are the mildest form which such pressure could take, to be of any use.

Educational rate where required should be levied on *owners* of property.

75. With regard to the means of providing efficient schools I think an educational rate should be enforced in all parishes where a Government inspector reports that the schools are not adequately supported, or where any fixed proportion of the ratepayers asks for such a rate, failing, however, a revision of the whole system of rating, and the adoption of such a half-rating scheme as I have before alluded to, I think the educational rate should be levied on the *owners* of property. Where landowners are now doing their duty by aiding in the education of the labouring class, they are already paying all that is asked for by such a rate, and many of them are paying not only their own share but that of those whom the voluntary system cannot arouse; an educational rate, therefore, levied on the owners of property would be an actual relief to the best supporters of the voluntary system and would leave the management of the schools in the same hands which now hold it. As I think I have said before the adoption of an educational rate would probably lead to a grouping of small parishes or an arrangement of school districts not strictly confined by parish boundaries, but this need only be done where it is evident that a parish is too small to support an efficient school, or where its shape is such as to prevent any of the children residing in it being within a reasonable distance of their own parish school.

By levying the rate upon the owners of property you at once get rid of the very reasonable objection of the occupiers of land to an educational rate, which, although theoretically and ultimately a tax on the land, practically means a rise of rent to them which they would never have had inflicted on them, but for the sake of education of the benefits of which they are by no means generally convinced. I must do the farmers of Oxfordshire and Berks the justice to say that but on the score of an educational rate levied on them I scarcely ever heard from them any illiberal sentiment on the question of educating the labouring class, and on the rating question I think they are perfectly right.

Cottages.

76. The Answers to Questions 37 and 9 of the different circulars giving a general description of the cottages will be found at the beginning of the parish evidence, Nos. 1 to 64, Appendix B. of Oxon evidence, and Nos. 1 to 65, Appendix B. of Berks evidence, and in Appendix A. for each county I have given a summary of these answers, which for Oxfordshire is as follows :—

General description of their condition.

"The cottages are described in a nearly equal number of cases as '*good or fair*' and '*bad.*' Rooms are "generally described as small, and in most cases the accommodation is described as insufficient for the larger "families."

"Ventilation is generally described as *fair;* in seven cases it is described as *bad.*"

"Drainage is usually described as *bad;* in five cases it is said to be *good.*"

"Water supply is generally said to be *good;* in six cases it is said to be *bad.*"

The summary for 58 descriptions for Berks stands thus :—

"The cottages are described as good in eight cases, as fair in 10 cases, as *mixed good and bad* in 10 cases, as "*bad* in 12 cases."

"Ventilation is described about equally often as *good* and *bad.*"

'Drainage is described in the majority of cases as *bad.*"

"Water supply is said to be *good* in 23 parishes, *fair* in six parishes, *bad* in 11 parishes."

"Outhouses are seldom mentioned; in four parishes, they are said to be insufficient and badly placed."

No instance is mentioned in either county of the owner compelling the occupier to deal with him.

Rents are highest in the small towns, such as Woodstock, Deddington, Witney, Wantage, and in the large open villages, which supply labour to surrounding close parishes; in these towns and open villages the cottages usually belong to speculators or small tenement holders, and rents vary from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week for a cottage without a garden, and in the small towns and open villages the worst specimens of cottages are to be found.

In all the close parishes, and in some of those which can hardly be called close, the cottage property lies with the landowners, and is generally of a very much better character than in the open parishes. In some of the close parishes which I visited, the cottages are all that could be desired in quality, but deficient in quantity.

Except in Burghfield and Finchampstead I saw no great number of squatters' cottages; in Burghfield I should think at least two-thirds of the working population live in cottages or huts of their own building; some of them miserable hovels (see Berks evidence 51a, where also it will be seen that an occupier of 500 acres told me he had offered his landlord 7 per cent. on the outlay if he would build him some cottages attached to his farm offices).

The landowners' cottages are, as a rule, in fair condition, and have usually a garden attached to the cottage, cottage and garden being let at a low or moderate rent, varying from 9*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Woodstock union.

77. In the parish evidence from Woodstock union (see Oxon evidence Nos. 1 to 25) I have given the number of cottages belonging to the landowners in each parish, and a few examples will serve to show not only how many cottages the landowners provide, but also how that provision affects the comfort of the labourers (the acreage stated as *let in farms* is taken from the union valuation list and includes land occupied by the owner, but is exclusive of woods, allotment ground, &c.).

Taking first, examples of close parishes. My note on Glympton, pop. 153, acreage 1,232, is,—

The chief landowner has 22 cottages for about 950 acres of farm land. Magdalen College, Oxford, has 70 acres, and the glebe 55 acres, without any cottage, and as there is no other cottage proprietor, there are therefore not cottages enough to supply the labour of the parish; those which there are are well cared for, as well as the persons living in them, by the chief landowner, who charges a small rent (30*s.* a year), and supplies allotment ground at the rate of 3*s.* a chain (30*s.* an acre), the usual allowance to a family being two chains.

On Kiddington, pop. 205, acreage 2,450, my note is,—

All the cottages, of which about 36 are inhabited by labourers, belong to the chief landowner, who has

about 1,500 acres let in farms. There are therefore not sufficient cottages to supply the labour of the parish. The rectory farm has no cottage. 11½ acres are let in allotments, and the cottages are well looked after by their owner.

On Rousham, pop. 131, acreage 920, my note is,—

There are 25 cottages for 920 acres, not sufficient to supply the labour of the parish. All the cottages are good and well cared for.

Taking now as many examples of open or quasi open parishes.

On Steeple Barton, pop. 850, acreage 2,832, my note is,—

In this parish there are about 150 cottages let at rents varying from 30*s.* to 80*s.* a year; many of them very bad. These cottages belong to about 40 different persons, many of them small tradesmen. The chief landed estate, having about 1,300 acres let in farms, appears to be represented by 10 cottages, and another estate of about 500 acres has apparently no cottages belonging to it. With the exception of one landowner, who for about 120 acres has seven cottages, and lets 11½ acres in allotments, and the 10 cottages named above, the landowners in this parish leave the necessary supply of cottages to private or speculative enterprise. In Steeple Barton there are 10 very poor cottages with one bedroom each, and one room down stairs. One of these cottages is inhabited by nine persons, two by eight persons each, and the remaining five by five persons each.

On Deddington, pop. 2,024, acreage 3,990, my note is,—

Deddington with its hamlets is an open parish into which labourers have been driven from surrounding close parishes; there are about 240 cottages belonging to about 50 owners, the three largest estates approaching 300 acres each not being represented by any cottages. Several of the cottages in Deddington proper are very bad; in Grove Lane, commonly called Hell Lane, are seven or eight houses with no back door, a sink in front of the cottages, and one watercloset for the lot; the whole place has a horrid stench. Rent of these cottages, 1*s.* 2*d.* a week; they belong to small tenement holders. The inspector of nuisances certainly does not do his duty.

On Wootton, pop. 1,238, acreage 3,720, my note is,—

This is a large open parish with many very poor cottages, both in the village of Wootton and in Old Woodstock. A very small proportion of the cottages belong to the landowners. The largest estate has seven cottages for 1,570 acres let in farms; the rector has 10 for about 750 acres; another proprietor has two for 540 acres; and another has 400 acres without a cottage. Balliol College has one cottage for 320 acres; the churchwardens have 15 cottages.

Dunstew is an unique example (as far as this union is concerned) of a close parish sufficiently supplied with cottages, the chief landowner having sufficient cottages not only for his own estate but for the church land, which for 180 acres has no cottage.

The unequal distribution of landowners' cottages is exemplified in Yarnton, where one landowner, owning half the parish, has 30 out of the 50 cottages, the other landowners having none.

Tackley also is a good example of this, in which one estate of 600 acres has 26 cottages, while another of the same acreage has no cottage; in the same parish an estate of 500 acres has 15 cottages, while another of 400 acres has none; Christ Church College also has 350 acres without a cottage.

The largest estate in Woodstock union has, as nearly as I could ascertain, 180 cottages for about 8,400 acres, and the next in size has 114 cottages for about 3,800 acres, the former having rather more than two, and the latter exactly three to 100 acres.

In the open villages, such as Deddington, Wotton, Woolvercott, and the two Bartons there are some miserable dwellings.

Of Cassington, which did not strike me as having any unusually bad cottages, the Rev. C. Reade says,—

"The cottages vary; some are tumbledown and little better than piggeries; landlords of such abominations ought to be fined."

The worst close parish in Woodstock union, as far as cottages are concerned, is Shipton, but as this parish has very recently changed hands the state of matters cannot be charged to the present landowner.

78. Of the parishes which I visited in Oxfordshire, other than those in Woodstock union, the cottages and their surroundings are best cared for in Stanton Harcourt, Kirtlington, Nuneham, Shirburn, and Swyncombe, all of them close parishes and lying under the eye of a resident landowner. Other parishes in Oxfordshire.

The worst specimen of landowners' cottages which I saw were in Marsh Baldon and Enstone.

I don't think I visited any open village in which there were not some very bad cottages, but upon the whole the open villages in Oxfordshire, and I may add Berks, do not present such unwholesome pictures (water excepted) as some of those which I can call to mind in Bedfordshire and Bucks.

79. The following list will give an idea of the proportion of cottages which are supplied by landowners in Wantage union:— Wantage Union proportion of landowners' cottages.

1.	An estate of	12,000	acres has	216	cottages, less than 2 to 100 acres.
2.	„	7,900	„	215	„ less than 3 to 100 acres.
3.	„	2,260	„	43	„ about 2 to 100 acres.
4.	„	1,700	„	41	„ about 2½ to 100 acres.
5.	„	1,450	„	22	„ about 1½ to 100 acres.
6.	„	660	„	No cottage.	
7.	„	630	„	10	cottages, about 1⅔ to 100 acres.
8.	„	570	„	2	„

I cannot give the cottages on College property which is held on beneficial leases, as they appear in the valuation list under the names of the leaseholders; on the college property which is let in the ordinary way the case stands thus:—

Queen's College - -	Oxford	has 1,000 acres	and 11 cottages.
Corpus Christi College	„	has 470 „	and 14 „
Worcester College -	„	has 270 „	and 9 „

J.

On all of these estates three cottages per 100 acres would, if fairly placed, be sufficient to supply the necessary labour; it will be seen that of the larger estates, No. 2 is the only one which closely approaches this proportion, making no deduction for cottages held by persons other than agricultural labourers; this deduction, however, is a very serious one under the village system, *i.e.*, where cottages are not attached to farms and held for the use of the labourers employed on them.

A landowner cannot, or at all events does not, turn a family out of a cottage because the agricultural working power of the cottage is lost to his estate, and so the cottages come to have only an accidental connexion with the farms of their landlord, and it by no means follows that, in a district where three cottages would, if inhabited by able-bodied farm labourers and their families, be sufficient for the supply of labour, an estate which, like No. 2, can show a proportion of 3 to 100 acres, is able to house all its labourers.

Judging from the evidence, I have obtained on the subject, where labourers' cottages are built in villages and are held directly from the landlord, about one-fourth may be deducted in computing the proportion available for the cultivation of the land, allowing one adult male labourer for each cottage.

What I have said above of the proportion of cottages belonging to the landowners in Woodstock and Wantage unions may, I think, be taken as a fair sample of the two counties, and shows how far the landowners are from fulfilling the condition of providing cottage accommodation sufficient for the labour required on their estates, making no such deduction as, I think, should be made where the cottages are not attached to the farms, as is the case in these counties.*

Other cottage evidence from Berks.

80. Of the parishes *which I visited* in Berks the cottages are good and provided with all necessary conveniences in Ardington, West Challow, Farnborough, Lockinge, Buckland, Coleshill, Pusey, Englefield, Sulhampstead, Shaw, and Bearwood.

In all of them the cottages belong to the landowners, and except in West Challow and Farnborough, are immediately under the eye of the owner. Farnborough is not far from the residence of the owner and belongs to an estate which is better supplied with cottages than any other in the union of Wantage. West Challow presents a case where an absent landowner attends to the home comfort of his labouring tenant. In this village the cottages are old, but roomy and comfortable, and are particulary well kept by the inhabitants, showing a very marked contrast, both inside and out, to the cottages in the neighbouring open village of East Challow, though the same active pastoral care is constantly at work in both parishes.

Again, of the parishes I visited in Berks, I saw the largest proportion of bad cottages in East Challow, Childrey, Hanney, East and West Hendred, Sparsholt, Charlton and Grove hamlets of Wantage, Steventon, and Burghfield. As in Oxfordshire, however, I never visited any open or quasi open parish without seeing a certain number of very poor dwellings.

Except in not providing cottages sufficient for the labour of their estates, the landowners are not responsible for the state of the cottages in any of these parishes, except in East Hendred and Sparsholt. In East Hendred, while the chief landowner has (I think) upwards of 40 cottages with which I have no fault to find, another landowner possesses, besides better cottages, eight of the worst specimens in the village; eight cottages, in fact, quite unfit to be inhabited. On the whole, there are 35 cottages (see Berks evidence 17c) in East Hendred which have but one bedroom; in one of these there are 10 occupants, in three others there are nine, in three others there are eight; 20 of these 35 one-bedroomed cottages are in very bad condition and still find tenants at 52*s.* a year. In this village where "local congestion" developes itself there were 26 men out of work when I visited the parish.

In Sparsholt several of the worst cottages I visited belong to a non-resident landlord.

In Berks evidence 46 will be found a description of 11 thatched cottages standing by the side of the brook near the railway station at Steventon, anything more unfit inside or out for human habitation it would be difficult to conceive. This (Steventon) is one of the few remaining unenclosed parishes (the Dean and Chapter of Westminster are lords of the manor, and the property is now, I believe, in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners), and is an example of the effect of beneficial leases and limited interest in land; like several villages lying below the northern slope of the down it is badly supplied with spring water, and very much too well supplied with dirty ditch water; in fact, as I say in my notes, if there is not always typhoid fever in the village it is not from want of a standing invitation.

Grove, near Wantage, is another example of an absence of wells, where the cottages have no other water than the brook which has just received the sewage of Wantage.

The squatters' cottages or huts in Burghfield are described in Berks evidence 51*a*. The best are but poor dwellings, and the worst are wonderful to look upon as representing human homes, and yet the squatter would rather live in his narrow hovel with a living room at one end and tiny bedroom at the other, paying a quit rent of 4*s.* 6*d.* or 8*s.* 6*d.* a year, according as he has 20 or 80 poles of very poor land, than pay 50*s.* a year for a decent cottage and 20 poles of garden, giving as far as he can a proof of the fallacy of the assertion so often made that cottage rents and therefore good cottages are only a question of wages.

Good cottages not altogether a question of wages or rent.

81. It is said, for instance, that when a labourer has only 12*s.* a week and cannot afford to pay more than 1*s.* a week rent, he would be as well off in every other respect and be able to pay 3*s.* a week rent and so command a three bed-roomed cottage, if his wage was raised to 14*s.* a week, and so far what is said is true, but would he do it? Would he be content to be only as well off as he was before? Does he do it now in the exceptional cases where labourers receive 18*s.* a week? I would go much further than this and say, that if you could raise the farm labourer's wage to 20*s.* a week, you will still find him living in a cheap house with six children in one bedroom, rather than pay such a rent as would induce a speculator to build a really good three bed-roomed cottage of any ordinary material.

The ordinary cost of a stone or brick cottage containing three moderate sized bedrooms with suitable offices is about 140*l.* When will a labourer deem that his wages are high enough to allow him to pay such a rent as would induce a speculator to build cottages at such a cost?

* In his address to tenant farmers and occupiers (see Berks evidence 89), Mr. H. R. Eyre says:—"In a return which I have of the "number of cottages in the Newbury union, it appears that of 2,155 cottages in the rural districts, 622 only are the property of the "landowners; and as many of these 622 are occupied by gamekeepers, gardeners, and other servants of the landowners, the proportion "of those occupied by the agricultural labourers is proportionately reduced."

J.

There is, however, a fashion in cottage rents as in many other things, and the labourer has in most districts been educated to think that he may fairly be expected to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* or as in some places 2*s.* a week for the rent of his cottage, and if any plan can be matured for building good cottages for which such a rent would be a fair interest on outlay a great advance will have been made to meet the crying evil of overcrowded cottages.

It is the difficulty of such a solution that has induced me to endeavour to point out that the rent of the cottages is not the only interest which a landowner receives from housing his labourers well, and that good cottages conveniently placed for the use of his farms are as necessary as good farm offices of any other kind, and pay fully as well.

This view of the case, as you are aware from Mr. Henley's report, has been practically accepted in the north of England, where a sufficient number of cottages for the ordinary staff of the farm are always attached to the farm offices and let with the farms, and as you have also seen by Mr. Henley's report the custom exhibits no signs of that oppression on the part of the masters to which it is supposed to give rise.

I gave you some instances of landowners in Beds and Bucks who are now attaching a certain number of cottages to their farms, and I find that the custom is spreading in both Oxfordshire and Berks, and that the farmers are quite alive to its advantages, having offered in several cases to pay 5 per cent. interest on the necessary outlay.

Comparatively few farmers, however, are aware to what an extent their labour could be economised, with no loss to the labourer, and their system of employment improved by having the whole ordinary staff of the farm near their premises, and their demand is generally limited to sufficient cottages for the men whom they now put in charge of live stock;* but if they are ever to dismiss their ploughboys, and adopt plough-reins attached to a better class of horses, they should adopt also the Scotch hours so strongly recommended to them by Mr. Read in his prize essay, and the Scotch custom of giving each ploughman charge of the pair of horses he works with, neither of which can with any comfort be done till all the ploughmen are housed on or near the premises.†

82. To persuade landowners that no harm will arise to the labourers from adopting the system, and farmers that it is well worth their while to aid their landlords by paying a fair interest on habitable cottages attached to their farms, is unhappily not enough to ensure a provision of good cottages for agricultural labourers, and there constantly arises to me, and I doubt not to my colleagues, the feeling that in speaking of the state of cottages I am exhibiting a dark picture, as if it was the fault of a class many of whom are powerless to change it, and few of whom are answerable for it.

How far landowners are answerable for the manner in which labourers are generally housed.

We are calling upon the landowners of to-day to remedy the evil growth of many past generations and nine-tenths of those who reside in the four counties which I have visited under your orders are already busy at the work as far as their means will allow.

I could point out to you two very large estates in the counties which I have visited, upon the general improvement of which, cottages having a large share, the whole income has been spent for many years past, and will probably, if the present owners live, be spent for many years to come. What can a landowner do more? How many landowners are in a position to do as much? And above all what must have been the condition of these estates to demand such a sacrifice from the present owners?

What then has led to the state of labourers' dwellings being such as to justify men in speaking of it as a national disgrace? And why are so many landowners now powerless to deal with it?

If I was to answer these questions, judging from the history of the estates I know, I would answer at once, the encouragement given by law to the creation of limited interests in land and the power of entailing burdened estates.‡

What can the poor life-renter, especially if his estate be burdened, do towards providing good cottages for his labourers? Nine times out of ten he strives to do his duty and suffers fully as much as the ill-housed labourers on his estate.

The unhappy propensity to create limited interest and entail burdened estates tells hardest against the smaller properties, where, if the owner lives as all the world expects him to live, there is no margin

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* Mr. W. Chamberlin, owner and occupier, Adderbury, says:—"I let six cottages with one farm; three of them attached to the farm. "A farm of 500 or 600 acres ought to have five or six cottages attached to it."

Mr. Thos. Taylor, occupier, Shipton, says:—"The majority of labourers live in the village, about a mile from my premises, but this "was such a constant source of annoyance and inconvenience that I have erected three large cottages (for carters and shepherd) near the "farm buildings at a cost of over 500*l.*"

[Mr. Taylor holds his farm on a lease for 20 years. One of the cottages is a sort of lodging house for unmarried carters, looked after by the head carter's wife, who lives in adjoining cottage.—G. C.]

† Mr. John Hedley, bailiff to Mr. Wroughton, of Woolley park, near Wantage, says:—"A ploughman cannot take charge of his two "horses unless he lives on the farm premises. Farmers here are obliged to hand over seven or eight horses to one man's care as soon as "work is over."

The following is extracted from a letter from Mr. James Sanderson, land surveyor and valuer:—"Apart from the important questions "of education, cottage accommodation, and wages, it must be admitted that the great distance between the cottage of a labourer "and his work, and the prevailing mode of contract, especially in the southern counties of England, between farmers and employed "married servants, adversely influence the moral and social condition of the labourer. . . . . .

"In the majority of the Scottish counties, as well as in the northern counties of England, there are attached to each farm, and placed "near the homestead, cottages sufficient to accommodate as many labourers as the ordinary cultivation of the farm requires. The term "of engagement is yearly. The wages average about 40*l.*, nearly the half of which is paid in money, and the remainder in bread food, "potatoes, and either one cow's milk or the food of a cow. This system gives the farmer full command of labour, allows him to effect "necessary operations at the proper time, obviates the difficulty of obtaining and the expense of paying extraneous labourers, and when-"ever he requires it, irrespective of working hours, gives him the assistance of his labourers. On the part of the servant, it secures "constant employment, full and regular wages, notwithstanding sickness, and prevents the exhausting of physical energies by unneces-"sary and unrequited labour. This system, too, induces frugal habits, creates in the servant an interest in the employer's work, and "tends to elevate the position of both by making one scrupulous as to the character of the other.

"The labourers in the north are generally sober and industrious, regularly attend church in respectable clothing, educate their "children in reading, writing, and the simple rules of arithmetic, rarely contract debts, and if one of them dies a pauper the case is "exceptional.

"This furnishes a striking contrast to the condition of the rural labourer in the south-western counties of England. Yet I am con-"vinced that were the same system adopted in the south as in the north, the disparity would soon disappear.

"As the erecting of cottages would involve considerable expenditure, the change I have indicated could not be prudently carried "out at once; however, if farm cottages were erected as the village cottages decay, the system adopted in the north would be gradually "introduced.

"Wherever it is introduced, I believe that it will conduce to the mutual advantage of employer and employed, and diminish the "poor-rate, which, as now levied in several districts, threatens to restrain the mainsprings of industry, and foster the evils it seeks to "cure."

The power, for instance, of charging estates in favour of persons who own no responsibility for the condition of those residing on them, and by such charges depriving the nominal owner not only of the means of doing his duty, but of the feeling of responsibility also.

J. left for estate improvement, especially cottage improvement; even on a large estate, by the time all is done for which farm tenants most loudly call, unless the burdens be light, or the owner unusually self-denying, there is very little left to expend in the expensive luxury of cottage building.

The case of the small estates, however, is the worst, and in spite of the supposed protection of the law of entail, they are being swallowed up by their larger neighbours, or are passing into the hands of men whose whole means are not invested in land. Would it not be better that they should be allowed so to pass before they have inflicted undeserved suffering on everybody connected with them?

Corporate landowners.

83. If, however, the labourers on the estate of an ordinary life-renter are, as far as their cottages are concerned, in a bad way, the labourers on the estates of collegiate and ecclesiastical bodies, and all corporate bodies, whose members manage and divide the income of the estate, are in a much worse; the life-renter has a conscience, but the corporate landowner has none, and the system of beneficial leases, to which some of them still cling, is simply an abomination.*

Power of borrowing money under sanction of Inclosure Commissioners for cottage improvement in virtue of Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., very little used.

84. It may be said that by the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. authorizing the Inclosure Commissioners to advance public money for the improvement of land, including the erection of labourers' cottages, and to sanction such loans from public companies, the legislature has acknowledged the evils arising from the settlemeut of estates, and has already provided means, as far as it prudently can, by which a life-tenant can execute all desirable improvements on his estate without altogether sacrificing his own interest or that of his successor.

With regard to general estate improvement, especially drainage, which was the motive power for this legislative action, I think this provision, as far as the action of the legislature is concerned, is sufficient, and that 25 years, the usual time allowed for the repayment of such loans, is not too narrow a limit. The rapidity with which the first Government loan was consumed and the large sums now yearly advanced by public companies under sanction of the Inclosure Commissioners is enough to prove this, as well as to prove how great an impetus this legislative action has given to the productive power of the country.

With regard to cottage improvement the case is altogether different, the rent of a cottage (even adding an estimated pecuniary value for the indirect advantages arising from good cottages, which as you say in your first Report "are not appreciable by all persons,") is so far below the rent-charge necessary to repay in 25 years the loan contracted for its erection, that few life-tenants can be expected to take advantage of the Act to which I am referring.

It would appear from paragraph 330 of your First Report, that between the years 1863 and 1866, the total sum sanctioned by the Inclosure Commissioners for the building of agricultural labourers' cottages was (in round numbers) 73,000*l.*; it would be interesting to compare this sum with the amount sanctioned by them during the same years for other estate improvements.

In your circulars of inquiry, referring to the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., you say, "*Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities or any reduction of cost that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?* I have received very little evidence in answer to this question, except a general opinion that it won't pay to build cottages with money obtained at such a cost, as, for instance, that given by Mr. E. Moore, a landagent of great experience in Berks, who says (see Berks, Appendix A.):—

"Government should take measures and render the cost more reasonable."

Only one witness, of the many whom I have consulted, has ever answered that the powers given by the Act are sufficient to enable landowners to meet the cottage difficulty; this gentleman, an occupier of land in Oxfordshire, says, in answer to your question:—

"No; my landlord has erected cottages under the Inclosure Commissioners, and has found no difficulty." (See Oxon, Appendix A.)

This witness, however, being himself a director of one of the companies who advance money under sanction of the Inclosure Commissioners, would at once acknowledge that landowners in general do not take the same view of the subject, and I think this answer only proves that the landlord of the witness who makes it is liberal-spirited and courageous above his fellows.

Showing why the powers of the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. are not used, and suggestions for meeting the difficulty;

85. If then the power of charging settled estates with loans contracted for the improvment and building of cottages is to be of any practical use in meeting the cottage difficulty, I cannot help echoing Mr. Moore's words that "Government should take measures to render the cost more reasonable." To what extent this may be done, either by extending the time and leaving the money to be found as now by public companies, or by a State loan and extension of time combined, will, I think, be seen from the following calculation which shows the difference of the yearly charge which would be incurred for a loan of, say, 1,500*l.* for building 10 cottages under the rules of the Inclosure Commissioners when advanced by the Government at a charge of 3½ per cent., and when advanced by a public company (taking the Lands Improvement Company as an example) at 4½ per cent., adding in each case the yearly instalment necessary to repay the principal sum in the specified number of years.

The gross sum upon which the rent-charge would be calculated in the case of an advance by Government would be:—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cost of cottages	1,500	0	0	1,533	15	0
Inclosure Commissioners' charges 2¼ per cent.	33	15	0			

The gross sum upon which the rent-charge would be calculated in the case of the public company would be—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cost of cottages	1,500	0	0	1,608	15	0
Inclosure Commissioners' charges 2¼ per cent.	33	15	0			
Company's charge of 5 per cent.	75	0	0			

Mr. Clare Sewell Read, M.P., in his essay on the farming of Oxfordshire, says:—"It is computed that nearly one-sixth of the "income of the land of this county (Oxford), *i.e.*, rent and tithes, belongs to the Oxford colleges and other religious bodies. Speaking "generally, the property of the university is badly managed. The master and fellows of a college have no permanent interest in the "estate, and it is not often that the bursar is a man of business habits or conversant with the management of land." (It would be interesting to obtain a return from the college estates in Oxfordshire and Berks, showing the number and conditoin of the cottages belonging to the estates.—G. C.)

The difference in the amount of rent-charge for a loan repayable in 25 years (the longest term for which the Lands Improvement Company can advance money), 30, 35, and 40 years will be as follows:— J.

Number of Years over which the Loan extends.	Government Loan, 1,533*l.* 15*s.*		Company's Loan, 1,608*l.* 15*s.*	
	Rent-charge.	Rate per cent. on 1,500*l.* expended in building.	Rent-charge.	Rate per cent. on 1,500*l.* expended in buildings.
	£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*
25 years - - -	92 11 2	6 3 5	108 9 0	7 4 7
30 years - - -	82 19 8	5 10 7¾	98 5 0	6 11 0
35 years - - -	76 7 0	5 1 10	91 14 4	6 2 3
40 years - - -	71 10 8	4 15 4	87 1 6	5 16 1

A landowner, therefore, who borrows under the present system reduces his income at the rate of 7*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* for every 100*l.* expended in cottage building, and under the present rules of the Inclosure Commissioners (which make cottages cost 140*l.* each), his income suffers to the extent of 10*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.* less the rent of the cottage, say 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, or 3*l.* 18*s.* per annum, *i.e.*, he is an absolute loser, as far as his own income is concerned, for 25 years of 6*l.* 4*s.* 5*d.* per annum for every cottage he builds with money so borrowed. If, however, the time of the charge was extended to 40 years his loss per cottage would be reduced to 4*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* per annum, and if at the same time the money for this purpose was advanced by the State at 3½ per cent. instead of 4½, as by the public companies, and the companies charge of 5 per cent. on the amount of the loan saved, his loss per cottage would be reduced to 2*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* per annum, and for all cottages upon which the farm tenant was willing to pay 5 per cent. interest his loss would be absolutely nothing, and there would remain no excuse not to house properly at least a portion of the labourers on his estate. by extending duration of rent-charge;

I do not here, as it were, advocate a State loan for the purpose of helping needy proprietors, but to do something towards meeting a terrible evil, as far as it is the result of the present state of the law.

Should it be held that the difference of the rent-charge under a State loan and one from a public company is not such as to justify or make advisable a Government loan, it will be desirable to ascertain how far the extension of the duration of the rent-charge to such a term as 40 years (the greatest extension which would practically reduce the annual charge) would interfere with the ability of loan companies to find the money which they now do through the aid of Insurance Offices; and failing their power to advance money to be repaid by instalments extended over so many years, is not the state of things such as to make it desirable to put a life-tenant for the purpose of borrowing money for cottage building in the same position as an owner in fee? Under proper inspection there need be no fear of overbuilding. The Inclosure Commissioners' inspectors would have no difficulty in drawing a safe limit for the proportion of labourers' cottages which any settled estate might with advantage possess. by allowing life-tenant to borrow as owner in fee for cottage building.

86. Suggestions for the improvement of cottages and proper inspection of their sanitary condition will be found in Oxfordshire evidence 93b and in Berks evidence 25, 27, 80, 86, 87, 88, and 89, as given by Sir Henry Dashwood, the Rev. R. Hooper, the Rev. W. J. Butler, T. L. Goodlake, Esq., chairman of Faringdon union, H. Tucker, Esq., high sheriff of Berks, H. R. Eyre, Esq., chairman of Newbury union, and Mr. W. Menzies, deputy-surveyor of Windsor Forest.* Suggestions for inspection of cottages by various witnesses.

It will be seen also from other parts of the evidence on the state of cottages, that the usual action taken by boards of guardians under the Act 23 & 24 Vict. c. 77., which constitues them the "local authority" for carrying out the provisions of the "Nuisances Removal Act," 18 & 19 Vict. c. 121. is by no means satisfactory. For the sake of economy the relieving officers are in almost every case appointed inspectors of nuisances, and the result is that unless there is unusual activity on the part of the board, as in the Faringdon union, the duty is almost entirely neglected. The fault, however, does not altogether lie with boards of guardians, the provisions of the "Nuisances Removal Act" are only sufficient as against ordinary nuisances, and as the guardians have no means of enforcing their powers,

* The Rev. H. T. Young, Stoken Church, Oxon, says:—"I would remark that the cottage accommodation for the labouring poor is, generally speaking, so bad that it cannot be sufficiently condemned. Horses and cattle are often provided with a more substantial dwelling than the labouring poor. I am well aware of the stereotyped answer made to every remark about cottages, viz., that it does not pay to build them, nor does it pay to build farm buildings, but a landlord could not let his farm without them, they being, so to speak, the fixture and furniture of the farm; he is obliged to build them, and I think there ought to be cottage accommodation on every farm sufficient for the labourers employed on it, just as there is sufficient stable room, &c. &c. for the requisite number of horses, &c. &c. I do not think that the moral and physical condition of the labourer can be raised and improved until proper dwellings are provided for him; the overcrowded state of many of the present cottages is injurious to health and the constitution, and the intermixture of sexes which it causes prevents the nurture of the proper feelings of decency, and where these are wanting, chastity will be wanting too. I am satisfied from observations which I have made during a period of 35 years passed in the ministry of the church, that before our teaching and preaching can have the effect we look for we must house the labourers in a better manner." Rev. H. T. Young.

Sir Henry Dashwood, of Kirtlington, Oxon, says:—"To no class of labourer is health more essential than the agricultural; it is impossible that he should be equal to his work unless he is well paid and properly lodged." Sir H. Dashwood.

Lord Camoys, chairman of Henley union, speaking for the union, says:—"Cottage accommodation is good in my neighbourhood, but there are over the face of the union cottages much too inferior for the comfort, health, and morality of the inmates. Cottages are everywhere too few, hence crowding and long distance from work. The rents of some of these poor cottages are too high, but the scarcity of them has a tendency to keep up their rents." Lord Camoys.

The Rev. R. Hooper, Upton, Berks, says:—"An inspector of cottages and dwellings of agricultural labourers would probably be one of the most efficacious means of remedying much of the social evils now prevalent. Compulsery powers of repairing, draining, &c. ought to be given. Many of our Berkshire villages contain cottages utterly unfit for human dwellings." Rev. R. Hooper.

Rev. W. J. Butler, says:—"The cottages in Wantage are generally owned by small proprietors, who are utterly reckless of the health and morals of their tenants. Wretched hovels destroy decency, self-respect, and love of home. Nothing is more necessary than that some measures should be taken to prevent small capitalists from running up utterly unfit dwellings and reaping a large per-centage at the expense of health, life, and morality. I could mention frightful results of the present system of dwelling houses." Rev. W. J. Butler.

Mr T. L. Goodlake, chairman of Faringdon union, says:—"In Buckland, Coleshill, Shrivenham, and Bourton, the cottages are exceedingly good; in the remaining 27 parishes of this union they vary from indifferent to very bad; many are mere hovels. In the larger parishes there are many small proprietors whose speculations in cottages cause great evils; in comparison with others, they are very highly rented. The habit of taking the rent weekly operates hardly against the tenant, indeed a moiety of our paupers' out-relief goes at once into the pockets of these needy owners. Overcrowding is very common. I fear school and church are utterly powerless Mr. T. L. Goodlake.

J. except by laying a complaint before the justices whose authority only extends to small matters, there is practically no means of dealing with dwellings unfit for habitation, or with the want of proper offices.

It would no doubt be a great improvement that the inspector of nuisances should be in a more independent position than the ordinary relieving officer, but the powers of the local authority are so limited that it can hardly be surprising that cottage reformers should ask for some more direct means of insuring an attention to ordinary sanitary rules.

Difficulty where bad cottages already exist not belonging to the landowner.

87. In a letter addressed to me, after reading my report on Beds and Bucks, Mr. Thos. Bennett, late agent to the Duke of Bedford, says that he thinks I overlook the difficulty which landowners have in dealings with cottages in open parishes where there are already sufficient, though poor, cottages to supply the necessary labour, adding—

"That the landowner if he erected all his land requires, has no power of pulling down or of restraining others in building; hence the fostering of over populated districts, by inducing young persons to stay in their native place instead of looking for work in the more thinly populated districts, consequently when the least slackness of labour (as in this exceptional year) sets in, there is an immediate outcry of over population."

A reference to my report will show that in paragraph 16 I say:—

"Where large open villages, in which the cottages belong either to persons who have built on speculation, or are the property of the occupiers themselves, now exist, yielding a supply of labour greater than the agricultural demand of the surrounding estates, the costs of buying, pulling down (to build without pulling down being only to increase the evil) and rebuilding is beyond the means of most landowners."

I ought perhaps to have added:—

"And constitute a great difficulty, entailed upon him by the policy or necessity of former owners, to even the wealthiest of landowners."

Certain stringent sanitary rules might meet this difficulty as far as speculators' cottages are concerned, but there would remain the difficulty of copyhold, keyhold, or squatters' cottages either freehold or held on titles which the landowner would have great difficulty in disturbing.

Mr. Benyon, M.P., for Berks, who has built 64 labourers' cottages during the last 12 years, besides bringing many other costly humanizing influences to bear on the labouring classes of Bradfield union, has partially met this difficulty by giving the owner of the wayside hovel a good cottage and garden either rent free or at the old quit-rent for the life of the present owner, on condition of a surrender of the old holding; not every squatter, however, will accept the terms, few indeed, except the younger men, who thus entail a loss for many years on Mr. Benyon, though an ultimate benefit to his estate.

"in the presence of the complete disregard of decency to which the poor are exposed; indeed the practice of modesty in the case of "females is scarcely practicable. Where a third sleeping room is provided it is usually let, if the poor are left to themselves. This is "prevented in the case of villages belonging to single owners. In the four parishes I have named there is nothing to be desired in the "way of water or ventilation; the remaining parishes vary in supply of water, and as to ventilation from indifferent to very bad. "I should like to add that, in my opinion, the provisions of the Common Lodging Houses Act might advantageously be applied to the "best interests of the poor by compelling all houses under 6*l.* a year rental to come within its ambit. The erection of proper cottages "is simply a luxury in which the more wealthy alone can indulge, the capital sunk in their erection being completely unremunerative. "Far otherwise is the case of cottages in the small towns; the poor flock to them, as the necessaries of life are cheaper than in the "villages; this enables them to pay double the rent, and as the houses are run up with the sole object of a quick return of the capital "invested, everything that can conduce to the comfort and health of the inmates is simply ignored. Marked have been the benefits of "the Nuisances Removal Acts, which the guardians of this union, encouraged by the magistrates, have carried out to the utmost of "their power. The ever presence of fever I attribute chiefly to the filthy habits of the poor themselves; their disregard and dislike of "cleanliness is inconceivable."

Mr. J. S. Bowles. Mr. J. S. Bowles. chairman of Abingdon union, speaking for the union, says:—"The cottages are neither better nor worse than those "of other rural districts in England; they are overcrowded, ill ventilated, with an uncertain supply of water."

Mr. G. C. Cherry. Mr. G. C. Cherry, chairman of Newbury union, says:—"The condition of many cottages in most parishes of this union is bad. Im- "provements in this respect are taking place. Many are overcrowded, whence must arise evil results to morality, although I cannot "quote instances wherein such results have been traceable to this cause alone."

Mr. H. Tucker. Mr. H. Tucker, high sheriff of Berks, says:—"In 1859 I obtained at my own cost a return of all the cottages in the Faringdon union, "showing the number of rooms in each, and the number, ages, and sexes of their inhabitants. From these returns I sent a digest to "'The Times,' which was published and produced a great sensation at the time.

"I urged several members of Parliament to bring the matter before the House of Commons, with a view to obtain a similar return "for the whole of England, believing, as I still do, that there is no other way of getting at the real state of misery and degradation in "which a large proportion of our agricultural labourers and artizans are housed, and this opinion is confirmed by all that has been done "by Government and is still being done to obtain information upon this subject. The means adopted can never secure the desired end."

Mr. W. Menzies. Mr. W. Menzies, deputy-surveyor of Windsor Forest, says:—"It is quite evident to every one that much of the unhealthiness and "immorality, both in cottages and villages, arises from the bad condition of the dwelling-houses of the labouring classes, and as the "effects of these evils fall upon the community generally, the Legislature is entitled to deal with the matter. . . . . .

"As the law stands at present, it is the duty of no one specifically to interfere with these matters and say where they are wrong; but "however difficult and formidable a work it is, every one who sees the effects is, I believe, convinced that some change for the better "must be attempted."

Mr. H. R. Eyre. Mr. H. R. Eyre, chairman of the Newbury union, in his address to landowners, entitled, "A Voice from Berks," says, ... "Some general and extensive plan of housing the labouring poor must be devised, and the private rights of landowners must not be an "obstruction to it—some plan which shall not depend upon the indulgence or the accidental benevolence and liberality of individuals "—some plan which shall recognize the personal liability of proprietors of all classes for the state and condition of their house "property.

". . . . . Let us urge upon the Government and our Legislature to take parliamentary action in the business and duty of housing the "people, that the resistance of ignorance, indifference, and self-interest may be overcome, and that the partial efforts which have already "produced an instalment of what is due to the requirements of the people, may be aided and supplemented by a general movement in "the same direction."

In his "Address to Tenant Farmers and Occupiers of Land in Berks," the same gentleman says, ... "Some say indeed, that this "matter (supply of proper cottage accommodation) is better left to the operation of the principles of political economy. I am "surprised at the suggestion, and more surprised at the source of it, because it not only seems to ignore all moral and social duty in the "matter, but it seems to ignore a fact which a little thought and a little inquiry would disclose: that the system of land tenure in this "country, and the difficulties connected with the transfer of land, render the principles of political economy practically inoperative. "If it were not so, we should not now be deploring the want of cottages; we should not have to complain that the supply does not keep "pace with the demand. . . . . .

"What, I would ask, has made the present but the past, and what is to make the future but the present? If we would not hand down "to posterity an evil which we deplore ourselves; if we would not perpetuate a system which helps to corrupt and demoralize our "people; if we would not forfeit the blessings we enjoy, we must at once put our hands to a work which will be twice blessed, blessed "to him who engages in it, and to him who has the benefit of it.

"I am very well aware that there are landowners in Berkshire who have been long engaged in remedying the evil which is complained "of, but the problem to be solved is not who is building and who is not building cottages, but how far the work ought to be optional "and discretionary, whether any safeguard should be established against a public evil, partly arising from the right of ownership, "and what security the tenant farmer and the people should have that the agricultural labourers should be well and sufficiently "housed.

". . . . . I propose, then, that we petition Parliament to promote by further public measures the necessary work of providing "additional habitations and homes for the people, and to find a national remedy for a national grievance."

J. Allotment.

88. It will be seen from the parish evidence (Appendix B. for each county) that small allotments or gardens are provided by a great majority of landowners, not only for the tenants of their own cottages, but for a large proportion of the poor who rent cottages from persons who are unable to make such a provision; for instance, in Steeple Aston (Oxon evidence 2b) the chief landowner who has only 15 cottages lets 22 acres in allotments, while another landowner provides 17 acres; in Steeple Barton (Oxon evidence 3) a proprietor of seven cottages provides 11½ acres of allotment ground; in Combe (Oxon evidence 9) the chief landowner provides allotments for twice as many labourers as he provides cottages for; in Stonesfield (Oxon evidence 20a), where only 10 cottages belong to the landowners, 31 acres of allotment ground are provided for 137 tenants; in Wootton a large landowner having seven cottages provides 40 acres of allotment ground let to about 160 tenants.

There are, however, parishes in both counties where the poor are but ill-supplied with either gardens or allotment ground, or can only obtain such accommodation at a very high rent; for instance, see evidence of Jas. Ward, labourer, of Wardington in Banbury union, where he says:

"I have a bit of potato land belonging to Col. North, about 20 poles; I don't know what I should have done without it. The land is 3½ miles from my house; I can't get any land near. I have had to pay 20*s.* a chain for potato ground, and I pay 2*s.* to Col. North. Lots of people would pay 20*s.* a chain, one of our farmers lets lands at that rate."

In East Challow, Wantage union, sufficient provision of allotment ground not being made by the landowners, the Rev. G. Purdue rents six acres of land which he divides into allotments of from 10 to 20 poles, letting them to the poor at the rent he pays, adding rates and taxes. Of the provision at Hanney, Mr. W. Athawes, occupier, says,—

"There is an allotment of good working land about a quarter of a mile distant from the village let to the poor at a high rent by a near resident country gentlemen; the matters want revision; some, having no need, farm these allotments; others, real paupers, can't get a rood."

My note on Stanford-in-the-Vale on this subject is (see Berks evidence 40), as follows:—"There is "some land in this parish belonging to the poor of the parish of Shrivenham and let by the "trustees to the rector of the adjoining parish of Shellingford. Some part of this land is let in "allotments of 20 poles to the poor of Stanford at the rate of 4*l.* an acre (several labourers in "Stanford have not got any allotment ground)." What Mr. Purdue does for East Challow the Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck does for Long Wittenham, letting five acres near the village in allotments of a chain (16 poles) each.

A garden attached to the cottage is of course better than an allotment even at a very moderate distance from it, and very few landowners' cottages are now built without such a provision, which is easily made where cottages are not built in crowded villages. Many old cottages also belonging to landowners are well provided with garden ground; for instance, on the fine estate of Mr. Wroughton in Wantage union (see Berks evidence 7a) every cottage (upwards of 200) has a garden attached to it.

It will be seen from the evidence that the size of allotments let by landowners seldom exceeds 40 poles, and varies from 40 to 16 poles, *i.e.*, from one-fourth to one-tenth of an acre. Of the allotments on the Duke of Marlborough's estates in Oxfordshire, Mr. Jas. Napier says,—

"There are 914 allotments on the Duke's estate in this county; a few of them are 20 poles, but the greater portion are 40 poles each."

Judging from Dunstew, one-eighth of an acre appears to be the usual size of allotment or garden on Sir Henry Dashwood's estates. At Glympton, Mr. Barnett gives each family one-fifth of an acre at a very low rent. On the question of size Mr. E. L. Franklin, landagent, a very high authority on such matters, says (see Oxon evidence 49):—

"I find 20 poles to be quite sufficient and as much as a labourer can well manage with a garden."

Mr. Simmonds, bailiff to Mr. Walter, of Bearwood, says,—

"I asked four of our men this morning what size of garden or allotment they would like; they all said that 25 poles, the quantity which Mr. Walter allows, is sufficient."

Allotment awards.

89. Berks evidence 3b and 23e give examples of allotment awards made by the Inclosure Commissioners in lieu of the right of cutting furze and bushes formerly possessed by the poor of the parishes concerned. It will be seen that the quantity of land obtained by each of the 43 families in East Lockinge which receive an allotment under the award for that parish is about 12 poles, the rent paid by them, less expenses, being divided equally amongst all the poor householders of the parish. I have very little doubt that the award gave the poor a full *pecuniary* equivalent for the loss of the now almost worthless right of cutting furze; as to whether the conversion of such rights into allotments of the size named is the most desirable use that can be made of common rights is another question which I would be inclined to answer in the affirmative, granted that the number of the allotments is not such as to induce a larger number of persons to remain in the parish than it can find continuous employment for.

90. In Oxon evidence 32 you will find the history, as nearly as I could obtain it, of the past and present of the O'Connor allotments in Minster Lovell parish in Oxfordshire.

The O'Connor allotments in Oxfordshire.

In the year 1847 (about the same time that he purchased some other estates for the same purpose) Mr. Fergus O'Connor purchased an estate of about 300 acres in Minster Lovell parish on behalf of the shareholders of his land company. This estate he divided into 85 allotments of from two to four acres each (36 of them being four acres) and built a cottage on each allotment, distributing the plots of ground with their cottages amongst those of the shareholders of the land company who had paid up the full amount of a share in the order in which they stood upon his list. When a shareholder obtained possession of his little farm he received from the funds of the company "head money," at the rate of 7*l.* 10*s.* an acre, and was charged with his share of the interest of a mortgage debt of 5,000*l.* To use the language of Mr. Freer who now owns about one-third of the estate, "as "long as the head money lasted all went well," but in a few years many of the allottees, who were chiefly artizans from large towns left their allotments, and the interest of the debt not being paid the

J. mortgagees offered the estate and newly built cottages for sale; the mortgagees were, however, unable to effect a sale, and the state of affairs having been brought before the House of Commons, the estate was handed over to the Court of Chancery, which on the 6th of October 1851 appointed an official manager to wind up the affairs of the land company. The result of the winding up was that a considerable number of the allotments were sold and the possession of the remainder was confirmed to the allottees on payment of a rent-charge, which in the case of a four-acre allotment amounted to 9*l.* 10*s.*, a tolerably fair farm rent (allowing 3*l.* for the cottage), though such an allotment, subject to the rent-charge, can now (see Oxon evidence 32d) be sold for upwards of 100*l.*

When I visited the Charterville in October last I found only two of the original allottees in possession of their cottages and ground, and one of these was not strictly in possession, as his allotment had just been sold. This man's evidence (see Oxon evidence 32d) was as follows:—

"Those that paid up a whole share got the first choice of an allotment. I paid up mine, 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* I got one in six months. I never would if I had known what I do now. It has taken me 20 years to learn how a man can live without victuals, and I have just about come to it. Thousands paid up part of their share and lost it all, and I believe they were best off. I got 30*l.* head money for four acres.

"My allotment has been sold for 106*l.*, but there is a rent-charge on it of 9*l.* 10*s.* a year."

Adding the "head money" [which I accidentally omitted (Oxon evidence 33c)] brings up my estimate of the expenditure of the scheme to 22,250*l.*, which agrees very closely with the account given by persons living in the neighbourhood, by whom it was generally put at 22,000*l.*; while, according to Mr. Freer's evidence, and judging from the price obtained for the allotment spoken of above, the whole value of the estate is now about 22,500*l.* (taking the value of a cottage and four acres to be 300*l.*)

Cause of failure.

It is evident, therefore, that if the shareholders could have held on the estate till now, the scheme would not have injured them pecuniarily beyond the loss of interest for which they accepted the chance of an allotment as compensation, and we must look to other causes for an explanation of the speedy break down of the land company. I think the evidence makes the explanation tolerably apparent. To make a living for himself and family off even the largest of these allotments while paying a rent-charge equal to an ordinary farming rent would require all the energy and skill of an able-bodied agricultural labourer; to the class of men whom Mr. Fergus O'Connor introduced it was almost an impossibility.

Mr. Freer's evidence on the subject is of considerable value. He says,—

"I have purchased 26 allotments, and put three or four together, letting them to one man, who sub-lets the cottages. A man may get a living off 10 acres let a fair rent, or he may get a living off, say, two acres for which he pays no rent or rent-charge. None of those who have these allotments singly at a rent are able to live off them. I let four-acre allotments with the house at 13*l.*, *i.e.*, 50*s.* an acre for the land and 3*l.* for the house."

Summary of evidence on allotment systems.

91. The above evidence, I think, confirms the view which I was led to adopt by the evidence I had previously received on the same subject, that every farm labourer's cottage should, if possible, have attached to it a garden of not less than 20 nor more than 40 poles. There is, however, a class of men, not usually engaged as farm labourers, whose services at high wages in times of pressure are very useful to the agricultural community, for whom a much larger system of allotments might be desirable, more especially if the allotments were of such a character as to induce them to keep cows, and so supply milk at a moderate price to labourers, whose young families stand much in need of it.

Benefit Societies.

92. In the evidence which I received in Bedfordshire on the subject of benefit societies, I quoted some extracts from a paper on that subject read at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club in November 1867 by Mr. Charles Howard, of Biddenham; and I have now put in evidence a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Howard, after hearing his paper read, by Captain Dashwood, a large occupier of land in Oxfordshire, who has taken a great deal of trouble to investigate the difficulties in the way of establishing benefit societies on such a scale as to enable the labouring class of a parish or small group of parishes to form societies on a safe basis, so that, to use Captain Dashwood's words, "the "management may be kept as local as possible to enable members to overlook each other."

Showing the difficulties in the way of labourers anxious to form Benefit Societies on a safe basis, with suggestions as to how the difficulty might be overcome.

Captain Dashwood's experience in endeavouring to remodel the rules of a small club in his own parish will point to the difficulties to be encountered by labourers when left to their own resources; in speaking of this club he says,—

"With the help of a neighbouring clergyman, who had had great experience in Berkshire with such clubs, and with the assistance of Mr. Finlayson, the Government actuary, and Mr. Tidd Pratt, and his office, I trust I have been able to start the club on a safe basis, and that it now only depends for its success on the good management of its members."

And again he says,—

"Actuaries in general are obliged to put their rates too high, and they really have few good guides for such clubs, as all the receipts hitherto have been so mixed up with subscriptions from honorary members, and the outgoings with extra payments. The actuaries frequently limit the tables to the age of 65. This is impracticable and unnecessary with an agricultural population."

In order to get further information than Mr. Finlayson or Mr. Tidd Pratt were in a position to afford, Captain Dashwood examined the rules of a large number of reputedly good clubs, and with many of these he finds great fault.

The following are the principles on which Captain Dashwood thinks these societies should be founded:—

"1st. They should not be held at public houses.

"2nd. Clubs should be composed of about 150 members, say from one or more parishes, so as to keep the management as local as possible, that members may be able to overlook one another.

"3rd. They should be entirely managed by the benefit members.

"4th. There should be a revision of funds and a revision or division of surplus every five years, accompanied by power to raise an extra subscription if funds get too low.

"5th. The tables should include several classes, with different payments in quinquennial periods according to age of entry (worn out old age must practically be looked upon as sickness), few working men remain long

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quite past all labour, and the rules recommended by Mr. Tidd Pratt in his pamphlet of December 1865, as to the number of weeks of full pay, &c., prevents this charge ever becoming very high.

"6th. The *Medical Fund* payment should be ample to cover the expense of making contracts with different medical men, and women should be allowed to join this as well as the death fund.

"7th. There should be a benevolent fund, to which all payments from honorary members should be carried; to this fund also each member should pay yearly one day's sick pay, and the accumulation from other funds may be transferred to it at the end of every five years. This is a most important fund, as it meets the difficulty of the worn-out-by-old-age members and of cases of long sickness, and assists such without drawing too heavily on the sick fund."

For clubs of the size recommended by Captain Dashwood I see no fault to be found with these principles or rules, and I perfectly agree with him that worn-out old age must be looked upon as sickness for the reason he gives that "few working men remain long past all labour." The latter part of the 4th rule (accompanied by power to raise an extra subscription if funds get low), and the 7th, which acknowledges the necessity of a benevolent fund, and contemplates the aid of honorary subscriptions, exhibit, I think, the weakness of small clubs; and that there is no necessity to so limit the size of clubs is, I think, shown by the success of the Odd Fellows and Foresters, of which Captain Dashwood says, "I think as useful clubs as any in England are the Manchester Odd Fellows and the "Foresters." I cannot see why the same active supervision from benefit members could not be carried on over a larger area of parishes, and the management conducted by committees in the different parishes, as well as by a single committee for a smaller area; there is of course the question of confidence, or rather want of confidence, in each other, and it may be that the smaller club is the one which would succeed best if left entirely to the management of the benefit members.

As the present Government have undertaken to introduce a Bill to enable the Post Office to grant insurances on life for 5*l.*, there is now I think no need of a burial fund, or still better of burial societies, and as the Post Office savings banks, and Government annuities are everywhere at command to give a good account of the investment of a labourer's savings, there remains only the need of a sickness club, and whether that be conducted on the small scale recommended by Captain Dashwood, or on a much larger scale, it stands equally in need of carefully calculated tables, which would show, as nearly as the best actuaries in the country can ascertain, what proportion the payments and allowances should bear to each other for different scales of payment as well as for different numbers, of members, *i.e.*, that men who wish to join such clubs, after determining the number of members should be able to turn to the tables and see in what proportion men insuring for this or that amount of sickness pay should subscribe and how that that subscription should vary with the age of the man at the time of admittance.

How Government could help the cause of Benefit Societies.

To draw up such tables with anything like accuracy is, I apprehend, a very difficult task, and has not, as far as I am aware, been as yet satisfactorily performed, nor is likely to be with the funds at the disposal of small clubs, and it is in the performance of this task that I think that the Government might further the cause of benefit societies by putting into every man's hand at a moderate price a table of the kind I have described, and a good specimen of rules; by doing, in fact, for the country what Captain Dashwood and others like him have done for their parishes.

If the chief fault of the southern labourer is, as I think it is, improvidence, it is most desirable to encourage any symptom of the opposite virtue, such as the increasing disposition to join benefit societies, not for the sake of the beer, but for the sake of independence.

The rules of several district clubs in Berkshire, such as the Vale of White Horse, the Farnborough and the Yattendon clubs, were sent to me, and I was informed that such clubs, as well as branches of the Odd Fellows and Foresters, were now more popular than the old beerhouse clubs.

A somewhat greater strickness in the administration of the poor law, as far as out-door relief is concerned, would no doubt, as Captain Dashwood says, help the cause of benefit clubs, and check the pauperising tendency I have before alluded to. In point of fact, the greater strictness in this respect practised by the board of guardians in Farringdon union, has, according to the evidence of the relieving officers, already had this effect.

Beerhouses.

93. In his report on the "Farming of Oxfordshire," Mr. C. S. Read says,—

"Perhaps in no county in England is the love of beer among the labouring poor so general or so extravagant as in Oxfordshire. If anything out of the common routine on a farm is to be done "a drop of beer" is wanted to make it go off pleasantly, ... most unfortunately the rage for beer when at work is only second to the love of it at the alehouse. This miserable infatuation produces wretchedness, poverty, and crime."

As far as my experience goes, the Oxfordshire labourer is in this respect no worse than his neighbour in Beds, Bucks, and Berks. I have already alluded to the mischief done by the alehouse and love of beer in the two former counties, and the same evil is everywhere apparent in the two with which I am now concerned, and is the more apparent to those who have seen the farm labourer when he does not suffer from what Mr. Read calls "this miserable infatuation." Thus the wife of Col. Bowyer's farm bailiff at Barton, a Scotch woman, says (see Oxon evidence 3e):—

"If the men here get a shilling extra, it goes in drink to a certainty."

Mr. John Hedley, bailiff to Mr. Wroughton, of Woolley, says (see Berks evidence 7b):—

"The greatest difficulty here with men, especially daymen, is to keep them from beer; if a man earns extra wages at anything he takes it to the beershop."

Mr. Hardy, bailiff to Col. Lloyd Lindsay, says (see Berks evidence 23b):—

"The worst fault our men have is beer drinking."

In close parishes the beerhouse is either altogether absent or is kept in proper control by the landowner, and this is one of the reasons (the others being constant work and cheap cottages) why in such parishes the labourers always appear to be better off. Mr. J. C. King, speaking of Beedon parish in Wantage union, says:—

"Our men are as well off as cheap cottages, good allotments, and the absence of a public-house can make them; they are better off than in the adjoining parish of Hampstead Norris, the only difference in our farm being that there is no public-house here."

J. Mr. Thos. Tanner, a large occupier in Newbury union, says (Berks evidence 59a):—

"You will find a very few cases of real distress, and where it does exist it is from the effects of drunkenness, and that is caused from the "beershop," the curse of this country, being brought to their own doors. I think if our rulers would turn their attention to this, it would be a certain step towards improving the condition of the working class. They themselves would be glad to have the temptation removed."

In hay time and harvest, when men are working by the day, a gallon of beer per man is a common daily allowance, and many farmers stated to me that this allowance was not sufficient to satisfy the men.

A good many farmers, as will be seen from the evidence, give money instead of beer, thus enabling any man who chooses to save the cost of what he would otherwise have been, in a manner, compelled to drink; this is, I think, distinctly a better plan than giving beer, but it has been found that the result has often been to send them to the nearest beerhouse for worse beer than the farmer would have supplied, and to meet this difficulty, Mr. Samuel Druce, of Eynsham, gives his men malt and hops which they can convert into beer or money as they please.

The evil of wasting more of his wages than is necessary in beer consumed in the hay or corn field is as nothing compared with the loss which the farm labourer in these counties suffers from the consumption of the same article, of a worse quality, in beerhouses, and I confess I see no end to this mischief till the ordinary beerhouse licence to sell beer "*to be drunk on the premises*" is abolished. I do not for a moment desire that the labourer should be denied every facility for quenching his thirst in beer; on the contrary, I should like to see beer sold across every counter with as little restriction as bread and butter, save only that it should *not* be drunk on the premises; I would confine the licence to sell beer to be drunk *on* the premises to that class of houses which are also licensed to sell spirits. Under such a system a man would probably take home to his family only so much beer as he could conveniently pay for and as they could consume without injury, and he would be robbed of the temptations to excess which it is the business of the beerhouse keeper to provide.*

94. In my report on Beds and Bucks I said, "The great lessons which the labourers in these counties "require to be taught are independence and providence," and I have again to repeat that these are the lessons most wanting to the labourers of Oxfordshire and Berks; whatever, therefore, interferes with this teaching, helps the beershop and degrades the labourer. This brings me to a subject, in order to treat of which I put in evidence certain statistics in the Appendix to my former Report, but I am glad that I did not then call your attention to it, as I am now in a better position to justify the impression which I then entertained as well as to support my own impression by the opinions of persons whose judgment cannot fail to carry weight. The influence I allude to adverse to the fostering of provident habits is the present administration of the *Poor Law*, and especially the lax and uncertain manner in which *out-door relief* is given.

Pauperism.

Nothing will, I think, serve better to illustrate the effect of the manner in which relief is administered than a comparison of the rate of pauperism and cost of relief per head of the population in four of the rural unions in each county in which the general circumstances affecting the labouring class are as near as possible the same.

Rate of pauperism in eight unions in Oxfordshire and Berks.

County.	Union.	Population.	Acreage.	Acres per Head of Population.	Proportion of Paupers to Population.	Expenditure on Relief of the Poor for Year ending Lady Day 1868.		Proportion of Out-door Relief to In-maintenance.	Expenditure per Head of Population.
						In-maintenance.	Out-door Relief.		
						£	£		s. d.
Oxford -	Bicester -	15,555	64,127	4·12	1 in 18	698	3,430	About 5 to 1	5 3½
„ -	Henley -	18,200	61,662	3·38	1 in 11	1,848	6,981	Nearly 4 to 1	9 8½
„ -	Thame -	15,305	54,997	3·59	1 in 15	647	5,006	Nearly 8 to 1	7 4½
„ -	Woodstock -	14,236	47,913	3·36	1 in 15	938	4,038	About 4 to 1	7 0
Berks -	Abingdon -	20,861	57,535	2·75	1 in 13	1,647	6,909	About 4 to 1	8 2
„ -	Bradfield -	15,771	62,166	3·94	1 in 14	1,850	4,707	2½ to 1	8 3½
„ -	Faringdon -	15,688	64,207	4·09	1 in 30½	1,038	1,934	Under 2 to 1	3 9
„ -	Wantage -	17,308	75,700	4·37	1 in 14½	868	5,490	Above 6 to 1	7 4

Contrast between Faringdon and the other rural unions of these counties.

From this it will be seen that whereas in *Faringdon union* there was 1 person in 30 receiving relief on the 1st of January 1868, the average of the other seven unions gives 1 in 14. In Faringdon the proportion of the cost of out-door relief to in-maintenance is under 2 to 1, the average of the seven other rural unions which I have taken gives nearly 5 to 1. In Faringdon the cost per head of the population for relief of both kinds is 3*s.* 9*d.*, in the other seven unions it averages 7*s.* 7*d.*

Although taking each individual case, the amount of pauperism and cost of relief does not vary inversely as the proportion between the out-door relief and in-maintenance; on the average (as will be seen from Oxon evidence 101 and Berks evidence 90, where the amount of pauperism in each union of the county is given) it distinctly does so, and accounts for the fact that while the whole of England (towns and all) shows 1 pauper to 19 of the population; the rural districts show 1 to 16;

* On the beerhouse question, Mr. T. L. Goodlake, chairman of the Faringdon union (Berks evidence 80), says:—"The multiplication of low beerhouses beyond the control of the justices aggravates the social condition of our poor. I almost despair of any "improvement till beer and spirits are sold across the counter like any other necessary of life."

Mr. Walter, M.P. for Berks, says (Berks evidence 85):—"Instead of placing the licences in the hands of the magistrates, who would be "apt to exercise the power capriciously and sometimes unjustly, I would allow everybody to sell beer *not* to be drunk on the premises, "and give the magistrates ample power to take away the licence in case of its being abused. People must have beer, but there is no "occasion for them to meet and drink together in beerhouses—there is the evil. If they want to meet together for convivial purposes, "which they must be allowed to do occasionally as well as their betters, then let them go to the public-house, which I agree should be "licensed by the magistrates as at present."

Sir Henry Dashwood, in a private letter to me, expresses the same view, with some doubt as to whether the licences for the higher class of public-house should be left in the hands of the magistrates.

it is, in fact, the towns which reduce the average for the county of Oxford to 1 in 15, and the towns aided by Faringdon union which reduce the average for Berks to 1 in 16½.* J.

If then pauperism has been reduced in Faringdon union to less than one-half of the average of all the unions similarly situated in these two counties, or in fact of the rural unions of England, without any improper pressure on the labouring class, a lesson in providence has been taught which will do as much good as the legislative suppression of beershops.

That there is no such improper pressure, and that the decrease of pauperism is simply the result of good management and a proper administration of the poor law, I feel entirely convinced after questioning very closely the labouring class themselves, the officers of the union, and persons residing in it who had no interest in the matter sufficient to sway their judgment. In the cases where I found out-relief given it appeared to me to be given fully as liberally as in other unions; the difference between this and other unions being that out-relief is never given unnecessarily and never given at all until the whole facts of the case are known to the board; where help is desirable beyond what should legitimately be charged to the public purse it is given privately by those who are interested in and thoroughly acquainted with the case, and there is no tendency to use the rates in aid of low wages or slack work in winter.†

Faringdon union is fortunate enough to possess a very energetic chairman (as in most unions an ex-officio guardian) who is assisted by what appeared to me an unusual attendance of other ex-officio guardians and by an efficient and highly paid staff of union officers. Speaking of the chairman two or three of the labouring class, whom I questioned about the action of the board, used the same expression, saying, "he's hard at the board but he's a good man is Mr. Goodlake." I don't know that any greater praise could be bestowed on a chairman of a board of guardians.

I do not for a moment mean to say that the poor law is worse administered, or as some people might think more liberally administered, in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Beds, or Bucks than in other rural districts. I have seen the same effect growing in the very union in which Mr. Henley, in his excellent Report, pointed out to you the very favourable circumstances which surround the agricultural labouring class, and it may surprise you to know that in that "Northern Arcadia" there is 1 person in every 19 receiving union relief.

Consequences of lax system of out-relief.

In the north the effect of a lax system of out-relief manifests itself most in a growing disinclination on the part of well-paid labourers to do anything towards the support of their parents. In the counties which I have lately visited under your instructions it is exhibited in the number of young able-bodied men who without any hope of work in winter crowd themselves into the open villages. I scarcely visited any open village during last winter without finding a certain number of young men out of work and with no apparent intention of going out of their parish to look for it. In some villages, such as the Bartons, Childrey, and East Hendred, I found from 20 to 30 such men, and was told that it was quite amusing to see how they planned to get themselves on the union.

As to the effect of the present manner of administering out-door relief, Sir Henry Dashwood, formerly chairman of the Woodstock union, says (see Oxon evidence 93a):—

"It is becoming the means of granting pensions indiscriminately to *worthy* and *unworthy*, and places the worthy man, who has by good conduct earned assistance from his children or other sources of private charity, on a level with the *unworthy*, who has forfeited all such claims, and it will discourage the labourer from making any provision whatever for old age."

I could not express my own feeling on the subject better than by using Sir Henry's words.

Half-rating as a proposed remedy.

A proposed remedy for this state of things I have already alluded to, as explained a few days ago by Captain Dashwood at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club, viz. such a system of half-rating as prevails in Ireland and Scotland, which by levying one half the poor rate on the owners of property would bring the question of rates home to the landowning class and induce them to aid in the administration of the poor law, instead of as now leaving it entirely in the hands of tenant farmers, except when some matter of patronage or of unusual interest is on foot. Whether such a system would result in all the good which its advocates believe, may be doubtful, but it would at least be an improvement on the present system.

Law of settlement and removeability.

95. One desirable amendment in the poor law itself has been frequently mentioned to me, and that is the abolishing of all that remains of the law of settlement and removability. It is so difficult for a board of guardians to exercise any supervision over out-union relief that very many unions now refuse such relief altogether, no doubt inflicting in some cases undeserved hardship. To make every person requiring relief chargeable to the union where he or she happened to be, would, no doubt, prevent any such hardship; but would perhaps cause some difficulty in dealing with vagrant or non-resident paupers. A scheme for the treatment of this class, as proposed by Mr. Thornhill, chairman of the Woodstock union and vice-chairman of quarter sessions for Oxfordshire, given in Oxon evidence 96, is worthy your attention.

Industrial schools.

96. In Berks evidence 65d and Oxon evidence 64b and 63a, will be found a description of the rules and expenditure of industrial training schools supported by Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor, the Countess of Macclesfield at Watlington in Oxfordshire, and the Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene at Swyncombe in the same county.

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* I am aware that in some districts, where the rate of pauperism is lower, the proportion of out-relief to in-maintenance is higher than in the unions I am speaking of; but a comparison of the effect of such relief can only be made between unions in which the character of the labouring classes is the same. To the more self-reliant and independent Northern or Welsh labourer, for instance, the demoralizing effect of out-relief, administered by authorities who cannot or will not closely examine the cases of the recipients, comes less quickly, but not less surely.—G. C.

† Mr. E. W. Moore, agent to Lord Radnor, says (Berks evidence 33):—"The reduction of the pauperism in Faringdon union is only the "result of a careful examination of cases; the board are liberal when relief is necessary. The rule is not to give immediate relief to a "man who has been in regular work up to the time of application. We make him wait a few days or a week. Another rule is not "to pay a member of the patient's family as a nurse, except under peculiar circumstances."

Mr. Jas. Jeffries, R. O., Faringdon union, says (see Berks evidence 76):—"In this union we are very strict in examining into the "circumstance of every family by whom an application for relief is made; the result has been a great decrease in the expenditure on "out-door relief, while the persons who receive relief are better satisfied than under the old system, and the labourers generally have "been induced to subscribe to benefit clubs, such as the Farmers' Club, at Uffington, the Vale of White Horse Club, and the Farnborough "Club. Where cottagers keep lodgers we reduce the allowance by 1s. for each lodger; this has the effect of discouraging them from "crowding their houses with lodgers."

Mr. R. Gorton, master of the workhouse, and Mr. T. Wright, relieving officer, gave similar evidence.

J. G.

Her Majesty's at Windsor.

The following is my note taken at the time of my visit to Her Majesty's school,—

"There is an educational and industrial school in Windsor Park, entirely supported by the Queen, where about 120 children of persons employed by Her Majesty are educated free of expense; of these 50 boys and 50 girls are clothed (the boys in jackets and knickerbockers of black and white checked Scotch cloth and black leggings, the girls in a dress of a smaller check, with a scarlet cloak for winter); 30 boys and as many girls receive a dinner every school day, and 12 boys and as many girls under 7 years of age are admitted without either of these privileges. The school is an excellent building, with all the appliances necessary for teaching the girls cooking, baking, and washing, and there is a large garden where the boys receive their out-door training. A child of any person employed by Her Majesty is eligible after 7 years of age if it can pass the first standard of the Revised Code, and may remain, a boy till he is 15, a girl till she is 16, during which time each child costs Her Majesty about 6*l.* 10*s.* per annum."

A boy therefore who enters this school at 7 years of age, and leaves it at 15, will have cost Her Majesty upwards of 50*l.*; and a girl who remains till she is 16 will owe to the same kindly benefactress an education which has cost nearly 60*l.* I was particularly struck with the appropriateness of the dress of the children.

The Countess of Macclesfield's.

In Lady Macclesfield's school, which is for girls only, the pupils are boarded and lodged as well as educated, and the establishment, which provides accommodation for 12 girls and the matron, is perfect in all its arrangements; these as well as the yearly expenditure and general rules for the management of the school are so accurately described by her ladyship in Oxon evidence 64b, that I need only refer any person anxious to follow so good an example to the description there given. The cost of, as it were, finishing the education of each girl would appear to be about 40*l.*; after this expenditure the pupil is in every way fitted to obtain a good place in domestic service.

Mr. Ruck Keene's.

An account of the Swyncombe industrial school for boys founded so long ago as 1846 by Mr. Ruck Keene and since supported by him will be found in Oxon evidence 63a; here, too, the arrangements of the school, and especially the industrial department, are so well described that any person desirous of following Mr. Keene's example may find a pattern. An interesting feature in the Swyncombe school is that the garden department in which about 12 boys are engaged is almost self-supporting, and Mr. Keene thinks might be made entirely so. In the year Michaelmas 1867 to Michaelmas 1868 the balance against 12 boys, allowing a fair price for their labour, was only 5*l.*

Mr. Keene, after so many years of experience, may be allowed to speak with some authority on the advantages of industrial training; in his "Notes on Popular Education" (see Oxon evidence 91) he says:—

"In all cases of popular education I am of opinion that there should be a mixture of manual employment with the mental training. It relieves the irksome sameness of elementary education through the day, and in so doing allows the mind during the shorter period of tension to be more capable of digesting its lessons, whilst the bodily exercise and the incipient fitness for the employment and trade to which the child may afterwards be called will always be found most advantageous to its future career."

Example of the effect of better food and good example on inferior labourers.

97. To illustrate the difference of earnings at the same piece-work wages, and the levelling-up effect of good food and example, I have put in evidence an analysis of the pay-sheets, showing the earnings of mixed gangs of English and Irish drainers, employed during last autumn and winter on three estates in Northumberland (see Appendix C., 96):—The practice of these drainers is to work together in parties of two, or at most three, such parties being, in the cases taken, always composed of men of the same nationality; in other respects, they are entirely on an equality as to means of earning, the parties of two or three men taking each drain in succession as they finish that in which they have previously been working. It will be borne in mind that the English and Irish here compared are men probably of the finest class physically of their respective countries.

The total number of men composing these gangs was 46 Englishmen and 31 Irishmen; of these 43 Englishmen are described by Mr. Batty, the superintendent of the drains, as having "drained for "several years constant at the work," and 23 of the Irishmen are described as having been in England for several years, some of them for 15 years, none for less than 6 or 7 years, leaving a remainder of three Englishmen and eight Irishmen who are described as beginners, or not practised hands. The result of a comparison of their earnings shows that whereas the English beginner earns an average of 4*s.* a week more than the Irish beginner, better food and about 10 years' practice reduces the difference to 1*s.* 4½*d.* a week; this last difference is curiously enough the same to a fraction in the case of the practised hands engaged on Captain Leylands' estate and my own, though the earnings in the latter case are nearly 3*s.* a week higher than in the former.

In the first case—

The practised English drainers earned 16*s.* 10½*d.* a week.
„ Irish „ „ 15*s.* 6*d.* „

In the second case—

The practised English drainers earned 19*s.* 9*d.* a week.
„ Irish „ „ 18*s.* 4½*d.* „

Northern and southern labourers.

98. As a drainer is very much guided in the price he will accept for cutting by a comparison between what he supposes he can earn, and what his neighbours, who are not drainers, can earn, these earnings when compared with the evidence which I received on the same subject in Wokingham union, are another indication that labourers' earnings are not much higher in the northern than in the south-midland counties of England.

Deducting the value of the cottage and garden, which are supplied rent free by the landlord in the north, the Oxfordshire or Berkshire labourer costs his master nearly as much as the Northumbrian; and bearing in mind this fact, the following evidence which I received from northern bailiffs in Berks after considerable experience of the value of both classes of labourers, will at least be an indication to you that I cannot have made much error in my estimate of the cheapening of manual labour in the north through the superiority of the northern labourer, male and female. Mr. John Hedley (a Northumbrian) farm bailiff to Mr. Wroughton, of Woolley Park, in Wantage union, says (see Berks evidence 7b):—

"There is a great difference between the labourers here and in Northumberland. I would much rather pay a Northumbrian hind 16*s.* a week than a Berks carter 12*s.* I have one Northumbrian as a carter foreman, what you would call a ploughman steward; he has 17*s.* a week, besides his cottage free, say 18*s.* a week. Men are so inferior here that we are obliged to employ more than you do in the north." J.

Mr. Hardy (a native of Mid-Lothian), bailiff to Col. Lloyd Lindsay, in the same union, says (see Berks evidence 22b):—

"Our men here are very inferior to Scotch labourers; two men there do as much as three here."

Mr. James Robertson (a native of Perthshire), farm bailiff to the Earl of Radnor, at Coleshill, says (see Berks evidence 33a):—

"I always employ as many men here in doing such things as spreading dung as we used to employ women in Scotland, four to a plough opening the drills, and the men think they are going to be killed with hard work."

If you add to this the superior discipline, which having the cottages round the farm offices permits, you will have all the elements which induced me to institute the comparison, for which I had at the time ample means at my disposal and have since had ample means of verifying.

99. I cannot say that I see any marked difference between the labourers of the four counties which I have visited under your orders; what difference there is is in favour of the Berks and Oxfordshire labourers, and I would be inclined, falling back on the evidence which I received, to attribute the comparative physical inferiority of the Beds and Bucks labourers to the effect produced on the women by such occupations as straw-plaiting and lace-making. Beds, Bucks, Berks, and Oxfordshire labourers.

100. It only remains for me to thank all classes of persons in Oxfordshire and Berks for the anxiety which was everywhere displayed to assist me in conducting the inquiry with which I had the honour to be entrusted. However inquisitive and unnecessary the questions I asked might appear, there was ever the same readiness to answer, and if I have omitted anything which would have been interesting to you to know the fault lies entirely with myself.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
GEO. CULLEY.

Fowberry Tower,
May 1869.

DERBYSHIRE AND HERTS.

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J. 2.

REPORT.

To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

1. I have the honour to lay before you the evidence which I collected during a short visit to the counties of Derby and Herts.

Time and mode of collecting evidence.

As the time at my disposal was limited to about a fortnight in each county, I selected the more central portions for personal inquiry, and devoted my time more especially to obtaining evidence illustrative of any peculiarities in the condition of the agricultural labouring class which might have escaped my notice or that of my colleagues in the reports which we have already had the honour of presenting to you.

2. I attended by appointment meetings of the boards of guardians for Bakewell, Chesterfield, Belper, and Burton unions in Derbyshire, and for Hertford, Hatfield, St. Alban's, and Hitchin unions in Herts. At these meetings the questions asked in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry, especially those which have reference to legislative restrictions on the labour of children, were fairly discussed by intelligent employers of labour, with what result will be seen when I review the evidence, as it serves to answer the different subjects of inquiry.

To such persons as I had reason to believe would give me reliable information I issued circulars of inquiry, adding to the questions asked in the shorter circular forms for school or labour returns, or questions as to the mode of hiring and paying labourers, according to the occupation of the intended witness.

I find that in each county I issued about 35 circulars, and that of these I have had returned from Derbyshire 29, and from Herts 28, in all 57, of which 13 have been returned by clergymen for their respective parishes, 18 by landowners or their agents, 23 by occupiers of land, usually also guardians for their parishes, and 3 by other persons.

The remainder of the evidence, which includes that of 5 surgeons and 8 relieving officers, is chiefly taken from my note book as it was written down at the time of my interview with the persons who gave it.

Tabulated labour returns.

3. The tabulated labour returns show the whole ordinary staff employed on 3,899 acres, included in 13 farms in Derbyshire, and on 8,993 acres, included in 18 farms in Herts. These tables also show what proportion of labourers, male and female, whose ordinary occupation is that of farm labourers, are thrown out of work in winter.

School returns.

4. The table of school returns for Hertfordshire gives the number of children on the register and in average attendance in 7 rural parishes.

I distributed as many forms for school returns in Derbyshire as I did in Herts ; but, owing chiefly, I suppose, to the difficulty of separating children of the agricultural labouring class from those of the mining and manufacturing class, only 2 returns were made, and these are given at the end of the evidence from the parishes to which they refer.

Although I should have been glad to have put in evidence school returns from more of the parishes in Derbyshire where agricultural work forms the chief employment of the labouring class, there is abundant evidence to show to what extent farm labour interferes with school attendance. It will be seen that this interference as regards children under 13 years of age is chiefly confined to an irregularity of attendance during spring, summer, and autumn, and that boys under that age are rarely employed throughout the year.

Condition of the agricultural labourer in Derbyshire is favourably affected by demand for mining and manufacturing labour.

5. The condition of the agricultural labourer in Derbyshire contrasts very favourably with that of his fellow labourer in Herts, or in any of the four counties of the South Midland district which I have previously inspected.

The great cause affecting favourably the position of the agricultural labourer in Derbyshire is the ever-increasing demand for mining and manufacturing labour, which keeps up a continual drain on the labour market and constantly tends to raise the wages of those who are content to till the ground.

In my report on Oxfordshire and Berks I alluded to the absence of mining and manufacturing industry as one of the apparent causes of "local congestion" of the labour market ; and I think there can be no doubt that the farm labourer of Derbyshire owes a good deal of the comparative comfort of his position to the geological formation of his native county.

Under ground lie coal, iron, lead, lime, and gypsum, and over the surface run streams, which put in motion our earliest cotton mills.

In his essay on the Farming of Derbyshire (Royal Agricultural Society's Journal, 1853), Mr. J. J. Rowley says,—

"Towards the close of last century a new element was introduced amongst the wilds of the Peak, which exerted a mighty influence on the character of North Derbyshire : Arkwright had realized his great invention and introduced the cotton trade. Taking advantage of its streams and waterfalls, cotton mills began to occupy the most sequestered places, the Wye and Derwent put thousands of spindles in motion. These factories brought a population, wealth increased, both agricultural and manufacturing, and gave a stimulant to improvements of every kind. Progress became the rule, agriculture and manufactures joined hands."

The chiefs of the cotton mills are now amongst the largest and most improving landowners of the county, and though their mills still find employment for a large number of hands, especially for the youth of both sexes, iron, coal, and lead are more active causes in keeping up a healthy demand for the services of an increasing population.

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6. Towards the south of the county the demand for mining and manufacturing labour is less felt and wages give way; the only corrective influence, if corrective it may be called, being the winter employment in the Burton breweries of men whose ordinary avocation is farm labour.

Effect of winter employment in Burton breweries.

This winter employment at Burton, occurring at a time of year when, especially in a grazing country, farm work is short, would have the best possible effect, if it was not that it is accompanied by an education in beer drinking. Mr. S. Faulkner, occupier and guardian of Scropton, gives, I think, a fair summary of the evidence on this head, where he says (see Derbyshire evidence, 38),—

"If it was not for the beer, the winter work supplied by the Burton breweries would be a blessing to our labourers, who sometimes cannot find work in winter."*

Agricultural economy of Derbyshire.

7. Besides the demand for mining, manufacturing, and beer-making labour, there are, however, other peculiarities and customs of the county influencing the position of the labourer, which will be best explained by giving a slight sketch of its agricultural economy.

In the first place, Derbyshire, unlike Herts or any of those which I have previously inspected, is a grazing county, and the number of agricultural labourers proper is still further reduced by the fact that farms are generally small and are, many of them, held by a class of men whose families do a large share of the farm work.

Of the 473,000 acres accounted for in the "Agricultural Returns" for 1868, 138,000 are arable and 335,000 permanent pasture, exclusive of heath, mountain land, and waste, which are credited with about 186,000 acres.

Nor is the large proportion of permanent grass a thing of recent creation, or dependent in any way on the cost of labour. It is the natural result of the climate and geological formation.†

The carboniferous limestone and millstone grit district, which extends over upwards of 300,000 acres towards the west and north of the county, is well adapted for dairy farming and the summer grazing of young stock, and few farms possess any larger proportion of arable land than serves to provide winter keep and litter for cows. There are large farms on the higher elevations of these formations almost exclusively devoted to the summer grazing of young stock, and requiring very little manual labour.

A large proportion of the surface of the coal measures which covers about 150,000 acres presents no very inviting aspect to the eye of a farmer intent on growing an alternation of corn, clover, and roots, although on the coal measures, where wages are highest, are to be seen well-cultivated farms (such as Mr. Crawshaw's at Staveley) having a fair proportion of arable land.

A large proportion of the clays and marls of South Derbyshire, owing probably to deposits from the more elevated limstone district, has obtained such fame as grazing land that it can create no surprise that it remains uninjured by the plough. Notwithstanding a dryer and warmer climate only the lighter land in this district is used for growing corn.

There remains then only some 20,000 acres on the magnesian limestone where one would expect to see much arable farming, and here you find it in spite of high wages, a somewhat elevated situation, cold climate, and not very gifty soil.

Wages and hiring in Derbyshire.

8. Some examples from the evidence which I received on the mode of hiring and rate of wages will serve further to explain how the pecuniary position of the Derbyshire labourer compares with that of the South Midland labourer.

Beginning with the neighbourhood of Bakewell, which I chose as my chief point for inquiry in North Derbyshire.

Mr. H. P. Bagshawe, relieving officer, after saying that "labourers wages average 2*s.* 6*d.* a day," (Derbyshire evidence, 7) gives the following example of payment to a married farm servant:—

"12*s.* 6*d.* a week wages, a quart of new milk per day worth 2*d.*, a house and garden and manure, from 300 to 400 yards of potatoes, leadage of coals from the pit, about half food and beer in haytime."

Taking the cottage and garden and manure at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, this wage is at least worth 16*s.* a week.

As to the consumption of coal, Mr. Bagshawe says,—

"Coals are cheap, from 6*s.* to 6*s.* 6*d.* a ton at the pit, and from 9*s.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* at the station. With tolls, if the farmer leads them, coals will cost a labourer from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* 6*d.* a ton at his door, and a ton will last him an average of eight weeks.

I wonder what a labourer on the Berkshire downs, who has a ton of coal led for him valued at 25*s.* by his master, would think of a fellow labourer who consumed six tons in a year; or what his wife would say if she could have a quart of new milk per day for her children.

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* The following is some of the additional evidence as to the effect of the employment in the Burton breweries,—

Mr. John Shaw, relieving officer (Derbyshire evidence, 33), says:—

"The winter employment in Burton helps to keep up wages, especially for hired single men; I don't think the beer allowance of the breweries does so much harm as is usually attributed to it. At the breweries they give labourers 13*s.* a week and a quart to three pints of beer per day."

Employment in Burton breweries.

Edwin Dicken, labourer (Derbyshire evidence, 36b), says:—

"A good many men go to Burton in the winter, where they get 13*s.* a week and beer, and many of them would be out of work in winter if they didn't get work at Burton in the breweries, and if it wasn't the beer it would be a good job for them to get work there, but it spoils some of them getting to drink so much beer."

Mr. J. Hudson, occupier, Hilton (Derbyshire evidence, 37a), says:—

"Some labourers from about here go to Burton in the winter; they get no higher wages than we give, but as much beer as they like, and about three years kills them."

† According to Farey's Report, which gives the area of the county as 622,080 acres, instead of 658,803, as given by the Ordnance Survey, the area covered by the different geological formations is thus given:—

	Acres.
Clays and marls of South Derbyshire - - -	158,000
Yellow lime (magnesian limestone) - - -	21,580
Millstone grit shales - - - - -	220,500
Mountain limestone with toadstone - - -	92,000
Coal measures (with iron) - - - -	130,000
	622,080

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9. Returning again to the evidence on wages, Mr. Greaves, a large occupier in Bakewell parish (see evidence, 11), pays his men 14*s.* a week upstanding wages, and 8*s.* a week in addition in lieu of food and beer for eight weeks certain in hay and corn harvest, i.e., an average of about 15*s.* 3*d.* a week for the year.

10. Mr. Young, an occupier in Bakewell parish, after describing (see Derbyshire evidence, 11a.) his cowman's and shepherd's wages at 16*s.* a week, and his ploughman's, including allowances (also stated in detail), as worth 17*s.*, says:—

"All my other labourers have 14*s.* a week at all times except harvest, when they take cutting corn and hay by the acre, and average about a 1*l.* a week for eight weeks; they also take up turnips and potatoes by the piece."

11. Mr. Lawrence Furniss, another occupier in Bakewell, which is a very large parish, says (see Derbyshire evidence, 11b.):—

"I board and lodge three men, to whom I pay an average of 16*l.* a year. A lad of 15 has 10*l.*

"I consider these men much better off than labourers living on their own account. Such men may save 10*l.* a year, and some of them do. A man has just left me who has saved 100*l.*, he is looking out for a farm.

"The men we have in the house are cattle or horse men. When such a man is boarded out he gets from 8*s.* to 9*s.* for board. The men we keep are the best labourers, a good deal, because they are best fed.

"Labourers who live at home have from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a week, but any good labourer can command 14*s.* As soon as we commence cutting hay it is customary now to pay 1*l.* a week, and give from two to three quarts of beer per day, this would last for four weeks, and there would be the same wage for four weeks in harvest on our farm."

12. Thomas Wilson, labourer, Chatsworth (Derbyshire evidence, 14c.), says:—

"Labourers under the Duke have 14*s.* a week; farmers sometimes pay more, but the work is not so constant." *

13. Mr. J. Young, agent to Colonel Leslie (Derbyshire evidence, 15), says:—

"Labourers wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, though in summer good men get more, up to 3*s.*; still secondary men you may get for 15*s.* a week at any time of the year."

14. For Chapel-en-le-Frith union, Mr. Samuel Turner, bailiff to the Duke of Devonshire, says (Derbyshire evidence, 18):—

"Farms in this district are small, and few farmers keep more than one serving man, who is lodged and boarded in the house, and has from 16*l.* to 18*l.* a year, hired from Christmas at statute fairs.

"Where a farm servant does not lodge in the farmhouse he gets 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week and his meat."

15. For Chesterfield union, Mr. M. F. Mills, land agent, says:—

"The ordinary rate of wages is 15*s.* a week: unmarried men living in the farmer's house and hired by the year have from 10*l.* to 20*l.* and their food; 16*l.* would be about the average of full men."

16. The following are the wages in money and kind paid to two ordinary farm labourers examined by me on Mr. Crawshaw's farm near Staveley:—An upstanding wage of 16*s.* a week, three pecks of potatoes planted for them, extra pay in harvest, and a good cottage and garden let to them by their master at 1*s.* a week. Cottages such as these men occupy (which belong to the Duke of Devonshire) would in Staveley parish command a rent of 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; but putting the value of the cottage and garden at 1*s.* 6*d.*, I think the wages of these men are worth about 18*s.* a week.

The following is Mr. Crawshaw's account of the rate of wages (Derbyshire evidence, 21):—

"Hired servants from 14 to 20 years of age get from 8*l.* to 20*l.* per annum. The rate of wages for day labourers is on an average 15*s.* per week, for horsekeepers, who have longer hours, 18*s.*, and a foreman makes about 1*l.* This is *exclusive* of any extras; they make in harvest abont 40*s.* extra, and in piecework generally, such as hoeing turnips, &c., they make extra wages; they have also potatoes grown for their own consumption, the farmer finding land, manure, and labour, the man only seed, and coal carted free of charge."†

17. Passing now to the south of the county, Mr. Robert Spendlove, relieving officer, Belper union, says (Derbyshire evidence, 25):—

"Agricultural labourers in my district average 10*s.* a week and their food."

18. Mr. E. Harrison, agent for an estate which lies chiefly in Belper union, says (Derbyshire evidence, 27a):—

"Labourers wages are from 15*s.* to 16*s.* a week."

19. Mr. T. Travis, an occupier also in Belper union, says (Derbyshire evidence, 30):—

"I have three men who get their meat in my house and sleep at home; they have 9*s.* a week, except for 14 weeks in summer, when they have 13*s.* a week, their meat, and two quarts of beer per day. I consider the men's meat worth at least 7*s.* a week."

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* This man, as is the case with several of the Duke of Devonshire's labourers, has eight acres of grass and keeps two cows, and any labourer may put a cow for 21 weeks in summer into Chatsworth park at a charge of 3*l.*

Mr. Crawshaw's farm at Staveley.

† Mr. Crawshaw, who farms 480 acres, of which 240 are arable in four-course husbandry, with the exception of the stiffest part of the arable land, of which a portion equal to about 20 acres per annum remains in clover seeds for two years, employs a staff of seven adult men and two lads between 16 and 18 years of age. Mr. Crawshaw's explanation of how he keeps his farm in the high state of cultivation in which I saw it, with what would strike a southern farmer as so small a staff of labourers, is as follows:—

"I never grow couch grass, though at one time some of the land grew little else, and I always take advantage of labour-saving implements, that, together with good active horses in good condition and well-paid men, is the only reason why in this district we, as a rule, can do with less labour numerically than is the case in some parts of the country. I may sum up as follows:—We manage the land so as to distribute the labour as evenly through the year as possible; we use all the best machinery to economize labour; we keep good horses and pay high wages; and, as a consequence, we can command good men."

Mr. Crawshaw's adult labourers cost him an average of 18*s.* a week; the two lads are boarded with the foreman at 11*s.* a week each and receive 12*l.* wages. On this farm you have an example of good cultivation, where neither women nor children are employed, and where adult male labourers earn 18*s.* a week, of which 16*s.* a week is an upstanding day-work wage. One point not mentioned by Mr. Crawshaw is, that his labourers reside on his farm; and there is another point which I am afraid you must take at my valuation, and which is, that his rent is as high as such land would command in the southern counties.

20. Mr. Joseph Brookes, bailiff to Mr. Smedley, a large occupier in the same parish as Mr. Travis, says (Derbyshire evidence, 30a) :— J. 2.

"We hire carters by the year from the 12th of May, and pay them 15*s.* a week, and give them a cottage free, say 16*s.* 6*d.* a week. Sometimes these men have piecework in harvest for a week or so; we have three such men.

"Able-bodied day labourers we pay 14*s.* a week in winter and 16*s.* a week in summer. In harvest they earn about 1*l.* a week for a month; we have 10 such men. An old man has 10*s.* and a boy of 15 has 9*s.* a week."

21. Mr. John Shaw, relieving officer, Burton-on-Trent union, says (Derbyshire evidence, 33) :—

"Young men are usually hired by the year, and live in the farmer's house: lads begin about 12, and get about 4*l.* a year; men get from 12*l.* to 16*l.*

"Married men, who are hired by the week and board at home, get about 14*s.* a week on an average for the year. In winter wages drop to 12*s.* a week, in hay time and harvest they rise to 15*s.* or 16*s.*, and in spring and autumn they vary from 13*s.* to 14*s.*

"Some weekly servants board in the farmer's house, and get about 8*s.* a week in winter and 10*s.* a week in summer; the board is worth 5*s.* to 6*s.* a week, and the man himself is better off and better fed, but his family suffers, having only the 8*s.* or 10*s.* a week to live on."

22. Mr. T. S. Radford, occupier in Burton union, says (Derbyshire evidence, 35) :—

"I hire waggoners by the year, Michaelmas to Michaelmas, at from 12*l.* to 14*l.* a year and their keep. Men keeping themselves and not hired by the year have 14*s.* a week for 39 weeks, and 16*s.* for 13 weeks in summer, when they also have luncheon and supper and beer, if working long hours; I also give my men 300 yards of a drill of potatoes."

As an example of how wages fall off as the demand for labour other than agricultural falls off, Mr. Radford, who also occupies a farm at Cole Orton (a few miles further south), in Leicestershire, says :—

"At Cole Orton I pay 13*s.* a week throughout the year, and 1*l.* for Sunday work, giving the same potato ground."

i.e., ordinary labourers at Cole Orton receive 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for the year less wages than labourers at Church Broughton under the same master. Mr. Radford, however, pays higher wages than some farmers in his immediate neighbourhood.

23. Mr. S. Faulkner, for instance, says (Derbyshire evidence, 38) :—

"Our labourers have 13*s.* a week for day-work for 39 weeks, and 14*s.* for 13 weeks in summer; these men also get piece-work, earning by mowing and shearing, say 4*s.* a day."

Summary of evidence on wages for different classes of farm labourers in Derbyshire.

24. These are examples of the rate of wages in different parts of the county, and when compared with other evidence on the same subject, such as is given in Derbyshire evidence, 6, 9, 12, 14a, 14b, 19, 23, 31, 36a, 36b, they appear to me to show that the average weekly wage of an ablebodied farm labourer in Derbyshire, who is able to work throughout the year, varies from 14*s.* to 17*s.*, being highest in those districts (as on the coal measures) where mining and manufacturing labour is in most demand. Throughout the greater part of the county any ablebodied labourer can command an average weekly wage of 15*s.*, and in almost every instance which came under my notice a farm labourer proper would have, in addition to the above wage, about 300 yards of a drill of potatoes planted for him.

25. Owing no doubt to the absence of cottages attached to the farms in a county where villages are not very frequent, and to the prevalence of small farms, a large proportion of the unmarried labourers are boarded and lodged in their master's houses. These men are hired for the year at statute fairs and receive from 12*l.* to 18*l.* wages, 14*l.* in the south and 16*l.* in the north of the county being the ordinary wage of an able man.

26. As will be seen from the evidence, where cottages are not conveniently placed, married men occasionally receive their food in the farmer's house and sleep at home; such men usually (see Derbyshire evidence, 30 and 33) receive 9*s.* a week in money, and taking the value of the food at 6*s.* a week, their wage is worth 15*s.* a week. There can, I think, be little doubt that these men, as is pointed out in the evidence, are themselves better off than if they found their own food, but that their families are apt to suffer; too large a proportion of the wage is in fact consumed in feeding the head of the family.

27. Of the classes of labourers I have named those who save money are the unmarried hired servants. A man of that class receiving 16*l.* a year out of which he has only to provide himself with clothes, will not unfrequently save 10*l.*, and if after a few years of such saving he is fortunate enough to marry a dairy-maid who can bring to his aid her savings and experience he is in a position to occupy a small dairy farm, or a cottage with grass land enough attached to keep two or three cows which his wife can manage leaving him to pursue his calling of farm labourer and the certain return of 15*s.* a week, rather than try the chances of a small farmer.

In comparing the earnings of the Derbyshire labourer with those of the labourer in the corn counties of the South Midland district, it is important to bear in mind how large a proportion of his earnings are an upstanding wage for day work. Of the 15*s.* a week which he can command in the greater part of the county as an average for the year, 14*s.* represents what he would earn by day work alone.

28. Boys where employed by farmers other than their own parents begin regular work at from 12 to 13 years of age at a wage varying from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week.

29. Women (chiefly married) who are employed in out-door farm labour, as in South Derbyshire, receive ordinarily 1*s.* a day for eight or nine hours work. Dairy maids, who can take charge of a dairy are in great demand throughout the county. On large farms their wages occasionally reach from 18*l.* to 20*l.*, and 14*l.* is a common wage for an efficient dairy woman.

Agricultural economy of Hertfordshire.

30. Hertfordshire, unlike Derbyshire is naturally a corn county, possessing a warm and dry climate and presenting to the farmer the same variations of soil which he meets with in Berkshire and in the southern portions of Oxfordshire, Bucks, and Beds. Gravel and loam on chalk covers a large portion of the north and west of the county, while towards the borders of Middlesex the farmer finds his most useful soil to consist of a mixture of London or plastic clay and sand. Towards the borders of Essex some fertile land is apparently composed of the drift of sand, clay, flints, and chalk.

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According to the "Agricultural Returns" for 1868 permanent pasture reckons for only 88,000 out of the 330,000 acres accounted for, which is about the same proportion as on the 8,900 acres to which my Labour Returns (see Herts evidence, Table A) refer. As the amount of labour performed on the farms by the farmer himself is small, an approximation to the number, ages, and sexes of all persons employed in Hertfordshire may be formed from these tables.

Natural increase of population not provided for as in Derbyshire.

31. Unlike Derbyshire too, Hertfordshire which employs a much larger agricultural population affords very little other employment to carry off the natural increase of that population. The proximity of London, no doubt, has a tendency to raise wages especially by absorbing young men and women as domestic servants, but the slightness of the effect has always astonished me, and I cannot but think that the ignorance of the labouring class in the counties bordering upon the great city have allowed her wants to be supplied from more distant sources.

Wages in Herts.

32. The day-work wage at the time I was in Herts was said, as will be seen by the evidence, to vary from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week for ordinary day-men.

My own inquiries on this subject were confined to the Unions of Hertford, Hatfield, St. Alban's, and Hitchin, and I cannot say that I found any instance of an able-bodied labourer receiving a less wage than 11*s.* a week for day work, though I have no doubt that towards the north-east of the county such instances might be found.

The prevailing wage for day work had been 11*s.* a week since the harvest of 1868 before which it had stood at 12*s.* How far this represents the earnings of a fairly industrious man will be seen from the following examples of evidence, which distinctly confirm the evidence on wages and earnings which I have had the honour of laying before you from the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Oxford, and Berks, where the means of adding to the day work wage are almost the same as in Herts.

33. Mr. D. Peck, Relieving officer of Watton district in Hertford Union, says Herts evidence, 6) :—

"The wage for day work just now in the north of my district is 11*s.* a week, towards Hertford it is 12*s.*; this was the rate of wage during last winter; if bread was dearer the farmers would probably raise the wages 1*s.* a week. Besides farm piece work such as harvesting, mowing, hedging and hoeing corn and turnips, men get piecework in the woods, barking and cutting faggots. An average able-bodied labourer ought to make from 13*s.* to 14*s.* a week for the year round, when the day-work wage is at 11*s.*

"Our labourers have neither pig, nor cow, nor poultry, when they are thrown out of work they come immediately on the rates, all they think about when they have money is drink. In harvest men can earn 24*s.* a week, and they seem no better during that season than any other, they drink the difference and get ill on it."

34. The following account of the earnings for 12 months ending May 1st 1869, of 15 men employed by Mr. J. C. Allen, a large occupier in Hertford Union, was kindly extracted for me from Mr. Allen's labour-book (Herts evidence, 11a.)

Name and Description of Labourer.	Earnings for 12 Months.			Average per Week.		
	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
1. Collins, bailiff, formerly labourer	74	0	0	1	8	5¼
2. Bush, working bailiff, formerly labourer	54	12	0	1	1	0
3. Chapman, works on the farm and drives the engine, formerly day labourer.	54	12	0	1	1	0
4. Edwards, gardener, formerly labourer	48	2	0	0	18	6
5. Pike, groom, formerly labourer	44	4	0	0	17	0
6. Smith, shepherd	43	5	0	0	16	7½
7. Young „	40	3	8	0	15	5
8. Milton, labourer, and feeds thrashing machine.	40	0	2	0	15	4½
9. Tyler, labourer, and thatcher	39	15	1	0	15	3½
10. Cakebread, common labourer	38	0	9	0	14	7½
11. Hollingsworth, „ „	37	1	7	0	14	3
12. Milton, „ „	36	6	6	0	14	0
13. Tyler, „ „	36	6	6	0	14	0
14. Peddell, horsekeeper	37	12	6	0	14	6
15. Warford, „	34	15	6	0	13	4½

This table besides giving the earnings for ordinary farm labourers, such as numbers 10, 11, 12, and 13, for 12 months, shews the positions of higher trust at higher wages which are open to industrious labourers on large farms.

Numbers 10, 11, 12, and 13 were not picked men, but represent the average of about 20 men of that class employed by Mr. Allen. They average as will be seen 14*s.* 2½*d.* per man.

Immediately after the harvest of 1868 the day-work wage was dropped (in consequence of the fall in the price of bread) from 12*s.* to 11*s.* a week, so that the earnings of these ordinary labourers exceed the average day work wage (11*s.* 6*d.*) by 2*s.* 8½*d.* per week.

You will observe how closely this addition answers to that of the same class of men in the examples I quoted in my report on Oxfordshire and Berks.

Summary of evidence on men's wages in Herts.

35. Other evidence on the question of wages will be found in Nos. 9, 11, 11b, 13a, 15b, 19, 22, 23, 23b, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34 Herts evidence, and the result of it appears to me to be this, that the day work wage while I was in Herts varied in different parts of the county from 10*s.* to 13*s.* a week, being usually 11*s.* a week, and that the average addition to this wage for the year in the case of an able-bodied man in full work would be about 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

36. Yearly hiring for farm servants is almost unknown in Hertfordshire, but as will be seen from table 13 of the labour returns a very small proportion of the adult labourers whose ordinary employ-

ment is farm labour are thrown out of work in winter. My returns give 285 men employed in winter as against 286 in spring, 289 in summer, and 288 in autumn on the same acreage. J. 2.

37. Supposing then that a Derbyshire labourer earns an average of 15*s.* a week and a Herts labourer an average of 13*s.* 6*d.*, is the difference of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week sufficient to account for the difference of the comfort displayed in the surroundings of the former as compared with the latter? Is this difference of income sufficient to account for the fact that the Derbyshire labourer feeds himself and his family better and keeps his children longer at school, and that in parts of Derbyshire where this wage prevails women have almost ceased to work in the fields? Wages and earnings in Derbyshire and Herts compared.

Eighteenpence is no doubt a great addition to a weekly income of 13*s.* 6*d.*, but eighteenpence, though the difference in the earnings of the heads of families, by no means measures the difference of the sum at the disposal of the family. In the one case the upstanding wage irrespective of piece-work or temporary additions is 14*s.*, in the other 11*s.*, and these are the sums for which the labourer usually accounts to his wife and family.

The additions by piece-work in Herts are as 2½ to 1 compared with Derbyshire, and I have very little doubt that the expenditure in self-indulgence, chiefly in beer-drinking, on the part of the Herts labourer, is as 2½ to 1 compared with that of the Derbyshire labourer.

38. Piece-work wages no doubt recommend themselves to every employer as the easiest means of allowing industrious men to profit by their industry, and economically they appear to be the only possible mode of payment with such a class of men as constitute the bulk of South Midland labourers, but piece-work in agriculture often implies physical injury to men ignorant of the best means of maintaining their working power, and a variable income with its many temptations. Piecework wages.

The remedy for this state of things does not appear to me to be to discourage piece-work, but to teach the labouring classes to be thrifty of their strength as well as of their money.

In the Derbyshire evidence, especially that given by relieving officers, you will see how often the treatment of their families by farm labourers is compared favourably with that of the labourers in other branches of industry earning much higher though not so regular wages, and here again is an evidence of the effect of variable incomes in the hands of uneducated men.

39. As an example of how boys of 10 or 12 years can contribute to the family income in Herts take the evidence of Mrs. Fitz-John (Herts evidence, 11*b.*), who says,— Earnings of boys in Herts.

"My husband is a farm labourer; he has 12*s.* a week. We have five children; the two eldest are boys, 10 and 12 years old, and they are at work, minding cattle and sheep; they get 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a week now, but they will be out of work in winter."

40. Boys under 10 years of age employed chiefly in spring and autumn receive from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

41. Ploughboys, who are employed throughout the year, and at an earlier age in the north than in the south of the county, receive from 3*s.* to 5*s.* a week, according to their age and strength; 4*s.* a week would about represent the wage of an active boy of 13.

42. In the straw-plaiting district, and towards the south of the county generally, except in hay time and harvest, very little farm work is done by women. Where they are more generally employed their day-work wage for eight hours' work varies from 9*d.* to 10*d.*, rising to 1*s.* a day in hay time, and 1*s.* 6*d.* a day in harvest: 19 out of the 21 women returned to me as more or less regularly employed in farm labour are married (*see* Table B., Herts evidence). Employment of women in Herts.

43. In those portions of western Herts which lie within, say, a dozen miles of Luton (the metropolis of plaiting) most of the young women and many of the older ones, besides children of both sexes, earn their livelihood by plaiting straw. There has been very little change in the position of the plait trade since I reported on the condition of persons employed in it in Beds and Bucks, and I have nothing to add to what I then said as to the effect of this trade on the morals and domestic habits of those engaged in it. Straw-plaiting.

Two examples of evidence on the subject of plaiting will show that some of the evil effects of this trade, which I pointed out in my former Report, still exist.

Mr. W. N. Sladden, relieving officer for Hatfield union, says (Herts evidence, 17),—

"In half of this union the women and girls plait straw, boys generally go to field work.

"1. The female plaiters are very useless for all domestic work; they can't even put a patch on their husbands' clothes, and they can't earn more than an average of 2*s.* a week just now where they have families.

"2. The guardians do all they can to discourage plaiting, and try to get the parents to send their girls to service. In the workhouse the matron prepares the girls for domestic service, and many have succeeded well."

In answering the question in the Commissioners' circular of inquiry which refers to the state of education, the Board of Guardians for Hitchin union say (Herts evidence, 28),—

"In consequence of the employment of children in plaiting, and also the indifference of their parents to the value of education, there is much neglect in sending children to school. There are plaiting schools in most of our parishes, to which children are sent from 3 years old. In many of these neither reading nor writing is taught, the object being to extract a large amount of work from the children. These greatly interfere with the attendance at the educational schools."*

Private gangs.

44. Passing now to a review of the evidence, as it serves to answer the questions asked in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry: I found no evidence of the existence of gangs in Derbyshire. In Hertfordshire private gangs, or parties of adult women, are here and there employed in weeding corn, hoeing turnips, &c.; and gangs of boys under a foreman are employed by some farmers, chiefly in pulling charlock or in other light summer work. I see no reason for subjecting such private gangs to legislative interference other than such indirect interference as would be caused by educational restrictions, which might limit farm labour to children above a certain age or demand a certificate of ability to read and write before allowing a child to be employed. Private gangs.

* During the discussion, Mr. Pollard, one of the guardians present, said, "He thought they should mention in their answer that "the plaiting schools are most unwholesome; ventilation is bad and the health of the children suffers by preserving a high "temperature on the ground 'that it makes the straw work better.'"

General Farm Employment.

J. 2. Derbyshire labour returns.

45. The following is a return of the labourers, male and female, employed during the spring quarter on 13 farms in Derbyshire, extending over 3,899 acres, of which 1,058 are arable and 2,841 in permanent pasture:—

	Number of Farms.	Acres Arable.	Acres Pasture.	Total Acreage.	Males.						Females.						
					Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
North Derbyshire -	8	743	1,843	2,586	—	1	—	11	36	48	—	—	—	—	1	2	3
South Derbyshire -	5	315	998	1,313	—	—	4	7	25	36	—	—	1	5	11	5	22
Totals -	13	1,058	2,841	3,899	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	12	7	25

46. I have separated the returns for North and South Derbyshire, in order to show how small an element in the farm economy of North Derbyshire the labour of females and children under 13 years of age is.

Variation in staff of farms during four quarters of the year.

47. The following Table shows how the ordinary staff of these 13 farms, omitting extra hands in hay time and harvest, varies during the different seasons of the year:—

Employment on 13 Farms in Derbyshire covering 3,899 acres.	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring - - -	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	12	7	25
„ Summer - -	—	—	4	19	63	86	—	—	1	5	14	7	27
„ Autumn - -	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	10	3	19
„ Winter - -	—	—	4	18	56	78	—	—	1	5	8	3	17

Extra hands in hay-time and harvest.

48. It will be well first to dispose of the item "extra hands in hay time and harvest," which I think one or two quotations from the evidence will do most satisfactorily.

Mr. Daniel Roberts, bailiff to the Duke of Rutland, speaking of the neighbourhood of Bakewell, says (Derbyshire evidence, 9),—

"Women do no farm work now, not even in hay and corn harvest. Upwards of 20 years ago women were a good deal employed in twitching, cleaning turnips, and other light work; now hay-tedding and mowing machines and reaping machines have entirely taken the place of female labour, and provided for an increasing deficiency of male labour in hay time and harvest. Formerly a great many Irish labourers came, but their number is greatly diminished; not one-half come now of the number who used formerly to come, and without mowing machines we should have a great difficulty to get through our hay-cutting. Irish labourers who do come, come here for hay time, then go further south, where harvest is earlier, and come back for our late harvest, and then go to Lancashire for potato-picking."

Mr. Wm. Greaves, also speaking for the neighbourhood of Bakewell, says (Derbyshire evidence, 11),—

"We have a good supply of labour, and they are employed throughout the year. Our extra men are generally Irish, who have been in the habit of coming here early in June and staying to assist in hay-making, which is of great extent here. About the end of July they go forward to the corn counties. For the last three or four years they have not come as much as before, and in 1866 and 1867 we were much perplexed to get the grass cut and made. Mowing alone cost from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per statute acre. This has compelled us to have machines, and most farmers last year cut their grass with mowing machines."

49. Whatever causes may be in operation to diminish the number of Irish harvesters who visit England, and the diminution of their number has been the cause and not the effect of the greater use of mowing and reaping machines, the almost entire absence of women from the hay and corn fields of North Derbyshire appears to me to point to a great improvement in the pecuniary position of the labouring class.

Mr. M. F. Mill's evidence is very much to the point here, where he says,—

"All labour, mining and agricultural, has risen about 30 per cent. during the last 25 years."

Proportion of men thrown out of work in winter.

50. As is natural, however, on an acreage consisting chiefly of permanent grass, the quantity of adult labour employed is comparatively small, and a larger per-centage of men are thrown out of work in winter. The ordinary staff of the acreage I have given, which consists of 61 adult male labourers for three-fourths of the year, falls to 56 in winter, *i.e.*, about 9 per cent. of men whose ordinary occupation is that of farm labourers, are thrown out of work in winter, and it is fortunate that other sources of employment are open to them.

I have reason to believe that this per-centage of men thrown out of farm work in winter would have been greater if I had received returns from a larger proportion of small farms.

51. The returns made to me show an average employment of 1 man to 64 acres, of which somewhat more than one-fourth are arable.

Employment of boys in farm labour in North Derbyshire.

52. The eight labour returns from North Derbyshire, which are from farms averaging upwards of 300 acres, show that on such farms in that part of the county boys under 13 are not regularly employed in agriculture. The other evidence on this subject (with the exception of that given by the Rev. D.

Vawdrey, of which presently) fixes the age at which regular employment begins at from 12 to 13, except on small farms, where children are employed by their parents. Up to 12 or 13 children in North Derbyshire are only employed (as far as farm labour is concerned) in odd jobs, which may from time to time make their services useful in spring, summer, and autumn. J. 2.

53. The Rev. D. Vawdrey (evidence, 13), in answering the circular question for Darley parish, says,—

"Boys are employed in agriculture from 7 or 8 years old upwards. They are employed from March till September."

In an excellent letter (Derbyshire evidence, 13*a*), on the general condition of the agricultural labouring class, which he addressed to me, Mr. Vawdrey says,—

"Twenty years ago we had at school a large class of boys and girls, all of whom were above 13 years old. Now there are few of either sex, especially in the summer time, older if as old as 10. The boy at 6 nurses the baby or gathers manure, and the boy at 7 goes to the nursery garden to weed, and the instant the law permits them the rest are off to the flax mill at half time, in which condition their education is supposed to be provided for."

It is evident therefore, I think, that in answering the circular question Mr. Vawdrey had in his eye the employment given in the large nursery gardens at Darley rather than farm labour proper. Nursery gardening would no doubt be considered agricultural employment in any enactment placing legislative restrictions on such employment. Mr. Vawdrey, however, says:—

"No restriction is desirable for any purposes except for *educational*."

54. For South Derbyshire the returns for five farms, including 1,313 acres, of which about one-fourth are arable, make no mention of any child under 10 years of age, and give 4, or about 1 to 300 acres, as the number of boys between 10 and 13 years of age in regular employment. The remainder of the evidence from South Derbyshire on this subject shows that the regular employment of boys as farm servants begins, as in North Derbyshire, at from 12 to 13 years of age, and that irregular employment begins rather earlier in the south than in the north of the county. Employment of boys in South Derbyshire.

In point of fact, in the north of the county the parents are rather better off than they are in the south, and most of the boys after they are 12 or 13 years of age find employment other than agricultural.

55. In some of the parishes in Burton union I found that about one-third of the labourers' wives and a few unmarried women were employed on the farms in spring, summer, and autumn. In the north of the county female labour, except in connexion with dairy work, is now very little known to the farmer. I have already quoted Mr. Robert's evidence. Mr. H. P. Bagshawe, relieving officer of Bakewell union, says,— Employment of women in field labour confined to South Derbyshire.

"The women grumble if you ask them to do a bit of hay making."

Lord G. H. Cavendish, M.P., chairman of Bakewell union, says,—

"I have seldom seen women employed in the fields, except in making hay."

56. The following Table shows the whole ordinary staff for the four quarters of the year on 18 farms, extendlng over 8,933 acres in Herts, of which 6,742 are arable and 2,191 are in permanent pasture:— Hertfordshire labour returns.

18 Farms extending over 8,933 acres in Herts.	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring	—	4	40	84	286	414					19	2	21
„ Summer	—	2	45	84	289	420	Exclusive of women who only work in hay time and harvest.				20	2	22
„ Autumn	—	4	39	83	288	414					20	2	22
„ Winter	—	2	37	83	285	407					18	1	19

57. It will be seen that the per-centage of males over 18 years of age who are thrown out of work in winter is very small, and that the number of such men employed (harvest excepted, as extra harvest hands were omitted from the returns) is almost the same throughout the year. This is of course a healthy state of things in a county where agricultural labour forms the chief employment of men and arises from the large proportion of arable land and active cultivation of the farms from which the labour returns were obtained.* Proportion of men thrown out of work in winter very small.

* Deducting Earl Cowper's and Mr. Abel Smith's farms, which contain a large proportion of park ground, the labour account for 16 farmers (15 of which are occupied by tenant farmers) stands thus—

Herts.	Extent of Farms.			Males.						Females.						
	Arable.	Pasture.	Total.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
16 farms	6,472	1,242	7,714	—	4	38	78	252	372	—	—	—	—	18	1	19

Showing an ordinary staff of—
One man to about 31 acres
„ lad „ 100 „
„ boy „ 180 „
} Where about five-sixths of the land is arable.

J. 2.

Employment of young men and boys in Herts.

58. One lad between 13 and 18 is employed for about 110 acres (of which about three-fourths are arable), and that continuously throughout the year.

59. Of boys between 10 and 13 one is employed to about every 200 acres of such mixed cultivation, and of these 6 or 7 per cent. are thrown out of work in winter, while there is an addition of about 10 per cent. to their number in summer.

60. Of boys under 10 very few are employed continuously through any one quarter of the year, and only one to above 4,000 acres is returned as employed throughout the year. You will observe how closely these labour returns resemble those given for Oxfordshire and Berks.

Employment of women and girls in Herts.

61. It will be seen from Table A., Herts evidence, how the employment of women varies in different parts of the county. In the plaiting district, *i.e.*, towards the west of the county and towards the south generally, very little field work is done by women, except in hay time and harvest. North of Ware and east of the line of the Great Northern Railway the employment of women, four-fifths of whom are married, becomes more common, and on two farms of about 1,000 acres each in that district the employment of women in light work in spring and summer averages 1 to 100 acres.

62. Girls are not employed in farm labour in any part of the county which I visited or from which I have received evidence.

Medical Evidence and Provision of Milk.

Legislative interference to protect children from physical injury is not necessary.

63. The medical evidence (which will be found in Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Derbyshire evidence and No. 7 of the Herts evidence), when taken in conjunction with the evidence I have already referred to, will, I think, entirely justify my repeating what I have already said for the counties I have previously reported on, "*That legislative interference for the sake of protecting children from physical injury supposed "to arise from the manner in which they are employed in farm labour is not necessary.*"

Derbyshire neck and provision of milk.

64. I need, however, I think, make no apology for quoting at length part of the evidence given by Mr. E. M. Wrench, a surgeon in practice in Bakewell union in Derbyshire, which refers to a malady (goitre or Derbyshire neck) peculiar to a certain district in that county, and shows his estimate of the value of a good supply of milk to the children of the labouring class.

Mr. Wrench (*see* Derbyshire evidence, 2) says,—

"The health of the agricultural labourer and his family is very good, and has much improved lately, from better cottage accommodation and water supply, though much remains to be done."

"The Derbyshire neck is not nearly so common as it used to be. It is, as far as I can ascertain, after careful inquiry, attributable to defective nutriment, perhaps monotonous diet, and *not*, as is commonly supposed, to the limestone water or repeated intermarriage. The largest family of cretins in this neighbourhood occurs in one where a very well-to-do farmer's daughter ran away with a labouring man, and where there was not the slightest consanguinity.

"The food of the agricultural labourer has much improved since the introduction of railways, by the substitution of wheaten bread for oat cake. Milk, in the summer or cheese season, is very scarce, but at other times is pretty plentiful and easily procurable, with great advantage to the women and children.

"It is the custom of some of the landlords, most especially his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, to allow the labourers to rent enough grass land to keep one or two cows, with the greatest advantage to the labourer, by aiding his wages (which average 14*s.* a week), and inducing thrift to his wife by affording her more employment, and to the children by providing them with milk for nearly half the year, when there is no cheese-making.

"The labourers form small clubs, each member of which has the milk of all their cows in turn, and by these means each family is able to make one or two good cheeses every week or ten days. The beneficial result of the labourer keeping his cow is wonderfully exemplified in the health of the children of Baslow, where, out of a population of over 900, the deaths under 10 years of age (including those who only lived a few hours from birth) has averaged less than 3 per annum for the last 10 years, or at the rate of 3·103 per 1,000.

"I need scarcely say that this preservation of infant life would be our destruction were it not for the constant exodus of our young people to the neighbouring large towns for work, for which their good education and healthy frames eminently fit them.

"The labourer's cow again being of use in affording a little capital to enable the parents to apprentice their children to lucrative trades, or to send them to the colonies, where their practical knowledge of cattle is most useful."

65. The Rev. D. Vawdrey, rector of Darley and vice-chairman of Bakewell union, on the same subject or subjects (Derbyshire evidence, 13a), says,—

"Goitre is an evil incident to this locality, so extensive and so mischievous that no report of the hilly districts of Derbyshire would be complete without some reference to it. There is a great deal of it in this parish. In one family six daughters were deaf and dumb, one son a maniac, and another imbecile. In another family four daughters were deaf and dumb. There are many other cases of imbecility and imperfect development, either of bodily or mental power or both, all in this parish. Yet this parish is well drained, has admirable water all flowing from gritstone, and is spread over a wide and very open valley. Goitre chiefly prevails among the aboriginal inhabitants. I know but of one instance where any strangers coming to live here (and there are many) have shown any symptoms of it. Among the aborigines the system of intermarrying has been carried on for generations to an extent which I have never met with out of Derbyshire, and to this fact, more than to any other, I attribute the prevalence of this disease. Some years ago I obtained from all the medical officers of our union an opinion as to the possible and probable effect of administering to sickly children, at a certain age, in the spring of the year, port wine and quinine (especially if good milk were a constant part of their diet) in gradually eradicating the seeds of goitre. Their opinion was unanimous that the systematic adoption of such a course would *in time* be effectual. But then the poor could not be expected to buy such articles. The guardians should have the power and indeed be *required* to dispense them whenever their medical officers recommended them to be given. It would be a most economical policy to do so.*

* Mr. C. Evans (evidence 3), says, "Cases of 'Derbyshire neck' are diminishing, though still hanging about the district in "which it used to prevail."

"In connexion with this subject comes the labourers' cow and cottage allotments. I am sorry to see that modern notions of political economy are year by year causing these things to disappear amongst us. Twenty years ago there were few respectable labourers in this parish who had not their cow or cows. The wife and children mostly did the work required by them, and the husband gave his own labour to his employer. About 12 years since a large portion of the parish changed hands, and the first thing which the new owner did was to abolish the old system on his entire estate. I am sure that the change has been prejudicial in everyway." J. 2.

66. The "Derbyshire neck" is certainly much less prevalent in the county than it used to be, and from whatever cause the malady settled itself in that district, there can be little doubt that the number of persons attacked by it is diminishing pretty much in the same ratio as the power of obtaining more nutritious diet increases.

67. The introduction of Mr. Wrench's and Mr. Vawdrey's evidence leads me to discuss here the provision of milk, and what I may call cow-allotment system, because I am unwilling to weaken the effect of their evidence by allowing any other subject to intervene. Cow-allotment system in Derbyshire.

I believe it would be impossible to over-estimate the value of such a provision of milk as is within the reach of the families of most of the Derbyshire labourers. There are features too in the manner in which it is sometimes obtained, which tend to show how the condition of the labourer and his family may be improved without the danger of making him above doing his duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him.

68. Many labourers in the North of Derbyshire rent with their cottage six or eight acres of grass land with a shippon attached, and are thus enabled to keep two cows during both summer and winter. Others rent a smaller quantity of grass land which they mow, and graze their cows during summer in one of their masters' fields, or more commonly in the nearest nobleman or gentleman's park. Others again, who live near a park where they can enjoy this privilege, and who have no cow of their own, borrow one from a farmer and so get her milk for the summer months at a cost of from 3*l.* to 4*l.*

69. Some further examples of the evidence I received on this subject will perhaps explain the milk system better, and show how, in the opinion of persons who know both, a labourer with his cow-allotment compares with a small farmer.

Mr. R. Nesfield, agent to the Duke of Rutland, says,—

"Most labourers have a garden and two small fields enough for two cows, one field to pasture and one to mow."

70. Lord G. H. Cavendish, M.P., chairman of Bakewell union, says,—

"There are in the neighbourhood, both on the properties of the Duke of Devonshire and Duke of Rutland, allotments of land, but I think in this district the better class of labourers look more to renting an acre or two of land to enable them to keep a cow."

71. Mr. Young, of Ewe Close, says,—

"At Hassop Park (Col. Leslie's) they take cows in for 21 weeks in summer, as at Chatsworth. If a labourer has not a cow he borrows one. They have cow clubs to which the members pay 2*s.* 6*d.* a year."

72. Mr. Cottingham, agent to the Duke of Devonshire, speaking of Edensor, says,—

"The cottages have all gardens, and most of them have sufficient land to winter a cow. In summer they pasture their cows in Chatsworth Park, paying 3*l.* for the summer's grass, about 21 weeks."

On the subject of cow allotments *versus* small farms, Mr. Cottingham says,—

"I think that a man with an allotment of, say, 10 acres, to keep a couple of cows, is better off than the holder of 20 or 30 acres or a farm just big enough to tempt him to do nothing else but work on his farm.

"I reduced one man to 10 acres from 20 to compel him to work, and he afterwards told me I had made a gentleman of him; he now works for the Duke of Devonshire at 14*s.* a week, and has his grass allotment of 10 acres. This system works well, bringing up a good class of labourers, and giving their wives an occupation at home."

73. The Rev. J. Hall, vicar of Edensor, says,—

"I am clearly of opinion that the small farmers, *i.e.*, persons holding from 30 to 60 acres of land, are as a class worse off in this neighbourhood than the labourers, who receive generally from 14*s.* to 18*s.* per week.

"On the other hand, where a labourer can have, as is common with us, just so much grass land as will enable him to keep one or two cows, which can be managed by his wife with scarcely any demand upon his own time, his position is undoubtedly much better than that of those to whom this privilege is denied.

"I am satisfied that these views are shared by nearly all who are acquainted with the district."

74. Mr. Samuel Turner, bailiff to the Duke of Devonshire, for the Bakewell district, says,—

"We have a good many occupiers of a cottage and a few acres who keep one or two cows. These men are labourers as well, and are well off, fully as well off as a man who farms 30 acres and is not a regular farmer. A man who occupies less than 100 acres has great difficulty to make a living, as land here is chiefly grazing land. Men who have no land can 'lay' a cow for 20 weeks in summer for 4*l.*"

75. Mr. M. F. Mills, who has the charge of large estates in the neighbourhood of Chesterfield, says,—

"A labourer is best placed where he has just sufficient land to keep a cow, and that we encourage. Where I can give a man two or three acres to make hay of to keep his cow in winter, and provide a general cow pasture for summer at 3*l.* 10*s.* for 20 weeks (May 17th to October 10th). This works remarkably well, especially among mechanics. I think 20 poles quite sufficient for a spade-cultivated garden or allotment."

76. Such are the opinions of gentlemen who have every reason for understanding the position of the labourer and small farmer in North Derbyshire. I have not myself the smallest doubt that a regular labourer with 14*s.* a week and a grass allotment sufficient to keep two cows, is in a better position pecuniarily than the small farmer; and all the evidence I have received on this subject in Derbyshire, and have since received in South Wales, goes to show that he treats his family fully as well, *i.e.*, that he sends his children more regularly to school, and does not send them to work so early. Cow-allotment system *versus* small farms.

The amount of savings too necessary to become the possessor of a couple of cows and occupier of

J. 2.

from 6 to 10 acres is within reach of 10 times as many labourers, perhaps 100 times as many, as the amount which would be required to stock a farm which would maintain him with equal comfort as a farmer.

Here then lies the secret of the comfort of many of the labourers homes in North Derbyshire. The father brings in 14*s.* or 15*s.* a week, and the mother finds work enough at home in managing her cows and house, and looking after her husband's and her children's clothes; and when their turn comes the children go out to work with frames much stronger than those of their own age who have lacked one of the first necessaries of early life, and with the advantage of an industrial training which is certain to be of use to them in after life.

An allotment or garden is of the very greatest possible benefit to a labourer as long as it does not interfere with his legitimate employment, but a cultivated allotment very soon reaches that limit. The work to be done on such an allotment is chiefly man's work, whereas the management of the cow allotment may be left almost entirely to the woman.

The great difficulty in the way of introducing such a system in the southern counties, at least for those labourers who live near gentlemen's parks, is the ignorance of the women of the management of cows and dairy produce, a difficulty which might, however, be gradually overcome.

77. In South Derbyshire there is no such reason for the gradually diminishing number of cows kept by labourers. Formerly many cows were kept in the lanes in summer, and fed in the winter on grains purchased from the Burton breweries. During the last few years the grazing of cows about the roads has very properly been put an end to, but no provision has been made for the cows of labourers who had long enjoyed that privilege.

78. I have dwelt on what I consider the advantages of the cow-allotment system as against small farms; because unless we are altogether to abandon our approaches to free trade in land as in other things, it is impossible to resist the tendency to increase farms to such a size as to make it profitable to use on them all the means which reduce the cost of labour and add to the value of the produce.

Schools and School Attendance.

79. There has been a considerable improvement in the provision of schools in Derbyshire during the last few years, and their number is still increasing.

In answer to the circular question the Board of Guardians for Burton union (Derbyshire evidence, 32) say,—

"There are parochial schools in nearly every parish, and the children's attendance is not interfered with by early labour."

Quality of schools varies in proportion to the resources of the clergyman and presence of resident gentry.

The quality of the schools, however, varies very much, being chiefly dependent on the manner in which they are supported by aid other than that derived from the children's pence, which aid varies in proportion to the resources of the clergymen and the presence of resident gentry. Some of the parishes are very large and the whole teaching power is frequently expended on those children who are fortunate enough to live near the parish church.*

80. I will give an example from the evidence to show that in Derbyshire as elsewhere the clergyman is apt to be left to bear the brunt of the educational fight. In answering the circular question for Darley parish, the Rev. D. Vawdrey says,—

"The greater part of the property in this parish is owned by non-resident proprietors, most of whom contribute nothing to the education of the poor. Ill paid as my teachers are, the deficiency in the funds of the school has (every year) varied from 10*l.* to 30*l.*, which has invariably fallen on myself." †

81. In a county where school attendance is affected by other occupations much more than by farm labour it would be difficult to obtain such returns as would show accurately how far agricultural employment is a hindrance to education. The only return of any importance which I received was from the endowed school at Hilton in South Derbyshire. This school, which is a very popular one in its neighbourhood, has on its register 36 boys of the agricultural labouring class in summer and 58 in winter. *Of boys under* 10 there is an average attendance of 18 in summer against 24 in winter. Osier peeling (which you will find described in Derbyshire evidence, 35) might altogether account for this winter increase in average attendance, but it cannot, as it only lasts six or seven weeks, account for the fact that there are only 22 boys of that age on the register in summer against 30 in winter; it would appear in fact that 8 out of 30 boys under 10 years of age omit to attend school at all in summer. *Of boys between* 10 *and* 13, the summer register of 14 doubles itself in winter, and the average attendance increases from 5 to 22. A large proportion of boys of that age therefore who are otherwise engaged in summer attend school in winter.

At Hilton school the winter attendance of boys between 10 and 13 is very nearly equal to that of boys under 10, but it would be unsafe to draw any conclusion from this fact, as I have no returns to show how far the popularity of the master of this school affects the attendance of boys of that age at neighbouring schools.

School returns confirm general evidence as to effect of farm labour on school attendance.

82. There is, however, nothing in the return of the Hilton school nor in that from Handley, near Staveley (Derbyshire evidence, 21a), to contradict the general tenor of the evidence, which shows that up to 12 or 13 years of age farm labour does not altogether withdraw children from school, but that as early as 10 it makes their attendance irregular.

83. Owing to the fact that children remain longer at school in Derbyshire than in more southern counties, there is not the same pressure to keep up a regular attendance at an early age.

84. Opinions as to the extent to which the indifference or negligence of parents interferes with the

* It must not be forgotten that a large number of children in Derbyshire are educated by a half-time system in schools of variable quality attached to factories and supported by the manufacturers.

† I wish very much I had been permitted to give you an account of the income of the schools in two townships of the large parish of Duffield (which I used to know well in times past) showing how much of the necessary supply is derived from landowners resident and non-resident.

progress of education differ in Derbyshire as elsewhere, but on the whole I am inclined to think that the advantages of education are better appreciated in that county than in the counties I have already reported on. J. 2.

Indifference and negligence of parents as affecting school attendance.

Mr. John Coleman, whose experience was gained in Bedfordshire, says (Derbyshire evidence, 29):—

"I must say the working classes are very much more alive to the benefits of education than in other districts, where the farmer and his men are quite different classes, and not as here, the one in many instances sprung from the other; and it is the hope and struggle to get into a small farm that induces many a labouring man to keep his children at school when they might be pecuniarily benefiting him by work.

"I think there are many more inducements in this district for young men to get away from agricultural work, and therefore they are more careful about education.

85. On the other hand Mr. J. Young, whose experience was gained in the south of Scotland, says (Derbyshire evidence, 15):—

"There are plenty of parish schools about here (Hassop), but there is not that earnestness among the parents and the parish ministers that you find in the north."

86. The Rev. J. H. Jenkins, who has spent the last 20 years in humanizing, christianizing, and educating one of the most benighted districts in Belper union, says:—

"The poor think little of education, and are unwilling to pay the small sum required of them; on the smallest pretence they keep their children at home."

87. Mr. John Shaw, who can speak with considerable authority on this subject, in his evidence for South Derbyshire, says:—

"The means of education are national or parochial schools, and in a few instances endowed schools or private schools of landed proprietors. Advantage is *not* taken of these means to the extent which could be wished, although there is a general desire for the children to be 'taught.' This is not attributable, except in a comparatively small degree, to early labour or inability to pay, but I believe it arises from carelessness and negligence on the part of the parents, and in many cases, where it can be afforded, from an indisposition to pay the weekly pence. I know, however, of many instances where great anxiety exists to educate the children and for which purposes great sacrifices are made."

88. I did not visit any parish in Hertfordshire where the children were not within easy reach of some school, and I think there are few children, at any rate in the south of the county, who have to complain of the distance they have to go to school.

Schools and school attendance in Hertfordshire.

89. The Hitchin Board of Guardians, who discussed all the questions in the Commissioners' circular of inquiry, answered the one which refers to the provision of schools as follows:—

"Most parishes have national schools, and some have also schools on the British system. Parishes which are entirely without are usually within reach of neighbouring schools."

This answer reads as if the provision of schools is not quite so good in the Hitchin union, but for that I cannot answer personally.

90. Table C. of the Herts evidence contains in detail school returns from seven rural parishes lying near each other in the neighbourhood of Hertford. These parishes, which extend over 13,347 acres, contain 2,753 inhabitants, and their school account stands thus:—

School returns from seven rural parishes in Herts.

There are of the children of the agricultural labouring class in average attendance—

In summer	137	boys under 10.
	32	„ between 10 and 13.
	152	girls under 10.
	80	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13 -	401	
In winter	131	boys under 10.
	32	„ between 10 and 13.
	152	girls under 10.
	80	„ between 10 and 13.
Total children under 13 -	385	

The same schools have on their registers,—

In summer -	-	517 children under 13.
In winter -	-	489 „ „

If the attendance at these schools is drawn entirely from the parishes which they represent, the number of children in the registers as well as in average attendance is higher in proportion to the population than in any group of parishes from which I have as yet received returns.

The only way, however, to settle this question fairly is to take every school in a large area, and that I had not time to do in Herts.

Excluding Watton school, where there is a much larger attendance of girls than boys, the number of boys under 10 who attend school is about the same as the number of girls. That the attendance of such boys decreases in winter, no doubt owing to the state of roads and weather, appears to me to show that farm labour, which at their age would be confined to the summer half-year, interferes very little with their school attendance.

At 10 a great change takes place. The summer and winter attendance is the same, but the number of boys between 10 and 13 in attendance (again excluding Watton) has sunk to one-half of that of the girls of the same age. The working life of the Hertfordshire boy begins soon after 10, and once begun it puts an end to school attendance, as is shown by the fact that the winter attendance for boys over 10 shows no increase on the summer attendance.

91. In Hertfordshire, where good schools are provided, you may expect to find children of the agricultural labouring class kept pretty regularly at school from 5 to 10 years of age; at an average of 11 years of age their education, as obtained at day-schools, altogether ceases.

Summary of evidence derived from school returns.

J. 2.

92. In Derbyshire children are not usually sent to school so early, and up to 10 the attendance is more irregular; the education, however, is continued at day-schools during the winter half-year, in the majority of cases, up to 12 or 13 years of age.

93. It is pretty clear from the returns of schools I have quoted that where good schools (always excepting the plait country) are provided, the labouring class in Herts speedily learn to take advantage of them.

As to Restrictions on Agricultural Employment for the sake of Education.

Resolutions of Boards of Guardians in Derbyshire.

94. The Board of Guardians for Chesterfield union (in Derbyshire) say:—

"In the opinion of this Board, it is highly desirable that all children should be able to read and write before being employed in agriculture, and that if they are unable to do so they ought not to be so employed before 10 years of age."

95. The Guardians for Belper union (Derbyshire evidence, 24):—

"We do not consider it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which children should be permitted to work on the land, inasmuch as children in this union are very seldom so employed under 12 years of age."

96. The Burton Guardians (Derbyshire evidence, 32) say:—

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which children should be permitted to work on the land.

"The children's attendance is not interfered with by early labour."

Opinion of majority of witnesses.

97. The usual answer given by employers of agricultural labour in Derbyshire, as well as by the majority of other witnesses from that county, to the question of limiting the age at which children should be employed in farm labour, is that no such limitation is necessary, as it is not usual so to employ children until they are 12 or 13 years of age.

Restrictions, if any, best suited to Derbyshire.

98. The arrangement which would suit Derbyshire best would be a compulsory attendance for eight months in the year up to 10 years of age, and for four months in the year between 10 and 13. An attendance of eight months for children under 10 would not interfere with the family picnic in time of osier peeling, nor with the chance of obtaining healthy exercise while assisting their parents in haytime or harvest. Nor would a four months winter attendance up to 13 years of age appreciably affect the earnings of boys between 10 and 13.

Restrictions best suited to Herts.

It is a very different matter in a county like Herts, where boys expect to obtain a yearly engagement by the time they reach their eleventh year. What I have already said of the neighbouring counties would apply here. A limitation of employment to children over 10 years of age should be qualified by a permission to work at 9, for those children who can obtain a certificate that they can read and write; and any limitation of labour for children between 10 and 13 by compelling attendance at day-schools must contemplate the fact, that it will deprive the families of such children of from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week during the time necessary to fulfil such attendance.

Resolutions of Boards of Guardians in Herts.

99. The following was the resolution of the Hertford Board of Guardians, when I consulted them on this subject:—

"It is the opinion of the Board that no boys should be employed in agricultural labour under 10 years, or at 9 if they have a certificate from the manager of the school that they have made sufficient advance in reading and writing to admit of their leaving school at that age."

100. The Hatfield Guardians passed a resolution to the following effect:—

"The Board are not of opinion that it is desirable to fix an age for the employment of agricultural labour."

101. The St. Albans and Hitchin Guardians also passed resolutions against limiting the age at which children should be employed in agriculture.

102. To give another example of the difference of the two counties I am reporting on, where witnesses in Derbyshire are in favour of a limitation of labour, they say children should be kept at school till they are 12 or 13; in Herts few would place the limit above 10 years of age.

Suggestions as to an edutional scheme by the Rev. D. Vawdrey.

103. The only suggestions for an educational scheme which I have received from these counties in a form to quote here, are those made by the Rev. D. Vawdrey, who says that there should be,—

1st. "A school rate to be paid by the *owners and not by the tenants.*

2nd. "That one-half the cost of the school, &c. should be paid by Government to give them the right of interference and inspection.

3rd. "That it should be made obligatory on millowners to send their children" (*i.e.*, the children whom they employ) "to a school which has a *certificated* master, should there be any such within reach.

4th. "That the hire of any child should be prohibited, *unless certified by the inspector as able at least to read and perhaps write moderately*, under a certain age, say 9; and that the certificate should hold only on condition of a certain amount of attendance *subsequently* either at night school or in the winter months until 12 or 13, unless the inspector should certify sooner that the child's education is sufficient."

Curiously enough these recommendations come from Derbyshire. Mr. Vawdrey's parish in Derbyshire is, however, peculiarly affected by the demand for youthful labour in large nursery gardens. The limitations of labour he recommends resemble very much those which I suggested as applicable to Oxfordshire and Berks, and which would apply equally to Herts.

That a school rate should (unless the whole system of rating is revised) be levied on the "*owner* "*and not on the tenant*," I perfectly agree.

As to the second recommendation, that half the expenses of the school should be paid by Government, I disagree, as I think that the State contribution should in no case exceed one-third of the expenses of the school, leaving the remaining two-thirds to be equally divided between the children's pence and school rate.

Mr. Vawdrey's third recommendation points to what appears to me to be the first step in the direction of educational improvement, viz., a better system of inspection.

If for instance the school inspectors had access to every school of whatever description in the

district under their charge, we should have very little difficulty in discovering where a rate was necessary either to provide a suitable building or support a properly qualified (not necessarily "certificated") teacher. J. 2.

104. Since I have had the honour of serving on this Commission I have never lost an opportunity of impressing upon farmers the benefit of education to agricultural labourers as labourers, but before leaving the subject of education, I would like, while there is yet time, to enter my protest against encouraging "book learning" to the exclusion of all industrial training. Influence of education on the quality of labour and character of the labourer.

I do not for a moment wish to undervalue the benefit of education to the agricultural or any other labourer. It is, no doubt, one of the reasons why the northern labourer is superior to the southern, and, *coupled with a more earnest religious training*, it is, perhaps, *the* reason why the border labourer is superior to the Derbyshire, but it is not the reason why the Derbyshire labourer is superior to the Herts.

The same determination which led the northern labourer to overcome all the difficulties which lay in the way of his educating himself is at work now in enabling him to make the most of that education, and it must not be forgotten, in trying to measure how much of his superiority is due to education, that the fact of his being now educated is the effect of a superiority existing before he was educated.

To me, the most apparent advantage to the labourer as well as to the country of a more extended education, seems to be, that it will put it in the power of an able and industrious man, wherever in England he may chance to be born, to see that he may go and share with the Derbyshire, or any other highly paid labourer, the advantages which are now shut out from him by a cloud of ignorance; but the power of reading, writing, and ciphering alone, will not make him an able or industrious labourer.

Cottages.

105. The state of cottages in Derbyshire varies, as I believe in all other counties, from very good to very bad; on the whole, I think, the proportion of good cottages is larger than in any of the counties I have previously inspected. Provision and quality of cottages in Derbyshire.

There is evidently a general desire on the part of landowners to provide decent dwellings for the labourers on their estates, and this work is progressing pretty much in proportion to the means at the disposal of the owner.

A good many of the best cottages I saw have been recently built for the accommodation of large farms, and are let with the farms; but the most prevailing practice is for the cottager to hold directly from the landowner.

106. One or two examples from the evidence will probably help me to explain the state of matters.

Mr. R. Nesfield, agent to the Duke of Rutland, speaking of the Bakewell district, says (Derbyshire evidence, 6):—

"Cottages are generally good in this neighbourhood, and are sufficient for the supply of labour, and are for the most part conveniently situtaed with respect to the farms."

107. Mr. W. Greaves, a large occupier in Bakewell parish, says (Derbyshire evidence, 11):—

"The great drawback to the farmers generally is the want of cottages on their farms, and the rule is that the labourers live in the towns and villages, and I should think average two miles from their work; this tells on the men heavily, both in distance and the baneful effects of beer-houses."

As a matter of fact a good many labourers living in the town of Bakewell, in houses which cannot be described as good, have to go much further to their work than is good for them.

108. The Rev. D. Vawdrey, answering for a large parish (Darley), says:—

"The cottages are substantial and not overcrowded."

Edensor parish, as everybody who has visited Chatsworth knows, finds excellent accommodation for its 600 inhabitants from the noble duke who owns it to his poorest labourer.

109. Mr. M. F. Mills, land agent, speaking of the neighbourhood of Chesterfield, says:—

"Agricultural labourers cottages are above the average. They belong to the landowners, and are held directly from the landowners, except on large farms where one or two cottages are let with the farms."

110. Mr. T. W. Evans, landowner, speaking of Allestree parish, says:—

"The cottages in this parish are many of them new and generally good; a few, however, are very bad."

The good cottages in Allestree belong to Mr. Evans himself, the bad ones to small freeholders.

111. The Rev. J. H. Jenkins, of Hazelwood, says:—

"Our cottages are very bad; there is rarely more than one bedroom in them, in which adults and children crowd together. This is partly owing to the circumstance that they belong to small proprietors who are desirous to get as much as possible at the least outlay."

What struck me most about Hazelwood and the adjoining township of Shottle was the wretched state of several of the small farmhouses. If any man is desirous of receiving a practical answer to the question of large or small holdings, as affecting agriculture, I would advise him to visit these townships.

112. Mr. John Coleman, land steward to Lord Scarsdale, speaking of the neighbourhood of Kedleston, says (Derbyshire evidence, 29):—

"In this parish the cottages are nearly all new and good, but in the district I must say they are bad and small, with very poor accommodation for the division of the sexes, and are ill ventilated. They are situated in villages, and the inhabitants have a long distance to go to their work. I cannot say anything in their favour, and as they are short in number in many districts, they are very much overcrowded."

113. Mr. John Shaw's account of the cottages in South Derbyshire may stand for the county. He says:—

"Some of the cottages in South Derbyshire are very poor indeed, and in some places they are not sufficient for the supply of labour in the respective localities, nor are they conveniently situated. Some are also overcrowded, and evil results to morality have come under my notice in consequence. Within the last 20 years,

J. 2. however, very great improvements have been made in the cottages in this county, and on many large properties with which I am acquainted a very excellent state of things exist, cottages with all necessary conveniences having been erected, and good gardens having been provided."

114. I don't recollect visiting any cottage in Derbyshire in which there was not a fireplace with a boiler on one side and an oven on the other, a provision which one seldom sees in southern cottages. Fuel is no doubt cheaper in Derbyshire than in the south of England, but there are many occasions on which a labourer's wife if she had such a kitchen range would make shift, even where fuel is dear, to keep a hot dinner or supper ready for her husband.

There was, too, an air of cleanliness and comfort about the interior of the Derbyshire cottages which gave me a very favourable impression of their mistresses.

Condition of labourers' cottages in Herts;

115. To report on the condition of labourers cottages in Herts would be to repeat, with a change of names, what I have said of their condition in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berks.

What I said, for instance, of the Duke of Bedford's estate in Bedfordshire, I might repeat for Mr. Abel Smith's in Herts; no expense has been spared in providing for the comfort of everybody connected with it. With the exception, however, of Mr. Abel Smith's, I know no large estate in the part of the county to which my inquiries were confined where the cottages are, either in quality or quantity, what the owner would like to see them.

116. Cottages, it must be remembered, are a very much more serious item in estate economy in Herts than in Derbyshire. Less than one-half of the cottages required to supply labour in the former county would be sufficient (taking the average of the counties) for the same acreage in the latter. When the great landowner in Derbyshire has supplied one cottage for every 60 or 70 acres of his best land, he has done well; but his brother in Herts has not done well till he has supplied twice as many.

Measured in this way, I am afraid a very small proportion of the Hertfordshire landowners have done well; too many of the labourers working on their estates live in cottages which do not belong to them, and of which, if they did, they would be heartily ashamed.

I do not remember visiting any town or large village in Herts, with the exception of Watton, where I did not see some very bad cottages inhabited by farm labourers. As bad as any a man need to occupy may be found in Hatfield, St. Alban's, Harpenden, Hitchin, and Stevenage.

Allotments.

in Derbyshire;

117. I have already described the cow-allotment system of Derbyshire. All cottages belonging to the landowners in Derbyshire have either gardens attached to them or small allotments of garden ground. Allotments of land are provided near many of the towns and mining villages, and are greatly prized by the miners and mechanics. The Duke of Rutland, for instance, provides allotments of 40 poles each in the neighbourhood of Ilkeston, which are in great demand amongst the colliers and framework-knitters.

Allotments of land for garden cultivation are even of more importance to colliers and men engaged in indoor work than to farm labourers; and the example of his Grace of Rutland is one which might perhaps be followed more extensively.

in Herts.

All the cottages on Earl Cowper's and Mr. Abel Smith's estates near Hertford are provided with good gardens or allotments, and such a provision is becoming very general in the county. Mr. Trethewy, Earl Cowper's agent, whom you will accept as a high authority on the subject of allotments, and from whom I received great assistance while I was in Herts, told me that he did not find allotments so much appreciated or so well done by in that county as in Bedfordshire.

118. On the subject of benefit societies, beer-houses, and pauperism, I have nothing to add to what I have already said in my last report.

After expressing my thanks to the many persons who gave me kindly help in Derbyshire and Herts,

I beg to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
GEO. CULLEY.

August 28th, 1869.

REPORT by Mr. R. F. BOYLE on SOMERSETSHIRE.

K.

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TO HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS.

GENTLEMEN, July 1869.

1. I VENTURE to lay before you the evidence which I collected on the employment of women and children in agriculture in the county of Somerset during the months of June and July last year, and the February and March of the present year; and in the course of my inquiries I came to the conclusion that while demanding in a conspicuous degree inquiry into the general condition of the agricultural labouring class, the wages they receive, and the habitations in which they dwell, the county of Somerset does not so much require a special inquiry into the employment of women and children in agriculture, the principal object of my mission, except in one or two districts. There are two main causes to account for this. (1.) Somerset is more peculiarly a pastoral county than any other county in England, possessing, though only eighth in size of English counties, a greater extent of surface under grass than any other county except Yorkshire, and breeding stock more extensively than any other except Yorkshire and Lancashire; and in a pastoral country there is less work for children than in an arable country, while much of the milking is done by men and by farm servants. (2.) All the women in the most southerly part of the county, where wages are low, are engaged in sewing gloves in their own cottages, to be sent to Yeovil, Milborne Port, and other centres of the glove trade.

Somersetshire a pastoral county.

2. There are only two districts in the county which seem to demand a very special inquiry on these subjects, that is districts in which the extent of arable land exceeds that of the meadow and pasture, and therefore employs many women and children, viz., the valleys and slopes of Exmoor and its offshoots, and the cold soil on the hills around Somerton. All over the rest of the county meadow and pasture prevails, though the districts are few in which there is not also a small proportion of arable land intermixed, and in which women and children will not be found more or less employed.

Only two important arable districts.

3. To these two districts we must look, therefore, for the principal employment of women and children; to the former principally, comprising the sandstone formations due west of the Quantock hills and Taunton to the borders of Devon, through the whole extent of which there is no employment for women, except agriculture; whereas the latter district comprises the lias formation between the valleys of the Yeo and Brue, and to the eastward of Sedgmoor, into which the gloving district extends, and where gloving will be found sharing the labour of women with agriculture.

4. In West Somerset the wages are far lower than in East Somerset, consequently there is a greater necessity for the labour of boys and women, and we shall find it far more prevalent. About Bristol, where wages are often 12*s.*, women will hardly work out at all. In West Somerset, where the prevalent wages amount to about 8*s.*, nearly every labourer's wife works. In the south, where gloving prevails, wages are also very low; a circumstance attributed to the money made in gloving by the labourers' wives and daughters being ample to supplement any deficiency.

Low wages necessitate the employment of women and boys.

5. With respect to the employment of boys, a general rule may be laid down for almost all the county; for all the county west of the Mendip hills certainly. The differences are only differences in degree, according to the circumstances of the farmers and labourers in each individual place. In some places we find children taken earlier from school than in others; in some places receiving better wages than in others; but in all they are taken away from school earlier than the school authorities think advisable, and in all for the same employments.

Employment of boys.

K.

6. The first employment to which they are put is "keeping birds," an employment which occupies them only for certain months in the year; they are taken away from school for a month or six weeks at a time, just after the corn is sown, and just when it is ripening. This is an employment shared also by little girls. Mr. Corner, of Sampford Brett, told me that he would just as soon have a little girl to do the work; and Mr. Hancock, of Halse, said that you generally have to get a little girl to keep birds, as boys get regular employment so soon. The ages at which they are taken vary, but in many places boys go as young as 6 and 7; 5 years of age is the youngest I have found; these, however, are exceptional cases; 8 and 9 would be the more common time. At the time just before the corn ripens they are often expected to be out at 5 a.m., and remain out till sunset. At the sowing time of course their hours are shorter, as the days are shorter, and they are only expected to remain out as long as daylight lasts. Sunday is no exception, so that they get no holiday at all during the week. They have to be out in wet or fine weather alike, sheltering themselves under a tree or hedge when it rains, and sometimes getting hold of a hurdle, and thatching themselves a little hut in the corner of a field. They frighten the birds, as a rule, by shouting, sometimes by beating sticks together; and as the time gets on the birds are more difficult to frighten, for they get accustomed to the voice, and the child has to follow them about, hunting them from one place to another, so that it sometimes becomes very tiring work.

Necessity of bird-keeping.

7. Nearly all the farmers are of opinion that it would be very difficult to get on without children to "keep birds," and of course it is their object to get children out as young as possible, smaller remuneration being required for a smaller child. There are opinions, however, at variance with this. Some farmers complain of boys being so idle, they are really of little use; one expressing it so strongly as to say, that each boy requires a man to look after him. Some prefer to employ an old man with a gun, often without shot, merely to frighten the birds, or with shot to kill a rook, the bird most dreaded, and scatter a wing here and a leg there, a precaution that will often drive the rest away for some time. Those who are in favour of children "keeping birds" say that it is not so much the one child that does the good, but that his little brothers and sisters bring out his dinner, or come to see him, and the noise made by several children scares the birds. Yet again it is objected to this that a number of children running about destroys hedges and other property.

Bird-keeping by twine.

8. Some farmers have tried to substitute bird-keeping by twine, but this can only be done when a farmer has not a large extent in corn; besides which birds very soon become accustomed to seeing the feathers shake about on the twine. Mr. Featherstone, at Wiveliscombe, remarked that a peck more wheat sown does more good than all the boys.

Regular employment of boys.

9. The first regular employment obtained by boys is "driving plough," in other words, becoming carters' boys; for the term "driving plough" includes generally being with the horses. The ages at which they begin this work vary according to the means of the parents; in general, after "keeping birds" for a year or two a boy will be given regular work by the farmer who employed him irregularly before. In many instances he is then taken to live in the farmhouse, and then, even when not "driving plough," other work, such as minding the sheep or pigs, is found for him, or he makes himself generally useful in the yard. The greatest necessity for shepherds' boys is found on the moors, which are cut up by unprotected ditches, and it is the boy's duty to prevent the sheep from falling into the water. In certain parts of Somerset it is also usual to have in the farmhouse what is called a "scrub boy," who does all the dirty work about the yard, but has no special duty; such a boy is sometimes a poor relation, and therefore more in his employer's power.

"Driving plough."

10. To expect a boy of 7 or 8 years' old to mind a horse seems at first absurd; but I was often told that unless a boy begins very young to be with horses he becomes timid and of little use, and never learns to make them obey his voice. Accidents occur; in fact they must sometimes, but, as a rule, the horses are very tame, and the boys gain power over them by being unconscious of their own danger. Still some boys complained of having been knocked down or having had their feet trodden on by horses; and I had many complaints of the danger attending the system. In some districts the actual necessity for a boy to lead the horses with the plough is going out, for the use of reins is becoming very general in the light soils, but where the soil is heavy, and it is neeessary to plough with more than two horses, it is impossible for the ploughman to plough and drive at the same time, and a boy becomes indispensable. Here again it is natural for the employer to wish to have the work done as cheaply as possible, and the smaller the boy the lower his wages; whilst the boy's father, receiving very low wages himself, is only too glad to send his boy out as young as possible, and make him support himself.

11. It is not an unusual thing to meet a large cart drawn by one or more horses, and entirely under the control of a boy not 10 years of age. A little girl, 8 years of age, at Somerton, told me that her father trusted a little brother of hers, "not as big as me," with the cart and horses. Her father is a small farmer, and I found that the youngest children employed were generally the children of small farmers, not much removed above the condition of labourers themselves, who find the labour of their own children cheaper than hired labour; of course, such labour though often harder than hired labour would be far more difficult to restrict.

Employment of little boys and girls mixed.

12. So far, with the exception of bird-keeping, I have spoken of labour done by boys only; but there is a good deal of work in which little girls are found equally efficient. We shall, however, never find them employed to so great an extent as boys, and scarcely ever in regular employment, going out usually for a job, and usually with their mothers, and generally beginning at a rather later age than the boys. The school authorities did not complain so much of little girls being taken away to work in the fields, as of their being kept at home to nurse children, while their mother was out at work. The work done chiefly by girls, and by little boys as well, consists in stone-picking from the land, potato-setting and picking, and apple-picking. Mr. Hancock, a great employer of labour in Taunton Vale, told me that at a certain time of year, when he wants children to work among the turnips, he sends out a man into the village to collect all the boys and girls he can induce to come to work. It is the nearest approach to any gang system I have found. To a question as to the existence of gangs I always met with a flat denial: but in this instance some 20 children work in a row under the superintendence of a farm-hand; in fact, there are all the accompaniments of a gang system.

K.

13. A great deal of out-door work is done by children in the neighbourhood of Axbridge and the parish of Merriott. These two places are famous for their market gardens. Near Axbridge and Cheddar there are little plots of land on the slope of the Mendip hills, which, besides being very fertile, face due south, open to the full glare of the sun. Quantities of peas and early potatoes are grown for the London market, and at certain times of the year nearly every child in the neighbourhood, as well as every woman, turns out, and works long days in the gardens, setting and picking potatoes and picking peas. A great deal of hard work too falls upon them, as the husbands do the carrying, and all other work falls upon their wives and families. The case is very similar at Merriott, a large and fertile parish near Yeovil. Similar cases, too, are the whortleberry harvest in the neighbourhood of Porlock and the withy-peeling on the moors, both of which give employment to all the women and children of the neighbourhood for a few weeks. The Exmoor hills are covered with whortleberry plants in great abundance, and when they are ripe the women and children turn out to gather them, spending all the day on the mountains. A child can earn often as much as 1*s.* a day at this employment. Withy-peeling on Sedgmoor lasts for several weeks in the spring; it is generally done by a woman and child, the woman splitting the peel with an instrument called a break provided for the purpose, and the child pulling it off. Children as young as 5 are well up to such work, and it is no hardship, except in so far as it keeps the children from school, to which we shall have to refer presently.

Market gardens.

The whort harvest on Exmoor.

Withy-peeling on Sedgmoor.

14. The ordinary career of a girl in the purely agricultural districts is to be kept at home till about 12 or 14 years of age. During that time, in a well-ordered parish, and if one of an orderly family, she will probably go to school, with intervals of being kept away now and then for perhaps a little work in the fields in busy times, or to nurse the babies when her mother is at work. Some few, who get independent habits, prefer to remain on working in the fields, but it is the exception, and instances are becoming more rare; they usually take to millinery, or go out to service in a farmhouse. If milliners, they will stay at home, or, in some cases, join other girls and take a room, as more independent, but this occurs more often among the agricultural population resident in small towns than in the purely agricultural villages. All witnesses join in reprobating the system; they agree in saying that the custom of girls withdrawing themselves from the parents' supervision leads to immorality, and that they never make such good thrifty wives as the farm-servants. Of those who go to service a good many go away to the towns, such as Bristol or Weston, and such girls probably marry in the towns, and never return home, except on a visit; but the greater part still go to service in farmhouses. They begin service at 12 or 14 years of age, as soon as they are old enough to look after a child; for their keep first, and then with wages gradually increasing. As they become older they are given dairy work; they milk the cows, making the cream, &c., and probably end by marrying one of the farm labourers. Those who continue as young women to work in the fields are very few; and there is generally something against them, either they are deformed or deaf and dumb, or they are girls whom service has not suited; some have had what is usually called "a misfortune" in the country districts; but that does not prevent them in most cases from obtaining another place in service if they wish it.

Career of a girl in agricultural districts.

15. With married women the case is very different. They do not work out so much now as formerly, but in the west of the county labourers' wives still go out usually at busy times for their 8*d.* a day. It is not that there is a want of male labour; from time immemorial there has been certain field work that is looked upon as women's work, and they are often to be seen working when men are out of work. But there are few women who work as a regular thing all the year round; most of them only come out for haymaking, harvest, and to work among the turnips and mangolds, which last seems to be always considered the principal women's work. Few work out, except widows' and labourers' wives. In West Somerset an employer often expects his labourer's wife to come out in busy times if she is abled-bodied. In some cases the employer will stipulate that she is to come out to work at such times. I was told of a case at Combe Florey where the family have to turn out if the wife does not work out. Such instances point to the probability that it is really more to please the employers that the woman goes out, than for any profit that accrues to herself. Her wages are only 8*d.* a day for out-door work, and against that she has to set the wear and tear of clothes, the need of more food to support her, the payment to persons employed to make clothes, which she would make herself if at home, and the damage done to house and furniture by children left at home to take care of themselves. Many will allow that it is no real use to them. On the other hand, the evidence is very much at variance as to whether out-door work exercises a baneful influence on the character. With unmarried women there can be little doubt that working with men and boys, hearing bad language, and seeing sights among the beasts that they had better not see, cannot be for their good; but their work lies chiefly in the dairy farms, where they are out and about milking with the boys, and seeing a great deal of them in the farmhouse; whereas the work of married women, usually in the fields, is either only shared by other women or by their husbands. It may give them a certain roughness, but I saw many women who worked habitually in the fields, and were quite as respectable, if not more so, than those who stay at home; so on that point no very general rule can be laid down. As to the state in which their cottages are kept, of course they cannot be so tidy as those of the women who are always at home; but it becomes a question as to whether the disadvantage of their absence from home is counterbalanced by the advantage of more money coming in. Perhaps the worst part of the female labour is the influence it brings to bear upon the character of the husbands and children; little girls, sometimes boys, have to be kept at home to look after the younger children, and so lose their schooling; and the husbands come home and find the home uncomfortable, no supper ready, the fire probably out, and what more natural than that they should prefer instead of staying at home to go to the public-house?

Out-door work of married women.

16. The slight rise in wages of late years, and the dawning conviction that they do not really much increase the family comfort by going out to work, is now keeping the women more and more at home; in some parishes it is only the more old-fashioned, who have been accustomed to work, that keep it on now. The farmers, naturally, do not approve of the change; it is an extensive source of cheap labour that is

Women do not work out so much as formerly.

K.

gradually being drawn away from them. But, with the spread of education and general improvement the labouring class are beginning to see that the woman's place is by her own fire-side.

Ought female labour to be restricted?

17. With regard to the necessity of putting restriction on female labour, the majority of witnesses wish to put a stop to the working of girls, at any rate up to a certain age; but as to the labour of married women opinions are much divided. The majority, however, think no restriction advisable for one of two reasons, either that in the present low state of wages it would be hard to take away any means of increasing the family earnings; or that the supposed evil is righting itself, that female labour is gradually disappearing. If a woman can add 3*s.* or 4*s.* to the purse, when her husband only earns 8*s.*, it sounds very hard to prevent her doing so, even though you think you can prove to her that she is not really augmenting the wages as much as she supposes.

Reasons for the necessity of female labour.

18. The lowness of wages is the most usual reason assigned for the necessity of female and juvenile labour; when told that you cannot expect a man with a large family living on 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week to support his wife and children at home in idleness, it is difficult to find an answer to the objection; to say "raise the wages" is easy, but it is very difficult for the farmer to do so; there is pressure brought to bear upon him from above and below. Every one, except perhaps the farmer himself, wishes to see the wages raised; nay, he would be willing enough to raise the wages if he could do so without impoverishing himself, but with the present great demand for land the rents paid by the farmers are gradually rising, and it is impossible for them to pay higher rents and higher wages at the same time. At more than one meeting of guardians that I attended it was stated that the wages could never be raised till rents were lowered, and that as long as rents continue to rise the least that can be expected is that wages shall not fall. On one occasion a magistrate having suggested that the only means to check female labour is to raise the wages, a farmer retorted that the only means to raise the wages is to lower the rent. It is equally difficult to expect the landlord to lower his rent in the face of a rapidly increasing demand for land, and to expect the occupier to raise wages in face of an increasing demand for rent. The Rev. Mr. Hickley, of Walton, with whom I had some conversation on the subject, said that as long as there is no combination among the labourers it is very unlikely that wages will rise much; in towns where artisans are constantly thrown together combination is the natural result, but labourers scattered all over a large agricultural county, even if it occur to them to combine, find in the fact of their being scattered an almost insuperable difficulty. It is probable that the constant migration that is going on will ultimately lead to a rise of wages. The introduction of machinery is perhaps the cause that has hitherto prevented any such effect, and the fact that it is usually the strongest and best hands that go to seek higher pay elsewhere, and that the hands who stay behind are not worth so much money to their employers as those who have gone.

Wages in east and west Somerset compared.

19. Throughout the county of Somerset there is a most striking variety in the amount of money wages paid. Near Bristol and Bath an ordinary labourer will receive 12*s.* in money; in the far west, among the hills, usually 8*s.*; in some cases as low as 7*s.*; in one case I found it as low as 6*s.* But this money payment is not to be taken as a criterion of the full sum that passes from the pocket of the farmer into that of the labourer; where the wages are so very low there is almost always an allowance of cider given, sometimes a cottage, and there are various other perquisites, the extent and value of which vary according to the liberality of the farmer, and according to whether he is on a good footing with his men. Thus the system of low wages made up by perquisites to the value of a few shillings more puts a labourer far more in his employer's power than if he receives 11*s.* or 12*s.* a week in hard money; but it cannot be denied that the labourers prefer the old system as a rule; they know they cannot hire a cottage so cheap elsewhere, and they know that they cannot buy so much cider elsewhere for the money as they have allowed them by their employer instead of money. There is much to be said in favour of the cider truck and much against it; in its favour there is no doubt that it keeps the husband from the public-house; having been provided with enough to drink by his employer he usually goes home straight, whereas if he leaves off work thirsty he will probably go straight off to the public-house and spend far more money there than he can afford, returning home late more or less drunk. On the other hand, the cider being valued by the farmer at 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*, such a sum is a good deal to be allowed, say, out of 8*s.* or 9*s.* wages for one member of the family to spend in drinking; again, in many cases, the cider given is very bad and unwholesome, and assists materially to undermine the constitution. To obtain as much cider as possible is a great object to the labourer, besides for the mere purpose of drinking it; for condemned, as he is, from his poverty to eat so much dry bread, he uses it as a relish in which to dip the bread. There is little variety and little that is inviting in the food of the Somersetshire labourer. A little girl in the vale of Taunton Deane, being asked what she had for breakfast said, "bread and butter." What for dinner? "bread and butter." What for supper? "bread and butter and cheese." It is a fair sample of what the agricultural labourer lives on, except that where no cheese or butter is produced he has nothing but the bread dipped perhaps in cider: the wife drinks tea, and there is sometimes a bit of bacon for the husband after his work, unless they are so poor that they have to sell every atom of the pig to pay the rent. There is besides a concoction, called teakettle broth, given to the children: hot water flavoured with a few herbs or tag ends of bacon, sometimes little but the pure hot water.

The cider truck.

Food of a Somersetshire labourer.

Comparison of wages at Mr. Corner's two farms, Sampford Brett and near Bath.

Wages given by Mr. Risdon of Timberscombe.

20. Mr. Corner, of Sampford Brett, who has also a farm near Bath, gives at his Sampford Brett farm 10*s.* a week, and at his Bath farm 12*s.*; no cider at either. At the former, in way of perquisites, he gives "anything wanted in the way of turnips or straw," at the latter nothing; yet he reckons his Sampford Brett men the best off, and one of them who went up to the Bath farm with the idea of bettering himself chose to come back again. If wages are lower, provisions are cheaper in West Somerset. Mr. Corner's is a case of a farmer who gives few perquisites on either farm. The following case, that of Mr. Risdon, of Timberscombe, is that of an employer whose people are very well off, and yet are paid about half their wages in kind. In actual money he only gives an ordinary farm-labourer 1*s.* a day=6*s.* a week (it must be remembered this is only to an ordinary farm labourer, and to him whilst not working by task work; shepherds and carters always get a little more money in regular wages because they do less task work); but besides this he gives a cottage and garden and a quarter of an acre of potato-ground, his men working for him from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., which gives them spare time to

work in their own gardens; also a quart of cider daily; grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel all the year round, and the run of a pig generally in an orchard; besides this he gives a good deal of task-work, which he prefers and which the men prefer. Mr. Risdon's father offered his men 1*s.* 8*d.* a day=10*s.* a week, to give up all perquisites, but they preferred to adhere to the old system. If his men now want more than he gives, he offers the 1*s.* 8*d.* a day like his father, but they prefer the old system, and he does not find that they leave him. K.

A special instance of the value attached to perquisites in West Somerset will be found in a letter from Mr. A. S. Lovelace, of Leigh farm, Winsford (Appendix 46). Mr. Anderson, the rector of Winsford, told me that Mr. Lovelace had offered one of his men 12*s.*, in lieu of 9*s.* a week and perquisites, and the man had refused it. Having been unlucky enough to miss Mr. Lovelace, I wrote him a letter, and he wrote back to me describing how by perquisites the 9*s.* weekly was made up to 12*s.* 1*d.* Mr. Lovelace, of Leigh farm, Winsford.

	s.	*d.*
Cash per week	9	0
Cottage and about 15 perches of good garden, rent free	1	0
Thirty perches of potato ground (30*s.*) nearly	0	7
One quart of cider a day from Lady-day to Michaelmas	0	6
Keep of a pig	0	3
Wheat, ¾ths of a bushel a week, at 6*s.* a bushel (market value 7*s.*)	0	9
Total	12	1

besides a few other minor advantages; this man is a carter. The other labourers receive 1*s.* less in money, but the same perquisites, and are at piece-work half their time.

21. Of course the value of privileges varies with different employers; for instance, though nearly every farmer will say he allows the run of a pig, it is not everyone who, like Mr. Risdon, will allow the run in an orchard or meadow; it is usually in a piece of waste land, sometimes by the side of the road to which the employer has no more right than the employed. At Cutcombe the people joined to buy a bit of land on which to run their pigs. With regard to potato-ground again, this can hardly be considered an advantage, except in some few cases, where, as in the case of Mr. Lovelace, it is actually given. Potato-ground is usually rented of the farmer at a very high rent, so that he makes a considerable profit on the rent he himself pays to the landlord; in return for this he usually does the haulage and manuring, but giving too much potato-ground is a subject on which he is naturally jealous from the fear of it taking the labourer away from his work and the facility it affords him of taking a few turnips or mangolds from his employer, and pretending that they grew on his own piece of ground. Grist corn is perhaps the most doubtful privilege of all. Some farmers, and these are the best instances, will give it at 6*s.* when the market price is above 6*s.*, and at the market price when it is below 6*s.*, but usually they will keep the man to 6*s.* even when the market price is below that sum, saying that he need not have it unless he likes. Sometimes when the market price is above 6*s.* he will make some such excuse as that he has no corn left; thus with most perquisites the value depends on the temper of the employer.

Value of privileges; run of a pig. Potato ground. Grist corn.

22. Mr. Knollys, agent to Lord Ashburton, was good enough to provide me with some estimates made by farmers on Lord Ashburton's property about Fitzhead of the wages given to their labourers (Appendix 62). The usual money payment in that neighbourhood to an ordinary day-labourer is 8*s.* or 9*s.*, and the five gentlemen with whose estimates he has provided me calculate that perquisites and task-work (Mr. Lovelace, above, did not calculate task-work) make the weekly wages up to sums varying from 11*s.* 6*d.* to 13*s.* 1*d.* Thus Mr. Fishleigh (Dean, Fitzhead,) takes the extra money earned in harvest, haytime, turnip-hoeing, mangold-pulling, and lumping it together at 88*s.* spreads it over the 52 weeks at 1*s.* 9*d.* a week. Mr. Knollys remarks that in some cases the extras are counted more closely than in others, for instance, two of the gentlemen calculate that they give the labourer 6*d.* extra by giving him a cottage at 1*s.* for which elsewhere he would have to pay 1*s.* 6*d.*, "but you will "readily see what the average will come out at." "I find," he adds, "a growing feeling among our "best tenants to give money instead of cider."

Wages given, as estimated by five farmers on Lord Ashburton's estate.

23. The enclosure containing a statement of money payments for one year to his labourers by Mr. J. Lutley (Appendix 62), also forwarded to me by Mr. Knollys, is of great interest. Mr. Lutley pays by the day, and the actual money payment, excluding task-work, is about 8*s.* weekly; to this he adds the task-work, and strikes an average of about 9*s.* per week in cash all the year round, before he proceeds to add the perquisites.

24. The most important task-work given, that is, that at which most money is earned, is of course the harvest, next to that the turnip-hoeing, and a few shillings also at haymaking and mangold-pulling. Hedging and draining is also piece-work, and at grubbing up a hedge the labourer is allowed to take what he requires for firing. When at harvesting a man, woman, and boy, to cut, to pick up, and to sheave, can clear about two acres in a long day, and sometimes make from 8*s.* to 10*s.*, besides cider unlimited. Harvest is the time when the labourer has it all his own way. Farmers as well as labourers prefer to give piece-work; they get the work better and more honestly done, and the men do not require to be looked after and kept up to their work. Besides it enables a distinction to be drawn between the man who is worth his money and the man who is not. Farmers complain very much that the custom of the country requires them to give as much to a married man who has passed his prime as to a thoroughly able-bodied labourer. Mr. Follett, of Bishop's Lydeard, with whom I had a talk while his corn was being thrashed, pointed out one of his men and said, "That man is worth 12*s.* a day to me, and I "have to give him the same as another who is not worth 5*s.*" Task-work or piece-work.

25. The following is a table of the wages given by various farmers in West Somerset, all taken down from the farmer's own lips. It includes simply the actual money payment given to an ordinary day-labourer, *exclusive of extra money earned by task-work.* Estimate of wages in money given by various farmers in West Somerset.

K. TABLE of MONEY WAGES paid by 25 Farmers in West Somerset, exclusive of Task-work or Piecework.

Name of Union.	Farmer.	In Money per Week.	Cottage.	Cider.	Perquisites.
Wellington	Mr. J. Lutley, Parsonage farm, Wiveliscombe.	8*s.*	Cottage	3 pints	Run of a pig, potato-ground manured and ploughed, firing from hedges, and drawing.
,,	,, John Davis, Blackgroves -	8*s.*	,,	2 quarts	Grist corn at 6*s.* if they choose, firing for cutting, and drawn for them.
,,	,, Corner, Wellington - -	9*s.*	—	1*s.* 6*d.* worth a week.	——
,,	,, Langdon, Chilworthy, Raddington.	9*s.*	—	Cider	Grist corn at reduced rate, 30 square yards potato ground, run of a pig, and keep of poultry.
Dulverton	,, A. Lovelace, Leigh, Winsford -	8*s.*	Cottage and garden.	1 quart daily	30 perches potato-ground, keep of a pig, wheat at 6*s.* per bushel, fuel hauled for them.
,,	,, Hardinge, Highercombe, Dulverton.	Summer, 7*s.*; winter, 8*s.*	Cottage	1 quart daily extra in summer.	30 yards potato-ground, keep of a pig, wheat at 6*s.* per bushel, firing "like I have."
Williton -	,, Risdon, Manor farm, Timberscombe.	6*s.*	Cottage and garden.	1 quart daily	¼ acre potato-ground, run of a pig, grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel.
,,	J. King, Esq., Cutcombe - -	8*s.*	Cottage	—	Grist corn at 6*s.* per bushel.
,,	Mr. G. Risdon, Higher Marsh, Dunster.	8*s.*	—	3 pints daily	Grist corn at 6*s.* per bushel, half their firing, potato ground.
,,	,, Gibbs, Carhampton - -	9*s.*	—	3 pints daily	Potato-ground.
,,	,, Oatway, Withycombe - -	8*s.*	—	3 pints daily	Potato-ground, grist corn at 6*s.*
,,	,, Charles, Dibble, Clatworthy -	8*s.*	Cottage and good garden.	Some cider	Grist corn at 6*s.*, turnips, run of a pig.
,,	,, Corner, Sampford Brett -	10*s.*	—	—	"Anything they want in the way of turnips, straw, &c."
Taunton -	,, Follett, Bishop's Lydeard -	9*s.* 6*d.*	—	3 pints.	——
,,	,, Hancock, Halse - -	9*s.*	—	,,	——
Chard -	,, Hull, Chillington - -	9*s.*	—	Cider.	——
,,	,, Paull, Ilminster - -	10*s.*	—	—	——
Yeovil -	,, Woolcott, Montacute - -	9*s.*	—	Cider.	——
,, -	,, Peren, South Petherton -	10*s.*, which is 1*s.* more than in the district generally.	—	,,	——
Langport -	,, Snook, Somerton - -	9*s.*	—	,,	——
,,	,, Nutt, Compton Dundon -	9*s.*	—	½ gallon of cider.	——
,,	,, Bond, Kingsdon - -	9*s.*	—	Cider.	——
,,	,, Fry, Curry Rivell - -	10*s.*	—	—	——
Bridgwater	,, Jeffery, Huntspill - -	10*s.*	—	Cider.	Garden and lets potato ground.
,,	,, Biddicombe, Shapwick -	9*s.*	—	½ gallon daily.	——

2.—EDUCATION.

Difficulty of restricting boys' labour to any fixed age.

26. When I first began my tour of inspection in the east of Somerset, I fancied it would be easy to fix some age prior to which children might not be allowed to work, or if allowed to work only allowed under certain restrictions, similar to those placed on factory children; but as I went farther and farther west I began to see what great difficulties lay in the way of any such legislation. In the country east and north of the Mendip Hills it seemed to me that it would be no great hardship to the labourer's family to draw a line at 12 years of age; but in the neighbourhood of Taunton, and on the slopes of Exmoor, I found that while wages are what they are it would be very hard to restrict a sturdy boy of 10 or 11 years old, who requires much food, from supporting himself, which he is then fully able to do. On the ground of health early labour cannot do boys much harm. I had a few complaints of over-fatigue while leading the plough horses all a long day, and of getting wet and soaked while bird-keeping, but as a rule I found a pretty general agreement that out-door work is good for boys. To ill-treatment they are never subjected; the parents take good care of that; nay, even in the schools they will sometimes take the boy away, if he is beaten by the master. If an employer ill uses him, they will speedily have him up before a magistrate. It is on the ground of want of education that most complaints are made about boys going early to work, and the more the value of education is appreciated among the labouring class the louder the complaints will become; but it is a very distressing fact that in many districts boys are being now taken from school earlier than they used to be taken. The Rev. Mr. Vassall, of Hardington Mandeville, told me that he has hardly a boy over 8 years of age in his school, and the reason given is that with the constant migration of the older and more able hands much of the labour formerly done by young men now falls upon big boys, and the work of big boys is done in consequence by the smaller boys.

27. In such a parish as Hardington, for instance, it would be a very great hardship to keep boys at school till 12 years of age—a great revolution in fact that could hardly be worked out. In such parishes it seems that personal influence is the only power that can be brought to bear; where there is an active clergyman or a good squire boys will generally be found remaining at school one or two years longer than in a neglected parish; but it is only in the smaller parishes where the clergyman can bring his influence to bear on each individual that personal influence can really work. It is in the larger parishes, and on the outskirts of small towns in agricultural districts that the people are more behindhand and the children not so well educated.

Antagonism of farmer and clergyman on

28. There is generally a sort of struggle going on between the clergyman and the farmers, the former endeavouring to keep the children at school, the latter to get them out to work. Farmers do not see

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the good of what they call over-education; it raises a man above his work; he thinks himself fit for higher employment, and goes away to the towns or railways; consequently there is a scarcity of labour, and men who stay behind are less fit for their work than those who migrate, and require the same, nay even higher wages. What wonder then if the law of self-preservation induces the farmers as a body to be against education? I found, however, some striking exceptions to the rule—At Witham Friary the farmers support the school by a voluntary rate, and here and there were individual men who were above class prejudices. But the majority will say that this system of over-education teaches the labourers more than their employers themselves know. subject of education.

29. This brings us to the subject of middle-class schools. Of such schools there is a great want; while there is ample provision in nearly every part of the county for the education of the labourer's child, needing only to be taken proper advantage of, there is next to none for the farmer's son. Some of the smaller farmers send their children to the National school, but among the richer there is a marked disinclination to send them to mix with people of a different class of life. I had the pleasure of visiting one admirable institution of the kind, the middle-class school at Failands, near Bristol, where farmers' sons are educated. There is a farm of 60 acres, where they can learn the practical working of their profession. This institution seems to have far better carried out the purposes for which it was intended than the Agricultural College at Cirencester. A few more such schools would be of great advantage to the farming interest. Middle-class schools.

30. With the low wages she and her husband receive it is but natural that, as soon as ever a child is capable of frightening a bird, the mother should come to the farmer and ask for work for him. The work is always given, though many a farmer will tell you such a boy is no real good, but that it is customary to employ the son of one of his own labourers; on the other hand, the mothers will often say the farmer requires the boy, and they do not like to refuse him. When Lady-day comes the clergyman knows as well as possible that the school will be half deserted, and it becomes his object to induce as many parents of children as he has sufficient influence over to suffer their children to remain. He has a hard task to perform, for while he is urging the advantages of education he knows that those advantages, though real enough in themselves, do not appear as real to the parent's eye as to his own, and it is hard sometimes to be told such things as that if he (the clergyman) will pay the money the child would have earned, had he not been taken from work, the child shall come to school. Besides which, though the money payment is small, still there is a money payment for schooling to be asked for. On the other hand, the employer comes and offers money for the work the child will do; wages are low, times are hard, there is a large family to be supported, and the natural result follows, the child is taken from school, and if he does return in the winter has forgotten all he has learnt; very likely he gets regular work, and never comes back to school again. Comparative advantage of education and employment in parents' eyes.

31. Forgetfulness is one of the great evils complained of by teachers; a few weeks often suffice to make a boy forget nearly all he has learnt. What wonder then if a boy taken from school at 8 years of age, and never sent inside its walls again, utterly forgets all he has learnt? at that age few boys read sufficiently well for reading to be any pleasure to them. Several boys, who had been at school, when younger, told me that they could not now write their names. Forgetfulness.

31a. Opinions differed very much as to how long a boy must be kept at school to enable him to leave it sufficiently well grounded in the elements of education to find such grounding of any subsequent use to him. Most of the clergy said that a boy required to be kept at school till 10 or 12 years of age for it to do him any good; but the Rev. Mr. Luttrell, of Minehead, showed me some admirable writing by a boy of 9, quite as good as some by a boy 2 or 3 years older, and at the Rev. Mr. Coles' school, I was told that at 9 or 10 a boy can read perfectly and write; at 7 he can read words of one syllable and some of two syllables, can write capital and small letters, and add and subtract up to 10. The Rev. Mr. Yarde, of Porlock, though saying that any such rule would be a great loss to several families in the place, thought no child ought to be taken from school under 10 years of age. He said that if sent to school at 5 years, and kept there till 10, they can learn quite enough. The Board of Guardians at Wincanton, though protesting against any limit being fixed at all, passed a resolution that, if any age is to be fixed by government, it ought not to be before 9 years. A year at that age, 9 or 10, is worth all that have passed before. Still it must be borne in mind that the resolution at Wincanton expressed pretty generally the sense of opinion in the west and south of Somerset: that if the boys of a family were debarred labour, the family could not get on at all under the present system of low wages. The earliest age at which a boy can leave school, having gained any advantage from it.

32. Under these circumstances the maintenance of a good school is very up-hill work, and great credit is due to those gentlemen, who in the face of such obstacles have succeeded; it is not to be done without immense effort, and when once done, great energy is necessary to keep up what has been done. In many parishes the day school has been supplemented by a night school, and so much good is done by an efficient night school, that it becomes advisable to recommend that such schools should be put on a footing of equality with day schools as to Government allowance and advantages. In most cases the number of scholars is very limited, but it must remain so as long as the burden of education falls almost entirely on the clergyman, or the day-schoolmaster or day-schoolmistress, already tired with a long day's work in the school. But there are many other difficulties complained of beside; for though it is one of the best features of the system that such schools are open to all ages, and men of 30, 40, 50 attend, the varieties of age very often become a drawback, the men and bigger boys not liking to seem to know less than the smaller boys, as must be very frequently the case. Then they come in from labour at a late hour, have their supper, and come off to school, and are naturally very much tired after a long day's work, so much so, indeed, that many of them fall asleep over their books. Again, with respect to the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of teachers, more teachers are required than for an ordinary school, for there is such a variety of acquirements among the scholars that it is almost impossible to classify them, and almost every scholar requires to be taught separately. Again, there is no Government allowance given for children under 12 years of age, and in a parish where children are taken away from the day-school to regular work at 8 or 9, it is very important that they should come to evening-school for the next few years, and not let their minds lie fallow up to the age of 12. There is a great want too of evening-schools for girls; generally there is only a staff available for the one school, and it is considered objectionable to mix the boys and girls, owing to the supposed evil Night-schools. Difficulty of combining night schools

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for boys and girls.

results of dismissing them to walk home together in the dark; evil results that make some clergymen object even to evening church-service. On the other hand, in the peculiarly argricultural districts, girls are kept longer at school than boys, and a night-school is consequently not so necessary in their case; but in the gloving districts the case is different; there the girls are taken away from school fully as early as the boys, and there are many of them growing up utterly uneducated.

Arrangements of a night-school.

33. The usual arrangement of a night-school is to keep it open for about 20 weeks in the winter months, two a week, and two hours a night; reading, writing, and arithmetic are generally taught; in some schools the elements of geography and Scripture; the attendance usually begins very well, but declines as spring comes on and field-work is more pressing.

Question of how far Factory Acts applicable to agriculture.

34. To encourage night-schools as much as possible, so as to enable them efficiently to supplement the deficiencies of attendance at the day-school, seems a more practicable way of spreading education among the children of the labouring population, than to apply the Factory Act or fix an age prior to which it shall be unlawful for children to labour. There was a lamentable want of practical answers to those important questions in the circulars, with which you were good enough to supply me, viz., those which asked how far it is possible to apply to agriculture the provisions of the Factory and Printworks Acts; usually no answer was given; when given, it was with few exceptions a statement that they were utterly inapplicable, without any reasons assigned. Farmers, whom I consulted on the subject, said that as a rule there are not enough boys as it is, and it would be a great hardship to make necessary a number twice as large as the present by adopting a half-day or half-time system. In many cases I was told that practically the Printworks' Act works in agricultural districts, for that it is only in summer months that there is work for children; in winter there is none, and they can go to school; but the fact is, that having once gone to work they get regular work, living in the farm, perhaps, or doing odd jobs about the place all the winter, and when once they have passed the bird-keeping age, hardly ever come back to school at all. The Rev. Mr. Vaughan, of Wraxall, with whom I had the pleasure of a long talk on this subject, made what seemed to me, if it could only be carried out, a very admirable suggestion, viz., that "no child under 12 years of age should be permitted to be em- "ployed in any agricultural work without a certificate that he can read without spelling any common "book, such certificate to be signed by the master or mistress of the school he has attended, the "clergyman of the parish, the minister of the chapel, or some householder in the parish, rated, say "above 20*l.* in the parish books, not being the child's employer; an appeal to the truth of the certifi- "cate to be allowed to Her Majesty's inspector of schools, or in the case of the Church of England "children to the bishop's inspector." Seeing, however, how the Small Workshops Act is daily eluded, it cannot but occur to us how very difficult any such plan would be to carry out, when we recollect that it would need inspectors in a scattered neighbourhood, who would labour under disadvantages unkown to a factory inspector. Besides the objection that supervision is far harder to exercise in the country than in a town, it must be recollected that farmer and labourer would always consider it for their interest to elude it; for the interest of the employer it would certainly be to elude it, and it is to be feared that education is not yet sufficiently appreciated for the labourer to rate the benefits of education as highly as do the upper classes.

Causes of insufficient education.

35. The result of the present system is that in a parish of which care is taken there are very few children who have had no education at all; but there are generally a good many growing up with insufficient education, and forgetting the more the older they grow. Those who are utterly uneducated are generally the children of one or two families who do not bear a very good character in the parish, the parents being people who either spend every penny they can collect on drink, and grudge it to the school, or who having never been educated themselves, do not see what is the good of education to their children. Nothing but personal influence can diminish the number of such families, but it is being much brought to bear now. However there are still few parishes in which there are not children who have never been to school. Early labour, though interfering with the sufficiency of education, does not of itself forbid the elements of education; few children go to work before 7 or 8 years of age, and by that time they can have obtained a smattering of knowledge. The difference of education between the present generation and the past is most marked. The Rev. Mr. Cartwright, of Butcombe, with whom I talked long on this subject, assured me that it is impossible to make much of the older people; he must train his people by getting a hold of a few members of the rising generation, and winning an influence over them. It is an extraordinary fact how great a change the influence of an energetic man can work in a parish in a few years; but it is much to be regretted that if after his death or departure the people fell into less efficient hands, his good work is undone in far less time than it took him to do. Parishes in which great ignorance prevails, such as Wiveliscombe, Nunney, Compton Dunden, all owe it materially to the lack of personal influence of clergyman or squire.

3.—Cottages.

General state of cottages in Somerset.

36. A special complaint that I found urged by all classes alike was the deficiency of cottage accommodation throughout the whole of the west of England. In this county it is not an uncommon thing to find large families brought up in a cottage of two rooms, sometimes even in a cottage of only one room. At Butcombe a cottage was shewn to me, in which a man and wife and a family of little children live, a mere lean-to against the wall of another house, with open thatch, and the sky visible through the thatch in many places. In Chillington were some nearly as bad. The worst cottages are generally the small freeholds, inhabited by the persons who own them, and who being unable to make more money than absolutely necessary for their immediate wants are too poor to afford repairs of any kind. Next to these the worst class of buildings are generally those belonging to small proprietors, such as tradesmen in towns, who have invested in them as a money-speculation, and to make it pay are forced to charge a high rent and spend little in repairs. The best cottages are usually those belonging to the larger proprietors, most of whom, from a wish either to see the estate present a flourishing appearance or to see their people well off, charge a rent far too small to repay them for their outlay; but it must be remembered that it is only a rich man who can afford such munificence.

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37. Mr. Ponsford, agent to Mr. Luttrell, informed me that he always tells Mr. Luttrell he must expect to lose by his cottage property; that no man can be liberal in such matters and yet make a profit; yet in a man of large landed property he looks upon it as a duty to hold a certain amount of cottage property; acting on which principle he induced Mr. Luttrell the other day to let him buy him some cottages for sale in Dunster, most of which place is Mr. Luttrell's property, cottages that were let by the outgoing proprietor at a far higher rate than he could ever suggest to Mr. Luttrell to ask. A pair of these cottages had been let at 5*l.* yearly; for these he had to give 80*l.*; repairs were needed at once, and yet he thought it right to reduce the rent to 3*l.* In the present low state of wages it is almost a hardship to ask 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for a cottage; most of the farmers who have cottages on their farms let them to their men at 1*s.* a week, and the same is usually asked by the more liberal proprietors who have their cottages in hand. To make cottage property pay, a rent of 6 to 7 per cent. on the outlay is necessary. Suppose a cottage built to be let at 1*s.* a week, and let at 6 per cent on the outlay, it must be built for 42*l.*, a sum for which it is impossible to build a cottage fit for human habitation. Good cottages, built in pairs to make them cheaper, and provided with three bedrooms, which universal opinion is now beginning to think necessary, vary in Somersetshire in price from 200*l.* to 300*l.* A gentleman of large landed possessions in the far west, who has been building and repairing his cottages all through a long tenure of the property, was good enough to let me see his cottage account, and join me in a very careful perusal of it. The conclusion we came to was, that after the value of repairs had been deducted, and a calculation made of arrears of rent unpaid, there was no balance left for the proprietor at all, for the repairs swallowed up the whole of the rent. His cottages were let for various sums, some as low as 1*l.* a year, few more than 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Consequently for every new cottage he builds he is out of pocket by the value of that cottage; for say he builds a cottage of the value of 125*l.*, and lets it at 3*l.* a year, he only makes 2½ per cent. on his outlay, and a sum equal to that is to be allowed for the average annual value of repairs.

Cottage property cannot be remunerative.

38. Sir Alexander Hood, who builds his new model cottages of red brick and tile from Bridgwater by contract, calculates that he puts up a pair for 300*l.*, 50*l.* or 60*l.* of which are expended in an out-building, containing the copper, &c., for he thinks it a bad thing to have steam in the house. The cottages are plain, though neat, for he considers that they lose in strength wherever the roof is broken, so there are no gables, and the only break is where the chimney rises. He lets them for 4*l.* a piece, rather more than 2¾ per cent. Lord Taunton's model cottages, built of red stone found on the spot, cost 220*l.* a pair, besides pig-sty and privy, which are away at the back of the garden. They are perfectly square, according to a plan of his agent, Mr. Robertson, the block of two measuring 48 feet by 24. Mr. Robertson thought they were a little too small, and is going to build some 54 feet by 27, of which he calculates the cost at about 10*l.* more. The present cottages are let at 3*l.* a piece. Mr. Birmingham, agent to Sir Thomas Acland, told me that he calculated the value of a pair of three bed-roomed cottages at 200*l.*, but the stone is close at hand, and the estate provides timber. They are all thatched, Sir Thomas preferring thatch for the picturesque effect. Bridgwater tile would be delivered on the ground cheaper. Some of the best cottages I saw in Somerset were those that had been converted from old farmhouses; as the farms were enlarged many of the smaller farmhouses fell out of use, and have been divided into pairs of cottages. In most of these, though the roofs are low and the windows small, the rooms are more spacious than in the modern cottages. It is a great question whether the people themselves do not prefer one large bedroom for the whole household to sleep in to the same space cut up into three bedrooms for decency's sake. The one big room they generally divide with curtains and screens, which, though not ensuring privacy to the same extent as partitions, have the advantage of being removeable at pleasure. I visited with Sir Alexander Hood a very good new cottage with the bedrooms divided, in which were living a labourer and his wife and family. They were only there temporarily, while their own cottage, an old one with big, but few, rooms was undergoing repairs. He asked them which they preferred, and they hoped most earnestly they were to be allowed to return to their old cottage. Their ideas of comfort differed strangely from ours; the new cottage was superior even to the ordinary run of model cottages—in the old cottage the rooms were low, the windows small, and the floor up and down hill. A similar case came under my notice at Winsford. A husband, wife, six children, and a pair of old people lived all together in a cottage with but one bedroom and one sitting-room, and were all moved into a new three bedroomed cottage. They said there was not room in the new cottage for the old people, who remained in the old cottage. The fact was that the new bedrooms were small. In the old cottage the one bedroom had been very large, and they did not appreciate the advantage of separate rooms. It is very much to be deplored that they do no not see in the same way as we do, that a sense of decency demands separate rooms for the boys and girls, and that the parents should have a room apart from their children. Unless it is positively stipulated no lodgers are to be admitted, the third room is too frequently given to one, and the prohibition is often eluded in cases where there is such arrangement by a pretence that the lodger is a relation or a visitor. Mr. Ward, Sir Arthur Elton's agent, informed me that where there are three bedrooms they will often fill the house with lodgers, and herd with the whole family in the kitchen. Where there was no lodger, I saw in most cottages I entered that the third room was unfurnished, and used as a store room for potatoes and other vegetables.

Sir Alexander Hood's cottages.

Lord Taunton's cottages.

Sir Thomas Acland's cottages.

Converted cottages.

The people scarcely appreciate the new model cottages.

Lodgers.

39. With regard to the question of making cottages pay their landlord, and at the same time be fit for habitation, I scarcely received any answers to the circular of questions. The most practical suggestion was that offered by Mr. Porteous, Lord Cork's agent. He did not see why, as is always the custom at the present time, at which there is a great move in favour of the erection of model cottages, the price of building the cottage should come out of the pocket of the tenant for life. A good cottage when built will last with judicious repairs 80 to 100 years, and Mr. Porteous thought that the present owner should be empowered to raise money on the land for building necessary cottages, not on the principle by which money could be borrowed from Government to be paid back in 22 years, which, on striking an average of the duration of a life's possession, would almost all fall on the present possessor, but so that a great part of the burden should fall upon his heir. I saw at Clevedon some cottages that had been built with money borrowed from the Lands' Improvement Society. Mr. Ward, under whose superintendence they had been constructed for Sir Arthur Elton, did not seem in favour

Suggestions for making model cottages pay.

Mr. Porteous.

Sir A. Elton's cottages.

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of the plan. The plans have to be submitted to an inspector, and the society are very particular in trivial points of detail, besides which they are obliged to charge such a per-centage as will enable them to pay a dividend to the shareholders. The plan and elevation seemed good, but the expense

Gardens.

was great, and the whole affair naturally a very losing business for the proprietor. The only other valuable suggestion besides that of Mr. Porteous is to let with each cottage a considerably larger garden than is the present custom, so that the labourer shall be able to sell the product of his garden, and be able so to pay a higher rent. But against this there is to be set down that they will be liable to leave their other work earlier, which the farmers will not allow. After all it seems that the cottage must be considered in the light of a part of the farm buildings, from which the landlord expects no return except in the shape of part of the rent of the farm.

Pulling down cottages is going out.

40. Partly owing to the Union Chargeability Act, and partly to the increasing sense of responsibility among proprietors, the custom of pulling down cottages, to force the people to live in the villages, and come out to labour in the farms, is disappearing rapidly. In a country which is chiefly pastoral it was a great disadvantage to the farmer to be left at night, as was the case with some, with a large stock of beasts, and not a soul, except his family, to look after them. It bore more hardly on Somerset than on a county of greater arable extent. But now it is becoming an exceptional case to find a farmer who has not at any rate two cottages on his farm, one for the herdsman, the other for the

Ownership of cottages.

carter and the majority have more. As to the ownership of the cottages the landlords are now trying to get them as much as possible in hand, with the exception of the two for the shepherd and carter, which most are agreed in thinking should be let with the farm. They consider that it leaves the labourer less at the mercy of his employer. But the farmers, naturally, do not like it so much; they naturally wish to have a hold over their people. The people themselves, as a rule, would rather hold directly of the landlord, but if not of him would rather take a cottage of their employer than live in the village; for they are nearer to their work, and seldom pay a landlord or employer more than 1*s.* a week, whereas in the village they cannot often get a cottage under 1*s.* 6*d.* most of the cottages there, unless it is a close parish, belonging to some small proprietor, who must make his house property pay.

Deficient cottage accommodation,

41. Boards of guardians were very energetic in their wishes that Government would do something to improve cottage accommodation. Clergy and farmers alike combined in saying that the bad cottages were the crying evil of the country; that as long as the people herd together in small dirty cottages you cannot expect to raise their moral or intellectual condition. The problem is most difficult to solve. A labourer has 8*s.* or 10*s.* a week, and to be able to afford the very worst cottage that is now thought fit to live in he must have at least 14*s.* or 15*s.* a week. The only means by which he gets on at present is by living in a cottage unfit for human beings, or living on sufferance in a model cottage, for which he does not pay more than one-third of the market value. It is, however, to be very much feared that the labouring class are not fully sensible of the degradation attending the fact of all ages and sexes sleeping together in one room. I was often told that their sense of delicacy is not so fine as in a higher class; but if we wish to raise that sense it cannot be done as long as they live as they live at present. Everywhere were complaints of the low state of morality, a state generally

supposed to lead to immorality.

attributed to the overcrowding in cottages; to the labour in the fields it was seldom attributed. When I inquired why it was that the girls who laboured in the fields were generally a lower class, I was told it was not because they labour in the fields, but because they have tried service or other employment, or had a "misfortune," and fallen back afterwards on out-door labour. As a rule, the state of morality is lower in the gloving than in the purely agricultural districts; in both, the boys live at home till they marry and set up for themselves. In the gloving districts the girls stay at home too, and crowd the cottages, whilst in the agricultural districts they do not stay at home so much; most go out to service, and only a few stay at home for millinery or field work. Then in the purely agricultural districts there is no substitute for the system about Yeovil of girls leaving their homes,

Morals worse in gloving districts than in agricultural.

and setting up gloving on their own account. But in such districts there is a good deal of immorality among the farm servants, who assist in the dairy work with the men and boys, and being left much with them the usual consequences result. As a rule, if a child is coming the father will marry the girl, and generally before the child is born; in fact, it is considered almost a point of honour; but when the father is in a higher class, as sometimes happens, a young farmer for instance, her character is lost. If too, through negligence and delay, as sometimes happens, the child is born before the

"Misfortune."

marriage, the father will often try to fight off, for the other girls jeer, and he does not like that. Still even in the case where a child is born before marriage it is thought more a misfortune than a fault, as the term "a misfortune," generally used in such cases, implies, and so leniently is it regarded, that after the girl has been home to be confined the farmer in whose service she has been employed will generally take her back, while the child is kept at home by the grand-parents, and just as well treated as if born in lawful wedlock.

The Rev. J. King on immorality.

42. The Rev. Mr. King, of Cutcombe, who was very strong on this subject, writes:—"Having had a "long and intimate acquaintance with the habits of the labouring class I am able to speak with some "degree of accuracy. The principal immorality exists among young people about to be married, "who think there is neither guilt or shame in such conduct; so little harm do they see in this form "of immorality that they will quote Scripture against you in their favour. 'Let them do what they "'like—they sin not—let them marry.'" It seems to be a pretty well-established fact that though the number of illegitimate children born in the county is not large, the number of women married who

Attempts of the clergy to check it.

are not about almost immediately to become mothers is very small. To check this evil various devices have been adopted by the clergy in various parishes. The wife of one clergyman offered to fit out the bedroom with washhand-stand, table, &c. in every new establishment where the woman was not married pregnant. She thought she had found a case at last, and fitted out the room accordingly, but only two months after the marriage almost the first use to which the basin was put was to christen a baby. The Rev. Mr. Carter, of Kingston, refused to church the woman in such

Not so bad a form of immorality as in towns.

cases, though he knew such refusal was illegal. He found himself in a scrape on this account once, but public opinion stood by him. After all it is a question whether it is not better that such a form of immorality should prevail than that common in towns. At any rate, it is not a worst form; and it

is so thoroughly established a custom now that, even if improved cottage accommodation ever have any effect in putting a stop to it, it will be only gradually that it will do so.

Early marriages and consequent poverty.

43. Early marriages are a great disadvantage, but under the present system of morality they must prevail. Men marry at from 18 to 22 years of age, girls younger, and generally must do so to save themselves. They begin very poor, taking a cottage, and being forced to borrow money to buy furniture, and perhaps not getting out of debt for years, perhaps never at all. It is during the first few years after marriage that the greatest poverty prevails, while the mother is herself often unfit for work, and the children are too small to earn anything. When the children cease to come so often, and the mother can herself work, and the elder children are beginning to be able to do so, the family begins to be more prosperous; but such prosperity is in the agricultural districts entirely dependent on out-door labour.

4.—Gloving.

44. In conclusion, I have ventured to append a short statement on the system of sewing gloves that prevails extensively among the wives and daughters of the agricultural labouring class in a large extent of this county, and which seemed to me to demand interference far more than the actual field labour.

District in which gloving prevails.

45. Gloving prevails principally in the four unions of Chard, Yeovil, Langport, and Wincanton, and spreads also slightly into the unions of Taunton and Bridgwater. A line drawn from the Blackdown Hills at Corfe through Taunton, Durston, and Middlezoy, along the line of the Polden Hills, and out to Castle Carey and Wincanton, would form the northern boundary; and Yeovil, Stoke, and Milborne Port are the chief centres of the trade. Taunton is to a smaller extent a centre, but employs few women in the parishes north of itself. The overseer at Bishop's Lydeard expressed a wish that he could introduce it in that parish. Gloving is generally to be found extending further along the line of the high road than in the intermediate districts. Where it prevails, scarcely a woman is to be found engaged in out-door work; it is difficult to combine the two, as a softness of hand and delicacy of touch is required for sewing gloves that soon disappears in manual labour, and gloving is naturally most often preferred as the more remunerative employment.

Effects of gloving on education.

46. Thus, in all the above-mentioned districts scarcely a woman or girl works out, but the girls are taken away from school at as early an age as the boys, often younger, and when once that is done, they do not, as do the boys, come back sometimes for the four winter months, but take to gloving as an occupation. They begin now at 7 or 8 years of age, some even earlier. They begin earlier than they used to. In one house I visited I found a small girl at work, and was told she had begun at 5 years of age. The woman, in whose house she was working told me that all her own children began at 6 or 7; another woman that she had herself begun at 6. It is obvious that to take children away from school so young as this interferes terribly with education, and it is very difficult to bring the Workshops Act to bear, as the work, not being done in factories or workshops, but in private houses, is far more scattered, and it would be very great labour to seize upon each individual instance of the infringement of the Act. On this subject Mr. Tregarthen, Her Majesty's inspector of schools, is at present engaged in getting up statistics. Many children also, who are at school all day, work at gloving all the evening. When I visited the school at Shepton Beauchamp, the mistress, who was teaching the first class, told all those who glove in the evening to hold up their hands, and every girl, even a little thing of 8, held up her hand. She worked every evening from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Evil effects on health.

Injury to the eyes.

47. But besides the hindrance to education, there is the damage to health and morality to be considered, subjects on which I gleaned a good deal of valuable information from Dr. Wills, of Crewkerne (Appendix 134). The constant concentration of the sight on a small machine is acknowledged by the glovers themselves to be most injurious. They use a brass machine which holds the glove in a vice, and has a row of little holes close together, through which the needle passes, and which keeps the stitches regular. They will all say that the reason that the machine is bad for the eyes is that the brass dazzles them, especially at candle-light, at which time so injurious is the effect that many have to leave off altogether. Dr. Wills, however, does not so much attribute such bad effect to the brass being dazzling as to the holes being so close together, that when they have been working long many of the glovers find that all the holes seem to run into one. He thinks that if the holes were of different colours the eyes would not suffer so much. He showed me one very painful case of a girl of 14, who had quite lost the use of her eyes; she was evidently far gone in consumption also, and the mother said that, though all her children "glovey," this was the only one whose eyes had suffered. Dr. Wills explained that she being naturally a delicate child, the disease had attacked the part so much used, but said that it was an unusual case. In another cottage we entered was a little girl, of 8, a "learner," who had just worked a twelvemonth. At first she used to miss stitches, and the woman teaching her thought it was laziness, and proved her, but she found when candles were brought that her eyes were bad, and she has to leave off work sometimes, and cannot work at all by candle-light. "Some eyes do fail; my own are not as strong as they were."

"Learners."

48. Girls are "learners" for 12 months, for the first three of which they receive no pay; after that they are paid regularly, but overlooked. They work usually, I am speaking of those about Yeovil now, in the cottage of some agent or overlooker, up to the age of 14 or 15 years of age, when they go to work at home, paying their mother 2*s.* 6*d.* out of their earnings, and doing what they like with the rest. We visited several cottages in East Chinnock, where the younger ones were working; in one there were 11 girls at work, besides which some women came in a friendly way to finish off just before the overlooker started with the finished gloves for Stoke. All were sitting in rows at their machines. The atmosphere was very stuffy, as was natural with 15 to 20 persons in a small room, but it was a clean cottage, and belonged to a respectable woman. Not all of the employers however treat the children well. A girl at Ilchester complained that her eyes had suffered, that she could see well at the beginning of the week, but at the end all the holes seemed run into one. When her eyes felt bad the woman would not let her look up, and thought it was laziness, so used often to bang her on the head as a hint to go on.

Gloving agents.

49. The system of agencies is new, and seems to have been, on the whole, a great improvement. Before it was adopted the woman and girls themselves used to have to walk once a week into the town where

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their employers resided, often as far as 10 or 15 miles, and wait about till their turn came to have their gloves examined. Many of them were kept waiting till 9 or 10 o'clock at night, and did not get home till early morning The consequences to health with people tired and ill-fed can readily be imagined. The gloves were severally examined, and those that were found to contain a fault were returned to them, and the full value deducted from their wages, and when it is recollected that the market value of one pair of kid gloves is greater than the sum paid to a glover for sewing a dozen pair, and that many of them cannot sew more than a dozen or a dozen and a half pairs in a week, it must naturally have resulted that sometimes they received no wages at all. The system of girls bringing in their work has not however entirely gone out. I found it still about Ilminster, though there was no great distance to be walked, and they were not kept waiting a long time; and Mr. Cuthbert Raymond, a prominent manufacturer at Yeovil, told me that he goes down himself now to Langport, and takes a room there, where he receives the finished gloves from the neighbourhood, and distributes fresh gloves to be sewn.

Value of gloves.

50. The value of gloves varies. If we turn to the kid gloves, which are the principal manufacture, we find that some years ago as much as 5*s.* a dozen could be earned; but those halcyon days are past; the demand for gloving has increased so among the labourers' families that no more than from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a dozen pair can be earned. Mary Eyres, at Ilchester (133) told me that the price she obtained was 2*d.* a pair; the agent received from the manufactory 2*s.* 2¼*d.* a dozen, and the odd 2¼*d.* went to herself, the 2*s.* to the gloving girl.

Abuse of agencies.

51. This system of agencies is, however, very liable to be abused; an agency is very often obtained by the small shop, grocer's or general shop, and the gloving girls will be expected to take out part of the wages in tea, dress, &c., the agent being herself paid in money, and able to put her own price on the wares she sells to the girls employed. For sewing the backs of cotton gloves Mr. Southcombe, at Stoke, gives 5½*d.* to 8½*d.* a dozen. Miss Adams, a girl at East Chinnock, and a very fast good worker (Appendix 135), told me that she has made 24 pairs of kid gloves a week at 2¼*d.* a pair = 4*s.* 6*d.* a week!; she has done as many as 34 pairs in a week, but that was working a day and a half each day; and it is hard to earn more than 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. At the Yeovil Board of Guardians there was a discussion as to how much a woman could earn in a week at gloving; the manufacturers set it down at 6*s.*, but the farmers did not think half so much, and though an average was struck at 4*s.* the farmers still said that that was outside the mark. Though a girl working hard all day and every day may make as much as 4*s.*, it must be recollected that a woman with household duties to perform besides will probably make scarcely half as much.

Overwork at gloving.

52. In busy times when there is a great demand the glovers are liable to be very much overworked; a younger sister of the girl mentioned above (Appendix 135), only 10 years of age, would sit and work all day, sometimes for 18 hours, and this was in her mother's house. The Rev. Mr. Salmon (Appendix 137) remarks that the number of hours of work at home is often far beyond the number in factories. The girls cannot afford to take a long time for meals, but sometimes get up and run about for a few minutes. One little girl, at Somerton, 14 years of age, told me that she works from 8 in the morning till 9 at night, and never has a holiday; another, only 8 years of age, who began to "glovey" at 5, that she works with her grandmother from 7 in the morning till 8 at night; and a third, 11 years of age, who likes doing it, that she works from 9 in the morning till 11 at night; never has a holiday, and never goes out while working. This last girl has a little sister of 8, who "gloveys" too and nurses the baby when tired, but she herself never nurses the baby, except on Sunday.

Consumption among glovers.

53. It stands to reason that a child must feel the worse for sitting so long and so continuously, but I did not hear of any special complaints at all peculiar to glovers, or that prevail more among them than among other persons engaged in sedentary occupations. It must be remembered that they are not so highly fed as persons of a higher class engaged in such occupations, and therefore are less likely to suffer from indigestion and similar illnesses. But the chief disadvantage, next to the injury to the eyes, results from so continuous a stooping posture; most of the women will be seen to have more or less of a stoop, and are narrow-chested. Dr. Wills informed me (Appendix 134) that there had been a doctor down some time ago trying to collect statistics about consumption, chest diseases, &c. among the poor glovers, supposed to come from sitting in a cramped attitude over the machine; but he himself attributed what consumption there is to that habit, formerly so common, but now going out, of having to walk once a week, without respect of weather, 6, 8, or 10 miles to the gloving place to have their gloves examined; being often kept out hours in the rain waiting for their turn, and having afterwards to walk home on wet nights. Mrs. Sweet, at High Ham (Appendix 171) said that though she "gloveys" herself, and has "gloveyed" for 30 years, she does not like her girls to do it. She thinks it bad for the health to sit so long without exercise; one fell sick and, in her opinion, died of it, and she pointed to another sickly looking girl sitting over the fire, and said that she had suffered from it too.

Character borne by glovers.

54. With respect to the general character of the gloving girls, the Rev. Mr. Salmon, of Martock, who was good enough to write me a special report on the subject, remarks that, "As a general rule, they "begin work at 8 or soon after. They grow up in a state of deplorable ignorance, very few of them "being able to write their own names. At an early age they become independent of their parents, "and submit to no control, even when it is exercised judiciously. The evil-disposed at once go out "to lodge, if their parents will not allow them to keep late hours; their morality is very low, their "ignorance excessive, and their language and behaviour often very rough and coarse. Sunday schools "do a little for the best of them, but the roughest will not attend them, as they are ashamed of their utter "ignorance, and impatient of any control." It is very painful to think that though the district is blessed with a more fertile soil than any other part of England, and affords more variety of and more continuous employment than any other part of Somerset, the morality of this part is lower than that of any other part of the county. The simple cause seems to be this, that there is more overcrowding of the cottages. In the purely agricultural districts girls go out to farm service, and few are at home after 13 or 14 years of age; in this district few go out to service; they like the independence of gloving, and either they stay at home and crowd the cottage or go out to lodge, and worse forms of immorality result. I was surprised at hearing from many competent witnesses that the women who work in the fields bear a higher character, as a rule, than either the glovers or the factory hands. The

Rev. Mr. Evans, of Merriott, a large parish, where the female population is pretty equally divided among these three classes, assured me of the fact. The factory hands get together after dark on returning from work ; the glovers at 15 or 16 get habits of independence of their parents. The glovers too make very useless wives in most cases; many of them have never learnt to make a bed or light a fire, for constant work gives no time to learn domestic duties. Doctor Wills told me a case of a girl who had a great wish to go out to service, and was found when in her new place not to know how to make a bed. She had always lain in bed while her mother rose and lit the fire and did the household work, and then risen and gone to work.

Ill-adapted for domestic duties.

55. While on this subject it may be as well to mention other cases of infringement of the Small Workshops Act that came prominently under my notice, either due to the negligence of the proper authorities to take action, or their ignorance as to whether they have the power.

Infringement of the Workshops Act.

56. At Pawlett, while not complaining of the labour of children in the fields, the Rev. Oland Crosse said that interference is much wanted in the brickyards, where children of 6 and 7 work barefooted in the clay. I had a like complaint from the schoolmaster at Clevedon.

Brick-fields.

57. At the request of the Rev. C. S. Grueber, I visited in his parish, Hambridge, a button-hole establishment, where from 30 to 40 girls between the ages of 8 and 12 work all day and never go to school. I was unfortunate in timing my visit on a day when there was a holiday, but Mr. Grueber subsequently wrote to me a letter containing more particulars on the subject, which I have printed in my Appendix (189). It appears that some children begin as young as 7 years, and work about 12 hours every day ; in the summer longer. He considers that they will be left without any education at all, and that unless he can get some of them to school, it will be no use keeping a school at all. He is willing to give every accommodation as to hours of attendance at school as may best suit the young person who employs the children.

Button-holing at Hambridge.

58. In conclusion, I must apologise for having wandered considerably wide of the immediate objects of our inquiry, in discussing the state of wages and the condition of the glovers in the south of Somersetshire ; but I found both subjects so inseparably mixed up with the question of the employment of women and children in agriculture, with the state of the education of the children, and with the want of cottage accommodation, that it would have been impossible to discuss any of these subjects without lengthened digressions into the general state of poverty, and the attempts to supplement wages by carrying to extremes such employments as gloving.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
ROBERT F. BOYLE.

June 1869.

REPORT by Mr. J. HENRY TREMENHEERE on CUMBERLAND and WESTMORLAND.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

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1. I have the honour to submit my report on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, in the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland into which I was instructed to inquire, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, and especially with a view to the education of such children. The district assigned to me being one in which landed property is much subdivided, it was your wish that I should incidentally direct my attention to the condition of the remanent of the class of statesmen or yeomen for which these counties have been long known, and especially to the influence which small properties and farms possess upon the education of the children of their owners and occupiers, I accordingly made them the subjects of my inquiries, and the conclusions at which I arrived will be found embodied in this Report.

Peculiarities of the district.

2. These counties possess several remarkable social peculiarities. The minute subdivision of landed property which took place at an early period of its history is still one of its most prominent characteristics; there does not, therefore, exist that constant and general demand for the combined labour of children in agriculture which forms so marked a feature in the rural economy of some other parts of England.

Counties of small estates and farms.

3. Cumberland and Westmorland are counties of small estates and small farms. They are, as compared with other fertile and populous counties in which large capitals and scientific farming have long been applied to draw out the latent capabilities of the soil, with some notable exceptions, still in a somewhat backward condition.

Sparsely peopled.

4. They are sparsely peopled. They possess very few large resident proprietors. There is very little immigration, except for temporary purposes such as the construction of railways, and the great majority of the farm servants and day labourers are natives.

Probably the last civilized of the English counties.

Cumberland and Westmorland were probably the last counties of England to receive the impulse of advancing civilization. Their mountainous nature, their extensive commons and moors, their large tracts of cold and barren fells, their distance from any great centre of civilization, the general

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absence of markets and of manufactures long continued to impress upon them a character of social isolation. The roads less than a hundred years ago were little better than traversed ruts and many were merely dangerous tracks over commons. A few sheep and herds of the poorer breeds of Irish and Scotch cattle grazed upon the mountains and fells, while thousands of acres were lying waste, not so much from natural barreness as from the want of capital and enterprise to bring them into cultivation. The highest aim of the small owners and occupiers was to feed and clothe themselves and their families from the produce of their land and to keep their half-starved stock alive through the long and inclement winters. Crops of stunted oats, barley, or rye were occasionally to be seen on the sides of hills and in the mountain dales, but wheat was an unknown grain; wheaten flour was imported and wheaten bread was consumed only by a few of the resident gentry, and by the better class of shopkeepers in the towns.

Long want of internal communication.

5. The want of internal communications compelled every farmer to grow a sufficient quantity of oats to provide meal for his family. The implements of husbandry were of the rudest description. Lean half-fed cattle were occasionally killed for food, but even as late as the end of the last century it was the practice of the butchers of Whitehaven to advertise in the newspapers their intention to slaughter a beast on a certain day. A side of bacon with a few dried legs of mutton formed the year's store of meat for the farm house, while oaten porridge, rye bread, and blue or skimmed milk cheese was the ordinary diet of the labouring men.

Commons formerly the chief dependence of farmers.

6. The chief dependence of the farmers was on the commons, and if one or two horses were kept they were expected to pick their own subsistence from the waste. Geese were the only description of stock that possessed any appreciable value, great numbers were kept on the commons, and a considerable profit was derived from their feathers and quills. Large patches of moorland were annually pared for fuel and for providing thatch for roofs.*

Rude state of agriculture continued until the end of the 18th century.

7. This rude and primitive state of society continued until nearly the end of the last century, when the attention of lords of manors first began to be directed to the enclosing of commons.

Continued progress since.

8. From that period the progress of these counties has been uninterrupted, and some districts will now bear a comparison with any portions of England for the skill and success with which farming operations are carried on.

Cumberland and Westmorland considered as one district.

9. Their physical and social features resemble each other so closely that I have deemed it expedient for the purposes of this report to consider these counties as one district. For certain purposes indeed they are combined. They possess between them but one lord lieutenant, one chairman of the court of quarter sessions, and one chief constable, and their moral is even more complete than their political and geographical unity.

Classification of farms, and their influence in the employment of children and women in agriculture.

10. The average size of farms in Cumberland is less than in any other of the northern counties, with the exception of Westmorland and perhaps a part of Lancashire. Large farms either of arable and pasture land or of both combined form the exception rather than the rule. Bailey and Culley, writing in 1805, say, "On the large estates there are some farms of from 100*l.* to 150*l.* a year, few reach "200*l.*, and we only hear of four or five that get as high as 300*l.* or 400*l.* a year, and only one of 600*l.* "The more general size of the farms is from 15*l.* to 28*l.* or 50*l.* a year."† The smallest farms are now found near villages and in the vicinity of collieries and iron mines, where occasional employment in carting offers inducements to many poor men to rent a few acres of land, and to endeavour with their aid to become independent. Very little time can therefore be spared from their work to cultivate their small holdings, which vary from four to 20 or 30 acres. This class of men can scarcely be called farmers, although they are occupiers of land. A more numerous class of farms consists of those of from 40 to 150 acres, which are either in the hands of small tenants or of their proprietors, the "statesmen" or estatesmen of these counties who generally cultivate their own land. The occupiers of from 200 to 1,000 acres are chiefly tenant farmers, and the farms are both arable and mixed, the land capable of cereal cultivation constituting, it has been estimated, about one-half of the area of Cumberland.

Small farms more numerous in Westmorland than in Cumberland.

11. In Westmorland small farms are even more numerous than in Cumberland, although there has long been the same tendency as in Cumberland to their gradual aggregation. Pringle, in his general view of the agriculture of this county in 1805 says, "Farms in general are so small that it is hard to meet "with one of 100*l.* a year rent, though there are some of 200*l.* or 250*l.* a year." From an inspection of the rate books of 62 parishes and townships in Westmorland, taken indiscriminately from the four wards into which the county is divided, and assuming that the same proportion exists in the remaining 47 parishes and townships, it appears, from a calculation made by the Rev. James Simpson, vicar of Kirkby Stephen, a gentleman to whom I am under the greatest obligations for his valuable assistance in prosecuting my inquiries in Westmorland, and whose communication‡ in the social and economical condition of that county will be read with much interest, that the total number of occupiers at the present time amounts to 1,405, of these—

803 hold from 50 to 100 acres.
432 „ „ 100 to 200 acres.
107 „ „ 200 to 300 acres.
33 „ „ 300 to 400 acres.
60 „ „ 400 and upwards,

the last being chiefly but not wholly hill-sheep farms. There are in this county 131 occupiers paying less than 50*l.* a year rent, but there are a great many statesmen still living in the county upon their patrimonial property, varying in value from 20*l.* to 150*l.* a year.

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* See Nicholson's and Burn's History of Westmorland and Cumberland for the early condition of these counties.

† A general view of the agriculture of the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, drawn up for the Board of Agriculture, London, 1794–5, by Mr. John Bailey, of Chillingham, and Mr. George Culley, of Fenton, Northumberland.

‡ See Appendix.

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12. The great majority of farms in Westmorland are under 100*l.* a year rent. In the Kendal union, taking all holdings rented at 20*l.* a year and upwards, the proportion per cent. is as follows:—

Farms under 100*l.* a year - - -	72
Above 100*l.* and under 150*l.* - - -	15
Above 150*l.* and under 200*l.* - - -	6
Above 200*l.* - - - - -	7
	100

Rent of farms in Westmorland.

Applying the same rule to the eastern union the proportion would be,—

Farms under 100*l.* a year - - -	78
Above 100*l.* a year and under 150*l.* - -	12
Above 150*l.* and under 200*l.* - - -	4
Above 200*l.* - - - - -	6
	100

the same proportion, it is believed, would be found in the western union, with perhaps a slight advantage in favour of large farms.

Average rent of land in both counties.

13. The average rent of land in Cumberland, I was informed by Mr. W. Dickinson, an eminent land agent at Workington, is about 20*s.* per acre; the average rent of good grass land is 50*s.* per acre; the average rent of arable land is 27*s.*, if such land is favourably situated, *i.e.*, in the vicinity of a town, about 50*s.*, decreasing according to quality and distance. There are, however, many thousand acres on the mountains not worth more than 3*d.* per acre. The average rent of land in Westmorland, according to Mr. C. Webster's estimate, is 15*s.* per acre, the average rent for good grass land is from 35*s.* to 45*s.* per acre; the average rent paid for arable land is 1*l.* per acre; and the average rent for arable farms in the neighbourhood of a town such as Kendal is 30*s.* to 35*s.* per acre. I may add that the average price of corn is higher in Westmorland than in any county in England.

Proportion of arable and pasture land.

14. *From an able paper on the farming of Westmorland written by Mr. Crayston Webster, land agent of Kendal for the Royal Agricultural Society of England, it appears that in 1868 one-tenth only of the gross area of this county was under the plough, and that of the 22,130 acres under cereal cultivation no less than 17,042 were in oats. There is very little cultivation in the mountain districts, the heavy rainfall and the generally poor quality of the soil being unfavourable to the production of corn. Oats were formerly grown to a greater extent than they now are, but the crop was always a precarious one, and the small farmer finds it cheaper to buy the grain that he requires than to raise it from his land. The demand for agricultural labour in these secluded districts is therefore very restricted; shepherds and a few men to tend cattle are all that are required.

Westmorland not a corn producing county.

15. The above figures plainly indicate that Westmorland is not a corn-growing county; breeding cattle and sheep and the production of butter and cheese form the chief stay of the farmers of that county, and Westmorland, having a smaller population in proportion to its area than any county in England (the number of inhabitants per square mile being only 80, while the average of England is 373), it will be evident that there is little scope for the employment on a large scale of children or women in agriculture, although they are freely employed in such occupations as the character of the cultivation admits. This remark applies in a less degree to Cumberland where the quantity of arable land is much greater than in Westmorland.

Employment of Women in Agriculture.

Employment of women in agriculture once common in Westmorland.

16. Pringle, in his view of the agriculture of Westmorland, published in 1794, says, "It is painful "to behold the beautiful servant maids of the district toiling in the severe labours of the field; they "drive the harrow and the plough, when they are drawn by three horses; nay, it is not uncommon to "see toiling at the dung carts a girl whose elegant features and delicately-proportioned limbs but ill "accord with such rough employment."

The employment of women in agriculture has diminished.

17. The employment of women in agriculture in both of these counties has considerably diminished within the recollection of many persons with whom I communicated on the subject. Bailey and Culley state that in their time more than half the carts in the county of Cumberland were driven by females, many of them under 20 years of age. I frequently heard farmers in Westmorland complain that women could not now be got to work in districts where such labour was a few years ago abundant.

The high rate of wages the cause of the diminution.

18. The high rate of wages in both counties has, to a great extent, removed the necessity which formerly existed for the wife to supplement the earnings of her husband by her own. The wives of agricultural labourers still generally assist at the hay and corn harvests, but they consider this work as a holiday, and field labour which entails exposure to wet and cold, and requires more exertion than women in general are willing to submit to, is left to a lower class which is found in towns, to girls of doubtful character, or to poor widows who gladly avail themselves of any employment to eke out their little means of subsistence. A farmer of Westmorland to whom I put the question whether he employed any women but his own farm servants in field labour, replied, he would willingly do so if he could get them, but that if he wanted a single extra female hand he should have to go to Carlisle, a distance of 30 miles, to hire her. That farmers should gladly avail themselves of female labour when they can obtain it is natural; it is comparatively cheap, and for certain purposes equal to, if not superior to that of men. There are several occupations in which women are more expert than men, and which the labourers of Westmorland and Cumberland would regard as a waste of their power and as derogatory to their manhood if they should be employed in them. The greater part of such work, as spreading dung, weeding crops, thinning turnips, and taking up potatoes, is still done by female farm servants and by extra women when they can be procured.

* Essay on the agriculture of Westmorland, Royal Agricultural Society's Journal, 1867.

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Female farm servants employed in field work.

19. There is probably scarcely a farm in either county in which the female servants do not contribute some portion of the outdoor labour, and the work demanded of them is often very heavy and unsuitable to the female constitution. I would direct attention to the communication of Dr. Tiffen, a gentleman of extensive practice in one of the districts of Cumberland where women are much employed, in which a strong opinion is expressed that they suffer considerably from exposure in the fields and from certain kinds of work which they are expected to perform. Loading dung carts is not only unseemly but involves an amount of exertion to which women are not generally equal; lifting and carrying heavy burthens, such as sacks of corn, tending cattle, treading down hay, pitching corn sheaves into the carts at harvest, or receiving and arranging them on the top of the rick, are all occupations more or less unsuited to their sex. A case was mentioned to me of a young woman having contracted a complaint from the hardships to which she had been exposed by working in a farmyard, and from which she died.*

Employment of women in agriculture very general in some parts of Cumberland.

20. I found the employment of women in agriculture very general in some parts of Cumberland, indeed, in some districts farmers seem to rely almost entirely upon the abundant supply of female labour which they can command. One of the largest farmers in the neighbourhood of Longtown, near the Scottish border, who rents 2,000 acres, chiefly under tillage, had not even thought it necessary to provide himself with a reaping machine, as he could get his harvest in with equal speed by women "shearers." In this town, containing a population of 2,300, almost every female capable of work, with the exception of a few who go out to domestic service, gains a living by field labour; and I may mention as a proof of the demoralizing effect of such labour upon the female character, that it was stated to me by the deputy chairman of the board of guardians, himself one of the largest employers of that labour, that the workhouse of the union in the district wherein women are so largely employed, has become little else than a great lying-in hospital.

Opinions against it.

21. Opinions were freely expressed in favour of putting a stop by legislation to some of the heavier and most unbecoming descriptions of female labour, particularly for girls under 18 years of age, under the impression that the very character of farm work has a tendency to degrade the moral nature of women, and that it unsettles and unfits them for domestic life. What they are constantly seeing and hearing in a farmyard must, it was often said, necessarily destroy all delicacy of character.

Farmers opposed to interference. Remedies for abuses best left to the influences of time and education.

22. I found, however, a strong feeling on the part of the farmers against any legislative interference with the employment of women, and many persons who had no pecuniary interest in the question frankly admitted the difficulties of dealing with even acknowledged abuses by law, believing that the practice would in time disappear under the influence of public opinion and the gradual improvement of manners. "As to the employment of women in the fields," writes Mr. George Moore, a gentleman to whom Cumberland is greatly indebted for his admirable schemes for the improvement of education, "I think that in another generation it will be discontinued, as I observe amongst the girls "educated in the schools in many parts of Cumberland that they show a decided aversion to "field work, and it would only be by those whose character was lost or who had not been regularly "to school that rough farm work would be chosen. In past years there was nothing done to "civilize or indeed to humanise the labouring classes of Cumberland, and besides, there were so "few resident gentry that they saw nothing of a more refined life; there was no opening for servants "in indoor places in their own immediate neighbourhood, and the greater hardships of out-door life "had greater wages and entire freedom to tempt them to follow in the way of life of their own "mothers."

Public and Private Gangs.

Public gangs partially employed in Cumberland.

23. It was with some surprise that I found the public agricultural gang system prevailing in parts of Cumberland. It seems to have been introduced about 21 years ago, and to have been adopted in several districts. At Penrith I discovered by the assistance of the police authorities that there are eight public gangmasters residing in that town, and seven women carrying on the same business. The gangs are composed, I was informed, of women, girls, and boys, but none under 10 years of age. The demand for these gangs, which generally consist of from 20 to 40 persons of both sexes, is continuous from March to the end of November, and about 300 children, young persons, and women who reside in or near the town of Penrith find employment in them. The Act of Parliament passed in 1867 for the regulation of agricultural gangs seems not to have been known in this district, and I availed myself of the opportunity which my presence at Penrith offered of assembling and addressing the gang-masters, of pointing out to them the consequences to which they had exposed themselves by violating the law, and of explaining its provisions. The men expressed their regret at having acted in contravention of the law, but said they had done so in ignorance, and promised compliance with it for the future. I also considered it my duty to call the attention of the magistrates of the district to the Act in question, and I received assurances that its enactments should henceforth be strictly enforced. I had no opportunity of seeing any of these gangs at work, the season for field labour not having commenced, but I was informed that the gangs superintended by women were far worse regulated than those conducted by men, the gang-mistresses generally setting a very bad example both in language and conduct to the children and young persons under their control. The attention of the magistrates having been directed to the subject of public gangs, these women will hereafter be obliged, in order to continue their employment, to apply for licences, which, as their characters are well known, will in most instances be refused. Some of these gangs go to work as far as nine miles from the town, but carts are sent by the farmers employing them to convey them to the spot where their labour is required, and they are sent back in the same manner.

Private gangs used in some parts of Cumberland and Westmorland.

24. I found private gangs much used in districts of both counties where large tillage farms prevail and where a sufficient supply of children could be obtained. Their principal employment is in turnip thinning under the superintendence of a farm servant. The work is done in West Cumberland by boys and girls of from 10 to 16 years of age who creep along the ground upon their hands and knees,

* See the evidence of Rev. J. S. Hodgson, Appendix.

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the knees being protected by leather caps, and who placing a finger on the finest plant at the proper interval, sweep out by a grasp with the other hand all the superfluous plants up to the one selected to remain. When properly instructed, three children can single an acre of turnips in a day.* A number of boys and girls of all ages creeping along the drills together upon their hands and knees gives rise, I have no doubt, to much impropriety of conduct. The posture of girls necessarily produces exposure, and the sexes should certainly be separated while engaged in such work.

25. There is constant employment for these private gangs in parts of Cumberland and Westmorland for nearly nine months of the year. The period during which I was occupied on my inquiries in these counties, namely, from the beginning of November until the middle of March, when there is an almost total suspension of outdoor field labour except ploughing, necessarily afforded me no opportunities of observing them at work, or of testing the state of education of the children employed in them; but I heard from persons on whom I can rely that they are chiefly composed of children of the lowest class, that they are not properly looked after while at work, and that their education is greatly neglected. The rate of payment for turnip thinning is 1*d.* per 100 yards, and a sharp boy or girl can thus often earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a day. The children employed in these private gangs have, in the vicinity of Cockermouth, to walk four or five miles out to their work, the only food brought by them consisting of a piece of dry bread; the farmers, however, occasionally send into the fields some milk as an addition to their scanty mid-day meal.

Require to be placed under regulations.

26. These private gangs require to be placed under regulations, and the separation of the sexes while at work enforced where the gang is large. This would subject the farmer to no material inconvenience, and if on leaving work they were conducted to their homes by some trustworthy servant it would be a wholesome check upon misconduct, which I have no doubt is much required.

Work on small farms often done by piece by a man and his family.

27. On small farms any work that is required to be done quickly is generally done by piece-work. A man contracts to single a certain quantity of turnips, for example, at a stated price per acre, and he does it by employing his wife and children, or he enters into a temporary partnership with a neighbour, and their united families do the work. The parents having their children under their eye no objection can be made to such an employment of the young.

Farm Servants and Agricultural Labourers.

Explanation of the general employment of farm servants. Origin of half-yearly hirings.

28. About two-thirds of the farm work of these counties is done by men and women who are hired by the half year, and boarded and lodged in the farmhouses. The arrangement is found to be attended with some advantages both to employers and employed. The practice of hiring by the half year originated in the desire of the farmers to prevent labourers from gaining a settlement by hiring for a year, and the practice has been continued partly from habit and partly from motives of convenience.

Scarcity of cottages.

29. A marked peculiarity in the economy of these counties is the paucity of cottages. This was not felt as an evil when almost all agricultural work was done by the small proprietors or small tenant farmers and their families, and where the subdivision of land was so general cottages were not built because they were not required. Employment for a day labourer moreover was too uncertain and precarious to encourage men from other districts to settle where they could not rely on regular wages, and the work of these counties was done almost exclusively by the native population. To a great extent this is still the case. There are no large agricultural villages from which regular supplies of day labour can be drawn. The farmhouses are generally isolated and remote from other habitations, and, if a farmer had not his labourers lodged under his own roof, he could not get the work of his farm done at all.

Farm servants necessary. Advantages of the system.

30. Farm servants who reside in the house live quite as well as their masters, and are thought to have their employer's interest more at heart than common labourers who are paid by the day. In the hay and corn harvests, for example, it is not unusual, if the weather should be unsettled or rain expected, for farm servants to work until very late at night, and even all night, and they never expect or require any extra payment for such overwork. They are always at hand to attend, early and late, to the horses and the stock, the master's eye is constantly upon them, and he often works as hard as themselves.

Farm servants a peculiar class.

31. Farm servants in these counties have always been a peculiar class. They are not like the agricultural labourers of some other parts of England, a well-defined portion of the community who marry without regard to consequences, and multiply beyond the requirements of the labour market. The mode of living and the objects in life of the farm servants of Cumberland and Westmorland discourage early marriages, and thus keep down the number of those who compete for wages, and prevent the supply of labour from ever exceeding the demand.

Geographical position not favourable for the immigration of labour.

32. The geographical position too of these counties, as will be seen by a glance at the map of England, is such that they are not favourably situated for the immigration of labour. They are bounded on three sides by great manufacturing districts. Westmorland is to only a very limited extent a manufacturing county; it has its bobbin mills in many a picturesque glen where water power is abundant, but it has only one town of manufacturing importance, namely Kendal, but Cumberland is a mineral county, and its mines employ a considerable number of men.

The census returns for both counties show a slow increase of population.

33. The population of both counties increases only at a slow rate. The census returns for 1861 for Westmorland indicate a considerable amount of emigration from that county. There were then living in England, but out of the county, 23,068 persons who had been born in Westmorland, and the whole population amounted only to but 60,810 souls.

Enclosure of commons has not much added to the population.

34. The increase of the population, compared with the area of the land brought within the present century into cultivation, has also been but small. The commons in Cumberland enclosed between the years 1793 and 1816, have been estimated at 200,000 acres, and since 1816 the enclosures have amounted to about 100,000 acres more. In Westmorland the proportion of modern enclosures to the area of the county has been about the same as in Cumberland.

Wages of farm servants.

35. The hiring of the farm servants male and female takes place half-yearly at Whitsuntide and Martinmas in the principal market towns. Their wages varying according to their age, strength,

* In some parts of Cumberland and Westmorland the hoe is exclusively used.

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and qualifications. A boy of 14 when he first enters service receives from 30*s.* to 50*s.* the first half year, and if he proves to be a smart lad and willing, he is very soon in the receipt of 6*l.* or 7*l.* for the half year; and when he can take charge of a pair of horses and hold his own in the harvest field he is entitled to and receives man's wages. Girls go to farm service when about 14 and receive from 30*s.* to 2*l.* the first half year, and as they become stronger and are able to take a more active part in the household or farm work their wages rise rapidly until they receive 5*l.* 10*s.* or 6*l.* for the half year. An able-bodied farm labourer before he rises to the position of "head man" obtains from 18*l.* to 20*l.* yearly, and a "topsman" has seldom less than 28*l.* or 30*l.* a year with food, washing, and lodging. The increase in the money rate of wages within the present century has been very great. According to Bailey and Culley the wages of men farm servants in 1805 were from 5*l.* to 7*l.* for the half year, and of women from 2*l.* to 3*l.*

Present mode of living of farm servants compared with the past.

36. The labourers who reside in the farm houses are abundantly fed. The improvement which has taken place within little more than half a century in the diet of the labouring classes of these counties is most remarkable. In 1795 Mr. Curwen, then member for Carlisle, to show the inability of the labouring population to bear any further taxation, entered the House of Commons dressed as a Cumberland labourer in a grey homespun coat, wearing the wooden clogs of the county rimmed with iron, carrying under one arm a brown "groudie" or loaf made of mixed barley and rye, and under the other a "whellimer" or skimmed milk cheese, and bearing in his hand a "gully" or large knife with which when he cut the black loaf and the cheese he had placed on the table, he produced a sound in the one resembling the crushing of cinders, and in the other that of planing a deal board.* Eden, in his History of the Poor Laws says, that about the year 1740 so small was the quantity of wheat consumed in the county of Cumberland that it was only a rich family that used a peck in the course of the year. The ordinary dietary of the Cumberland and Westmorland farm servants at the present day is, for breakfast porridge made with milk, at 10 a.m. a meal consisting of bread and cheese with in some districts beer or milk, which is taken out to the men at their work by one of the female farm servants; dinner consisting of fruit puddings according to the season, or if plain, with treacle sauce, and meat, either mutton or beef, baked, boiled, or made into pies, puddings, or stews, with potatoes and other vegetables. At four o'clock follows a light meal, consisting of bread and cheese, or tea and bread and butter, or sometimes gooseberry or apple cake, which is taken to the men at their work as in the morning. The supper is usually porridge as before, or milk, bread and cheese without stint. The bread is composed of two-thirds of the best wheaten flour, and one-third of rye, and which for sweetness and nourishing properties cannot be surpassed. Beer is rarely given except at harvest, tea is but little used.

Efficiency of farm servants.

37. Sustained by this ample and generous diet the Cumberland and Westmorland farm labourer is in the highest possible physical condition, and with his mind at ease as to the future, (for he is well able after providing for his clothes, and indulging in occasional recreation to put by at least two-thirds of his wages,) is not only an able but a willing labourer, and does his work honestly, thoroughly, and cheerfully.

No one who has entered a Cumberland or Westmorland farmhouse at the dinner hour and seen the servants seated at their long table could fail to have been impressed with the picture of rural comfort, abundance and health which the kitchen then presents. "Our people," said a large farmer to me on the occasion of one of such visits, "live quite as well as ourselves. There is no difference "in the quality or cooking of the food for my own family and my servants."

Independence of farm servants.

38. There is, however, another aspect in which this picture must be viewed. From the scarcity of labour and the demand for farm servants they are quite aware of their importance. "The men are "becoming our masters," said the land steward of one of the principal proprietors in Westmorland to me, "and if the present deficiency of labour should increase we shall speedily change positions "in this county."

Prevalence of immorality.

39. These counties have become notorious for the very large per-centage of illegitimacy as compared with others. The Registrar-General's reports reveal a state of society in that respect very much to be deplored. The farm servant system is credited with much of the evil. The men farm servants are as a rule unmarried, and as there are always one or two and sometimes three or four female farm servants living in the house the temptations to immorality are great; and girls who enter young into service fall easy victims to men who are not likely to impose much restraint upon their passions, and who have no other opportunities of gratifying them than the farmhouse affords. Unchastity, too, is not regarded in a very serious light by the class from which farm servants are taken. No disgrace, scarcely any discredit, attaches to a girl who has had one illegitimate child, which is generally denominated a chance child, the event being merely spoken of as a misfortune.

It cannot, I think, be doubted by any one who has investigated the subject, and heard the opinions of persons in the district competent to form an opinion, that a vast amount of immorality takes place in the farmhouses. "I firmly believe," writes the Rev. Thomas Goss, the rector of Stapleton, Cumberland, "that the living together of male and female servants under very little proper supervision or "restraint is productive of far more evil than is generally supposed. I believe there is more immo-"rality in the farmhouses of this county than in the poorest cottages." I heard of young female servants having had as many as three, four, and even five illegitimate children by different men, but the notorious fact did not in any way affect their prospects of future employment. The children are either put out to nurse or taken care of by the mothers' relations.

Farm servant system discourages marriages.

40. It is one of the disadvantages of the farm servant system in these counties that it acts as a discouragement to marriage. In some parts of England this might not be considered as an evil, but in one where the population is already insufficient for its industrial requirements any arrangement which keeps the labour market permanently under supplied cannot but be regarded as unsatisfactory. A farm servant when he marries loses his situation and becomes a day labourer. The disinclination to marry under these circumstances is natural. He is abundantly fed, need take no

* See Lonsdale's Life of John Christian Curwen, M.P.

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thought for the morrow, and if he aspires, as many of his class do, to become a farmer himself, or possibly even a small proprietor, he must relinquish, if he marries young, all his cherished hopes and objects in life. Whether these objects are the most desirable for that class of the community I shall have an opportunity of considering in the sequel of this report.

Hiring fairs.

41. Farm servants are hired at the statute or hiring fairs. This system is generally condemned as one of the great incentives to immorality. Attempts to abolish it have been occasionally made, but they have not been seconded either by the farmers or the men. An employer likes to see those upon whose industry the success of his farming mainly depends, to form an opinion on their capabilities for work, and to learn something of their antecedents. He can accomplish all these objects at once at the hiring fair, for the place is full of farmers assembled for the same purpose as himself. The farmers are less particular than they ought to be as to the moral character both of the women and of the men whom they hire; but the men are very inquisitive indeed as to the character of the farmers. If an employer has once acquired the repute of being ill-tempered, rough in his manners, and above all illiberal in his table, he may seek in vain for a labourer such as it is his interest to engage; he may tempt him with the offer of high wages, and perhaps promise an additional meal, but he will turn a deaf ear to all his advances, and the master will have to put up with the refuse of the market, and possibly find after a few days' experience that he had got a servant whom it would be almost better to be without. "I will inquire into your character," said a farmer to a man who offered himself for hire, "and you "shall know my decision in the afternoon." At the appointed hour the man re-appeared, and addressing the farmer who desired to engage him, said, "Since I saw you this morning I have got *your* "character, and *my* decision is to have nothing to do with you."*

Hiring fairs not attended with the same abuses as formerly.

42. The hiring fairs, I was informed, are conducted with more propriety than they formerly were. The towns are earlier emptied of their visitors, the railways conveying them in the direction of their homes. The public-houses have not so much custom as they had; and there are fewer inducements to squander in a week the wages of a half year.

Proportion of servants to a farm.

43. The number of men hired for a farmhouse generally depends upon the number of "draughts" employed upon the farm, one man being considered enough for each pair of horses, with a boy or two in addition according to circumstances. For any additional labour the farmer employs day men, if he can get them at 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per day, with food, but, as a general rule, the employer prefers giving a labourer 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, with meat, to allowing him 2*s.* 6*d.* without meat; and, so far as the value of the labour is concerned, he is right; less time is lost, and a well-fed labourer is much better able to do his work than one who is perhaps compelled to pinch himself for the sake of his family. Instances were mentioned to me of day labourers breaking down under work that a well-fed farm servant would accomplish with ease.

Wages of day labourers.

44. The wages of agricultural day labourers, when they provide for themselves, vary from 15*s.* to 18*s.* and 1*l.* 1*s.* per week. To these high wages are frequently added privileges worth from 4*l.* to 5*l.* a year. In some places cottages are allowed rent free; in others a labourer is permitted to plant potatoes in his employer's land, the labourer finding the manure, which is carted to the field for him free of expense. To these must be added the additional wages paid in haytime and harvest. In haytime as much as 5*l.* a month is sometimes given with board and lodging, but the usual wages in those seasons are 3*l.* 10*s.* or 4*l.* a month.

Cause of high wages in Cumberland and Westmorland.

45. One reason why day labourers are paid higher wages in these counties than in most others is that they are not very generally employed. The principal work on small farms is done by the resident farm servants and by the farmer's family, and the farmer obtains his labour upon the whole of a better quality when he boards and lodges his men than when he hires labourers by the day. In the comparative cost of farm servants and day labourers I heard different opinions expressed, but much of the food consumed in the house is the produce of the farm, and as the men live better than day labourers, are always at hand and less particular as to hours, they not only do more and better work in a given time, but work longer and harder. On many farms the farmers' sons and the farmer himself work with the men, who cannot object to labour which the master's family share with themselves.

Comparative cost of farm servants and day labourers.

46. Taking the keep of a farm servant as costing 9*s.* a week, which with the present price of butcher's meat is not too high, the expense of boarding a man for a year would be 15*l.* 12*s.*; add to this his money wages of 20*l.* and the total charge will amount to about 14*s.* 6*d.* per week. But although the cost to the employer will not exceed this sum the advantage to the employed is very great. He could not buy and cook food of the quality and quantity which he obtains in a farmhouse and pay the rent of a cottage for anything like 14*s.* 6*d.* per week, and the health and strength which an ample and nutritious diet secures are beyond calculation and price.

Evils of the farm servant system.

47. Against these advantages are to be set the isolation of farm service, and the celibacy which is one of its conditions. The servants residing in farmhouses have little to vary the monotony of their daily life. Most of the homesteads being far from villages or towns farm labourers have little intercourse with the world; a reading room or public library is seldom within their reach, a provincial newspaper which they read or hear read is the only resource for the Sunday, their mental vision is necessarily very bounded, and it is not surprising that animal gratifications should possess irresistible attractions when there is nothing to supply their place. That farmers might do much more than they are in the practice of doing to elevate the intellectual and moral character of their men there can be no doubt, but I am glad to have it in my power to state that I met with many instances in which farmers took considerable pains to provide recreation and amusement for their men after the hours of work.

The "terms" of farm servants.

48. There are two periods of the year, however, in which farm servants, male and female, fully indemnify themselves for the seclusion in which they pass the greater part of their lives. For a week at Whitsuntide and Martinmas, when the half-yearly hirings take place, there is an almost total suspension of agricultural labour throughout these counties. These periods are designated "terms." The hirings being invariably only for six months, the stipulated period of service being at an end, there must either be

* This incident was mentioned to me by Rev. J. S. Hodgson, Rector of Aikton.

a renewal of the engagement or another place must be sought. As a rule farm servants seldom remain more than six months in one place, however good may be the situation; they generally seek a change of masters. The brief interval between the leaving an old and entering upon a new place is a general holiday. Some visit their relations, or make excursions to towns; others who are saving money and hope to become small farmers embrace the opportunity of visiting neighbouring farms that may have acquired a reputation for good management; the greater number give themselves up to such enjoyments as are to their taste and are too often drawn into a vortex of dissipation. L.

Amusements of farm servants. Passion for dancing and love of dress.

49. The Cumberland and Westmorland farm servants are naturally a pleasure loving class. All the arts of the innkeepers are employed on these occasions to induce them to spend the wages they have just received. Prizes for wrestling, racing, leaping, shooting at a mark, &c. are among the attractions held out to draw them to the vicinity of the public house; but the most powerful is the "ball" in the evening, without which no entertainment would be considered complete. The "accomplishment" of dancing is universal. A day labourer with a large family may declare that he is too poor to pay the weekly pence for his children's schooling, but he seldom fails to find money enough to pay for the lessons of the itinerant dancing master. A passion for dress among the women is universal, and no inconsiderable part of the wages of a farm servant girl is expended on her person. At church it would be difficult to distinguish a farm servant from the daughter of a statesman or of a substantial tenant farmer, and a girl whose ordinary costume is a coarse petticoat, pinned close round her body, and wooden clogs, will appear at a dance in a white muslin dress, white kid boots and gloves, and with a wreath of artificial flowers on her head.

Savings of farm servants.

50. Farm servants are most favourably circumstanced for making a provision for themselves in after life, but the temptations to spend money have so much increased that they are, I was informed, less provident than they were when wages were comparatively low. Many, however, avail themselves of their opportunities of saving money, and in a few years accumulate a little fortune. By the courtesy of the managers of the Morland Branch of the Carlisle Savings' Bank I obtained a list of the existing deposits by farm servants of sums over 100*l.* in that district, which may be taken as examples of the savings which that class can effect if they please:—

Males.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
T. R.	148	8	7	R. B.	152	9	0
J. G.	172	6	6	T. R.	110	4	3
M. L.	182	13	6	J. W.	120	10	8
J. R.	132	11	10	J. G.	133	6	10
T. B.	171	1	2	J. E.	118	18	11
J. H.	136	7	11	J. S.	109	8	11
J. B.	162	9	10	J. K.	100	2	4
J. J.	100	0	2				

Females.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
S. H.	106	15	10	G. H.	163	1	0
R. P.	180	0	0	A. P.	189	4	2
F. N.	149	19	1	A. T.	107	7	0

These lists, however, by no means represent the full amount which farm servants of prudent habits have the power of accumulating for establishing themselves in life, or as a provision for old age. There are instances of sums of 500*l.* having been saved, and a case was mentioned to me of a man, still young, who commenced saving by depositing when a boy 10*s.* in the savings' bank, and whose account now shows 400*l.* to his credit.

Return of the Carlisle Savings Bank.

51. By the last annual report of the Penrith Branch of the Carlisle Savings' Bank it appears that the total amount due to 260 male farm servants is 9,259*l.* 9*s.* 5*d.*, to 240 female farm servants 7,904*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, and I was informed by the ex-manager and secretary of this bank that according to his experience farm servants are in the habit of depositing 10*l.* or 15*l.* a year.

Other modes of investing savings.

52. In some places private banks receive deposits from servants of small sums saved out of their wages, but there are many who do not use a bank of any kind, or if they do they withdraw their money after it has reached a certain sum, and lend it to some person who is willing to pay higher interest. Farm servants also often leave their wages in the hands of their masters, receiving interest, and they occasionally trade or speculate a little on their own account.

Benefit societies partially used by farm servants.

53. Farm servants being hired by the half year their employers are bound to maintain them and take care of them during illness; but sickness among this class is rare, their excellent diet and regular hours keeping them in excellent health; nevertheless, there is among the list of subscribers to benefit societies of these counties a fair proportion of farm servants. The annual club procession and the subsequent social meeting act as inducements to young men to join these societies, and when they have once become members they continue to pay their subscriptions, although they rarely derive any benefit from their membership unless they marry and become day labourers.

Returns of farm servants subscribing to benefit societies.

54. The numbers of farm servants on the books of the under-mentioned lodges represent pretty correctly the proportion in which they may be supposed to join these societies:—

Lonsdale Lodge of Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Farmers	11
Farm servants	34
Farm labourers	48
Artizans, &c.,	146
	239

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Morland Provident Society.

Farmers	21
Farmservants	17
Farm labourers	35
Artizans, &c.	39
	112

Shap Lodge of Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Farm servants	13
Farm labourers	31
Artizans, &c.	31
	75

Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Appleby.

Farm servants	32
Farm labourers	36
Artizans, &c.	173
	241

Loyal Eden Lodge of Odd Fellows, Kirkby Steven.

Farm servants	30
Labourers	65*
Trades	58
	153

Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Temple Sowerby.

Farm servants	25
Agricultural labourers	63
Artizans, &c.	94
	182

The "Statesmen" or Yeomen of Cumberland and Westmorland.

Origin of the statesmen.

55. There is a class of small proprietors known in these counties from time immemorial under the denomination of statesmen or estatesmen. The subdivision of landed property, which gave rise to this order of men, originated in two causes.

1. In encroachments upon the rights of lords of manors in a district which from its remoteness from the more advanced districts of England was little valued, and regarded as scarcely worth the trouble and cost of supervision,thus affording facilities for irregular appropriations of the wastes.

2. In the policy which prevailed during the Border wars of enfranchising villeins and of creating a number of small customary tenants bound to military service on an extensive scale for the purposes of providing an adequate force for the defence of the country.

This system of the subdivision of the land ceased after the union of the two crowns, but it had then proceeded to such an extent as to give to these two northern counties the peculiar character of a community of small proprietors farming their own estates. Up to end of the last century, the great majority of farmers in these counties were the owners of the land they tilled.

Statesmen still numerous.

56. Proprietors of estates varying from 20 to 150 or 200 acres are denominated statesmen, and they still, although greatly reduced in numbers, possess a very marked influence upon the social features of these counties. I have been unable to obtain even an approximation to the existing number of such proprietors, but there can be no doubt that, greatly as they have diminished within the present century, they still own no inconsiderable portion of the land of both counties. They exist in their primitive simplicity only in the mountain dales, where the whole of the work required on the small estate is generally done by the proprietor and his family. There is scarcely any portion of these counties in which the properties of "statesmen" are not still found intermixed with the lands of the more considerable proprietors.

Causes of their decline.

57. Many causes have contributed to bring about their gradual decline. Railways and free trade introduced new ideas and new principles into this district for which these primitive holders of the soil were unprepared, but the process of extinction had commenced at a much earlier period. Pringle in his General View of the Agriculture of Westmorland, published in 1805, attributes their steady decrease to the turnpike roads, which he says had brought the manners of the capital to the extremity of the kingdom, destroyed the simplicity of ancient times, and caused finer clothes, better dwellings, and more expensive viands to be sought after by all. The small estates, he adds, were being everywhere sold, and many a statesman had been reduced to the necessity of working as a labourer on those fields which he and his ancestors had for many generations cultivated as their own. The diminution in the number of small estates has certainly been continuous for more than a century, and those which remain are generally heavily burthened with debts. Children have to be maintained out of the estate after the owner's death, and the land is frequently charged with portions larger than its value can bear, and after struggling in

* Includes railway labourers.

vain with accumulated difficulties, the inheritor of a small estate is at last obliged to sell, or if he succeeds in retaining the patrimonial property and in transmitting it to his heir he leaves him only to continue the same unceasing conflict between industry and want, in which his predecessor, and a long line of predecessors before him, lived and died.

The increased competition for land, and the generally high price which it commands, has operated in the same direction, and many small proprietors have been tempted to part with their paternal property and to seek their fortune in emigration.

Small estates cultivated by the proprietors and their families.

58. The owners of small estates generally farm their own land with no help but that of their children, but on estates, of from 80 to 150 acres farm servants are generally hired, and the children are educated to fit them for some business or profession.

It is astonishing upon what small means these petty proprietors were formerly able to bring up their families.

Twenty acres were once considered enough for a statesman's subsistence; one supplied oatmeal sufficient for the consumption of a small family for a year, from half an acre were obtained potatoes enough for the family and the pigs, a couple of cows produced butter and milk chiefly for sale, the female calves were reared, the bull calves sold, a sheep or two and a pig salted down provided sufficient animal food for a year, and the wool of the sheep was either spun and converted into coarse garments or sold to supply the family with clothes.

Bad farming of the small statesmen.

59. Excepting on the land of some of the larger proprietors, the farming of the statesmen is generally bad. There is little spirit of improvement in the class. If they possess a little money they prefer hoarding it in their oaken chests to laying it out on the land. "Would you not," was inquired of an old statesman, "expend a shilling on your property if it would eventually return you five shillings?" "No; "I would rather button it up in my breeches pocket; it would be safer there," was the reply. The roads leading to their homesteads are generally so bad that it has been said that the only safe mode of reaching them would be by a balloon. The midden or dung pile is close to the door of the dwelling house. The land, generally undrained, is prolific of rushes, and the whole appearance of the property denotes poverty, slovenliness, and neglect. Bailey and Culley when they visited Cumberland, early in the present century, were struck with the impoverished condition of the small statesmen, and the condemnation then pronounced on their management I have seen nothing to induce me to consider as inapplicable to the present day; "These men" they say "seem to inherit with the estates of their ancestors their "notions of cultivating them, and are almost as much attached to the one as to the other."

Small statesmen often unable to make a living from their property.

60. I heard of several of the smaller statesmen who finding it impossible with their limited capital to make a living out of their land, sold it and became tenants of the very farm which as owners they had vainly endeavoured to cultivate with profit. In one case a small statesman who had become embarrassed sold his property to a neighbour, who took the estate into his own hands and employed the former proprietor as his hind; and in a very short time the land under improved management was made to yield double its former produce. At best these small proprietors have to struggle hard for a subsistence, and small statesmen of from 50*l.* to 70*l.* a year are obliged to work harder and longer than any labourer would consent to do for the highest wages that could be offered him.

Bad effect of small estates on the education of the children of their proprietors.

61. The effect of these small properties on the children of their owners is not favourable, for they are often kept from school for months to assist in the work of the farm. On inquiring of one at what age his children began to assist in farm work, "as soon as they can crawl," was the reply; and I believe I am correct in stating that as a rule the children of the smaller proprietors feel the disadvantages of a neglected education through life, and do not prosper in the world so well as those of agricultural labourers.

Economically considered prejudicial to the public interests.

62. If it is important that the soil should be cultivated with the maximum effect the small statesmen of these counties certainly do not satisfy that desideratum; half shepherds, half husbandmen, they are deficient in the spirit and enterprise which agriculture requires, and they are without either capital or skill. In the districts where tillage prevails they are singularly out of place. In small sheep and dairy farms they have a more legitimate occupation, and they will probably linger long in the secluded mountain dales, a remnant of that community of small proprietors whose simple manners and sturdy independence have long given to this part of England one of its most marked characteristics.

The Small Farmers of Cumberland and Westmorland.

Predominance of small farms.

63. I have already adverted to the predominance of small farms, as well as of small estates in these counties. Bailey and Culley state that the generality of farms in Cumberland were from 15*l.* to 30*l.* per annum, and that some few extended to 100*l.* The number of small farms has considerably diminished since Bailey and Culley wrote, although they are still very numerous, and I was informed by a land agent of long experience that a third of the existing tenant farmers were once farm servants. The number of small farms is greater in Westmorland than in Cumberland in consequence of the great preponderance of pasture over arable land. The production of butter forms a very profitable department of farming, and the produce of some of the dales, noted for the sweetness of their herbage, is in much request in the manufacturing towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Dairy and sheep farms generally best adapted for small capitalists.

64. Rearing poultry has also recently become from the same reason an object of some importance to small farmers. It is not uncommon for a farmer's wife with her cartload of poultry, butter, and eggs, to be stopped on her way to market by a middleman from Manchester or some other manufacturing town, and the whole contents purchased by the roadside.

Small dairy farms, with which the rearing of sheep and poultry can be combined, seem best adapted for persons of small capital, such as retired farm servants. On some sheep farms little or no capital is required to begin with, the flocks being often the property of the landlord. On entering upon such a farm viewers are appointed on each side who report on the numbers and quality of the stock and fix the value of each per head. The incoming tenant gives a bond for the amount, and is required to deliver an equal number of the same value at the end of his tenancy; in other cases the stock is bought by the tenant who disposes of them to his successor on a similar valuation. A right of common of pasture is generally appurtenant to the tenement, limited by the number of animals *levant and couchant*

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on the enclosed land of the farm. Each flock has its distinguishing marks of ownership, which is registered in a book particularizing every sheep owner in Westmorland and Cumberland, and a meeting is held annually at some appointed place for the exchange of sheep which have gone astray and become intermixed with other flocks.

Number of small farms diminishing.

65. The number of small farms is rapidly diminishing in both counties, and it is not to be expected that this mode of investing their savings will be much longer open to farm servants. The consolidation of farms is becoming general as it is found by the landed proprietors to be most beneficial to their interests.

Successful conversion of small into large on Sir Frederick Graham's estate.

66. The success with which it has been carried out on the estate of Netherby under the direction of the late Sir James Graham and his able land steward Mr. Brown, affords a striking illustration of the soundness of this system. In 1835 the Netherby estate was occupied by 315 tenants; the number is now reduced to 115 with an increase of upwards of 30 per cent. to the rental.* I was favoured with the following statement by Mr. Brown of the mode in which the improvement was carried out, and its results:

"When the late Sir James Graham succeeded to the estate in the year 1819 it was in a most ruinous condition. The good land which had been exhausted by repeated corn crops was chiefly divided into small farms of from 40 to 100 acres in extent. The estate was overburdened with an excessive population; a great portion of it remained unenclosed; the farm buildings, with few exceptions, were very bad, being chiefly formed of clay or mud walls, and thatched, whilst three-fourths of the estate was completely saturated with water, and a great excess of moss and cold pasture land on that account alone remained uncultivated. The public roads were also in a most wretched state and quite insufficient for the purposes of occupation.

"The first step towards the improvement of the estate was the amalgamation of many of the small possessions into suitably sized farms of from 100 to 500 acres in extent, the erection of good and substantial farm buildings; the division of the land into proper enclosures by quick fences; making proper occupation roads where necessary; granting 19 years' leases to the tenantry with improving clauses inserted therein, binding them to follow out the most approved system of modern husbandry; and lastly, establishing two tile kilns upon the estate, to furnish tiles for the use of the tenantry.

"By these means under able and skilful direction, and with the cordial co-operation and support of a most industrious and persevering body of tenantry, the estate has been brought into its present high state of cultivation, whilst hardly an acre capable of improvement remains unbroken up."

Mr. Brown adds, that after 27 years' experience he had come to the conclusion that when you can command eligible tenants, possessed of the requisite capital and skill, good land is best and most economically managed in large farms of from 500*l.* to 1,000*l.* per year; on inferior soils, where labour and industry constitute a great portion of the capital employed, farms of from 80 to 100 acres, but not smaller, are admissible and sometimes found to be advantageous and desirable, and that such farms are generally carefully and fairly managed, and are also the means of rearing an industrious body of tenantry, who often become occupiers of larger and better farms. Scarcely any of the tenants on the Netherby estate occupy less than 80 acres at a rent of 50*l.* a year. In an economical point of view the system has been attended with the most beneficial result. There is no waste of labour, while the tenants have been raised from poverty to comparative comfort and prosperity, and the productive power of the soil has been greatly increased by improved cultivation. Mr. Brown further adds, that he considers a man and his family occupying from 20 to 50 acres of poor land, even at a small rent, is far worse off than an agricultural labourer or husbandman employed on a good sized farm.

Hard life of small farmers and their bad husbandry.

67. It is obvious by what very small error in judgment a small capital may be impaired, rendered unproductive, or totally lost; and certainly nothing can be more wretched than the average farming of a man who, from a labourer, with the aid of his own and a little borrowed capital, has become a farmer on his own account. He buys a plough, a team of horses, and a few implements; he reaps his first crop of stunted oats, and when its straw has been converted by a few calves and half-starved yearlings into what can scarcely be called manure, he carts it out into his fields after it has been drenched by the winter rains, and is disheartened at the miserable results. To enable him to pay his rent he is generally obliged to part with his grain, whatever may be its price, and his stock before it has attained its maximum value; and before the first two years of his tenancy have expired he has too often cause to regret the day on which he was tempted to exchange the safe position of a comfortable farm servant for the anxieties and hardships of a tenant farmer.

Alleged advantages of small farms.

68. There are perhaps a few advantages attending small farms which should not be entirely overlooked. More attention is bestowed on the production of butter, eggs, poultry, honey, and other useful commodities which a large farmer usually deems beneath his notice, and which if the whole area of the country was thrown into large farms would scarcely be produced at all, or if produced would be solely for the consumption of the occupier and his family.

Small farm system gradually diminishing.

69. Farm servants, however, are not so much disposed to lay by their money for stocking a farm as they formerly were. Some marry early and settle down as labourers. A letter which I had the honour to receive from the Rev. R. C. Pattenson, rector of Melmerby, a gentleman thoroughly acquainted with the social state of Cumberland, places this matter in a very striking point of view. He writes:—

"I generally on a Sunday have some of my people to dinner. On Sunday last I had two tenants on this estate; both were originally farm servants. A. is 70 years old and now occupies a farm at rent of 370*l.*; B. is 50 and holds a farm of 150*l.* per annum. A., the elder, lived 25 years under three masters, and B., the younger, 20 years under two masters. I read your questions to them, and they considered that they could not now have taken farms upon their savings. Far more capital is now required to stock a farm than when they began, labour is so much more expensive. To take an instance; a few weeks since a farmer wanted some barley thrashed, and although he offered 2*s.* a bushel, he could not obtain a man at the price; 30 years ago 6*d.* was the rate,† but then thrashing machines were rare. I can remember when five only were in this whole district; now we have six in this small parish alone. But not only is more capital required to stock a fame but small farms are let at extravagant rents, and in the end (and I have seen many failures) become simply nests for poverty, or sinks of the capital laid out upon them. The condition of a day labourer is far better

* There was, however, at first, a considerable outlay in enlarging the fences and in draining.

† Bailey and Culley (1805) state the price of thrashing a bushel of barley as 2*d.*

than that of a small farmer with little capital. The day of small farms is over. They will die a lingering death, but their day is over. Even in the "dales" they are only "grass" farms. Their days are told, and I think their death is for the benefit of the nation. I don't think the number of petty landowners is decreasing so rapidly as that of small farmers, but as the purchase value of land increases, they too must die out. It is astonishing what sums these men will give or borrow for land. It is almost their only idea of investing their money; no wonder that so many small statesmen are poor; poorer than small farmers, more *pinched* than their labourers." L.

70. The boon ploughing day is one of the remarkable institutions of this district. Whenever a tenant enters upon a farm it is expected that all his neighbours within a certain distance shall bring a pair of horses and a plough on a fixed day and give him a day's ploughing. Nothing can more clearly show the primitive poverty of this county and the difficulty of obtaining labour than this custom. Although confined at first to the small farmers it has gradually extended, until it is recognized by the largest. It is a day of festivity; and a farmer is regarded as having failed in the duty of hospitality if he permits any visitor after the day's work is over to leave the homestead sober. Seventy ploughs have been seen simultaneously at work on a large farm, and it is not unusual for 50 acres to be turned over in the course of a day. Boon ploughing day.

71. The education of the small farmers is on the whole better than that of the small statesmen, one of whom, I was told, can only distinguish the notes of one country bank from another by closely scrutinising the insignia or symbols by which they are adorned. State of education of the small farmers.

72. Neither Cumberland nor Westmorland possesses a chamber of agriculture, but there are three farmers' clubs in which papers are read and discussions taken on them. Some of the superior statesmen and tenant farmers are by no means behind the age, and they are prompt to adopt the latest agricultural improvements, a knowledge of which they acquire by reading the principal publications of the day and by attending agricultural shows. Farmers' clubs.

73. I am indebted to Vice-Admiral Russell Eliott, of Appleby Castle, agent for the extensive property of Sir Richard Tufton, Bart., and the occupier of a large mixed farm in the fertile valley of the Eden, for the following details of the cost of labour per acre on one of the most important in the district, and which may be considered as a representative farm. It is managed on the Scotch system the labourers living in cottages, providing their own meals, and being paid weekly wages. The valley of the Eden contains some of the best land in the county of Westmorland and is about the same average fertility as the highest rented land in Cumberland. Rate of wages paid on a large farm in the valley of the Eden.

It will be seen from the note below * that the labourers are paid 12*s.* a week throughout the year. Two cartloads of potatoes are grown for them from seed supplied by themselves, and coals are led for them to their cottages. Some addition is made to their wages during the hay and corn harvests.

74. Nothing, however, conduces more to their comfort than a cow, for the keep of which Admiral Eliott deducts from their wages 2*s.* a week. Estimating the profit of a cow for a year at 10*l.*, with butter at 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb., the labourer obtains a clear money gain of 4*l.* 10*s.* besides having an ample supply of skimmed milk for the use of himself and his family. It is impossible to over estimate the value of this arrangement on behalf of the working man, for the difficulty in obtaining a sufficient supply of milk is great. Even labourers residing in or near villages are often unable to procure it. Farmers decline to sell it finding it more valuable when consumed by their pigs and young stock, and they are perhaps unwilling to encourage the visits to the homestead of people who have no business on the farm. Advantages of a cow kept for labourers.

75. Admiral Eliott's farm bailiff's schedule of wages paid within a year will be found in the appendix to this report. It appears that the total cost in wages for a year on the Langton Field farm amounts in round numbers to 700*l.* which upon the average of 1,220 acres, 650 acres being arable and 562 permanent pasture, amounts to 11*s.* 6*d.* per acre, or thereabouts. I should add that Admiral Eliott estimates the value of the horse labour employed on his farm at 280*l.* a year, and no doubt horses since machinery has been introduced do much work, especially in cutting hay and corn, that would otherwise be done by human labour. Cost of labour per acre on a farm in Westmorland.

Farmhouses and Cottages.

76. Bailey and Culley in their survey of Cumberland, say that throughout the greater part of that county the farmhouses are remarkably well built of stone. The observation was only partially true at the time, for many were built of mud and clay. Construction of ancient farmhouses.

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* List of persons employed by Vice-Admiral Russell Eliott at Langton Field Farm, in the parish of St. Michael, Bongate:

John Kerr	Farm bailiff	80*l.* per annum. Free house, garden, cow kept, and land for planting some potatoes.
John Swanstone	Foreman ploughman	50*l.* per annum. Free cottage, garden, and land for planting some potatoes.
John Tuer and John Currah	Ploughman	Each 12*s.* per week. Free cottage, garden, one cow kept, and land for planting some potatoes.
Thomas Sanderson	Attending to young stock	Ditto ditto.
John and William Sanderson	Ditto assisting	10*s.* 6*d.* and 7*s.* 6*d.* each.
Edward and William Tuer	Labourers	The former 12*s.* a week. Free cottage, garden, and one cow kept. The latter 9*s.* a week.
William and Thomas Nelson	Light work	Each 5*s.* per week.
Five women	Attending thrashing mill, pulling and hoeing turnips, &c.	Each 6*s.* per week.
William Hogg	Shepherd	In lieu of a money wage the shepherd has the following:—60 imperial bush. of oats, 18 bush. of barley, 6 bush. of peas, 1,200 yards of potatoes planted, coals driven from railway station, 12 half-bred ewes and 3 hogs, and one cow kept.
John Rae	Assistant shepherd	20*l.* per annum, and his board and lodging paid.

Note.—The above are the ordinary labourers employed. In hay and harvest time extra hands are employed at enhanced wages, and at this time the wages of the regular workers also are raised.

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In those parts of the county where stone suitable for building was scarce "clay daubies" roofed with thatch made of straw, rushes, or heather formed the dwelling houses on every farm. The fire places were on the ground, and extended nearly from one end of the building to the other. The chimneys were yawning chasms through which the sky might be seen, and which the rain freely entered. They were the curing place for hams, and across them ran an oaken beam from which the pot crook was suspended. Some examples of such buildings still remain, and during the Border wars no landed proprietor would think of expending more than was absolutely necessary upon houses that were any day liable to be burnt over their occupants heads; they were accordingly constructed of the cheapest materials. When the Border wars ceased, these counties were infested for more than a century by moss troopers, and to protect them from such marauders, farm houses were built in the form of a quadrangle, with a fold or yard to secure the cattle, the entrance being generally protected by an arched gateway with knobbed oaken doors, while the dwelling house fronted the yard. Some of these domestic fortresses still remain in the northern parts of Cumberland, and they are obviously well adapted for the purposes for which they were built.

The larger farmhouses generally well built, but the smaller defective in sleeping accommodation and in proper conveniences.

77. Most of the modern farmhouses are well built, every convenience having been studied in their arrangement, but the houses on the smaller farms are generally very bad and deficient in proper sleeping accommodation for the farmer's family and his servants. The rooms on the basement are generally flagged, but a parlour may now and then be seen with a boarded floor. The farmers seem to have been more desirous to possess good farm buildings, than good residences, and it is a very common thing to see byres and stables of imposing proportions attached to a very moderate dwelling house.

Many of the smaller farmhouses have no "conveniences," but some have a small detached building consisting of two stories, the basement being the pig sty, the first floor a "convenience," and the one above it a hen-roost, all communicating with each other.

Insufficient sleeping accommodation one cause of immorality in farmhouses.

78. The sleeping accommodation in the farmhouses has long been a disgrace to these counties, and although some improvement has taken place in this respect within the last 20 years, the same stairs often lead to the rooms of both the male and female servants. Only a few years ago in one of the largest farmhouses of the district, belonging to one of its principal landed proprietors, the men and women servants slept in the same room, the men at one end and the women at the other, with not even a curtain to separate them, and in another case a farmer, apologising for the domestic arrangements of his house, said he had done the best he could for the protection of his female servants by putting curtains to their beds.

Question of cottage accommodation not so important in these counties as in some others.

79. From the prevailing custom of lodging and boarding farm labourers in the farmhouses, and the great proportion which that class bears to other labourers in agriculture, the question of cottage accommodation, though a very grave one, does not assume that special importance in Cumberland and Westmorland which it possesses in some other counties. I have however to state as the general result of my observations and inquiries, that the cottage accommodation for the portion of the population which requires it is miserably defective, as the replies returned to the question bearing on that subject in the circulars which I distributed abundantly prove.

Cottages generally bad.

80. In a great many parishes the cottages are represented as deficient, either in the proper number of rooms, or in proper accommodation, or badly ventilated, and sometimes all these evils are combined. There is something peculiarly unattractive too in the exterior of most of the Cumberland and Westmorland cottages. They have a bald, cold, and repulsive appearance. The front door generally opens upon the road, without the intervention of any garden; no climbing rose, clematis, or honey-suckle twines round the porch or covers the bare, grey walls, presenting in that respect a disagreeable contrast to the cottages in some other parts of England, where the care bestowed upon the cultivation of a few flowers and in the exterior adornment of a hovel almost atones for the deficiencies too frequently to be found within.

Many of the larger farmers dislike the system of boarding and lodging farm servants in their houses, and would prefer hiring them by the day, and that they should provide for themselves, but the difficulties in the way of any general change are, from the want of cottages, at present insurmountable, and without more accommodation for day labourers, there can be no increase of the agricultural population. In the villages the cottages are generally bad, many have only two sleeping rooms, and some only one. In 18 parishes of Cumberland, the cottages in the returns are described as more or less deficient in proper sanitary arrangements, with little attention paid to ventilation, often without the accommodation required for a decent family. From Westmorland the reports are equally unfavourable. Many are described as overcrowded, badly supplied both with air and water, and with only two bedrooms. The cottages like the farmhouses are generally very imperfectly ventilated, one small pane of glass, six inches square, often affording the only supply of air; in some there is only one sleeping apartment for the whole family. With few exceptions all the cottages that I entered were defective in one or more of the requisites for comfort and respectability.

Cottage improvement the question of the day.

81. Cottage improvement was often impressed upon me by the clergy as the question of the day, for "how," they justly reasoned, "can we influence a class by schools when the houses they live in are "overcrowded, dirty, and often without the requisites of decency and comfort." The adoption of the Local Government Act has done much to improve the condition of labourers dwelling in towns, and it is to be hoped that the Labourers Dwellings Act may be found capable of being applied to the country districts.

Instances of cottage improvement.

82. In some places I found the acknowledged evil was being met by the exertions of landed proprietors. On the extensive estates of the Earl of Lonsdale efforts are being made to increase the number and improve the accommodation of labourers' dwellings. Mr. P. H. Howard of Greystoke Castle, who has long been convinced of the necessity of improvements in this direction, has built a considerable number of excellent cottages. Mr. George Moore, an extensive Cumberland proprietor, by offering prizes for the best kept cottages, has done much to raise the character of the population in his neighbourhood. Lord Kenlis of Underley Park, Westmorland, builds five or six new and improved cottages on his estates every year, and every married labourer on his property will eventually be provided with a cottage containing a sitting room, three bedrooms, a pantry, and a small back courtyard. The rent charged for such a cottage is only 2*l.* 10*s.* a year. The Earl of Carlisle has also recently built some excellent cottages on his estate at Naworth in Cumberland. The paucity of great landed

proprietors, together with the present subdivision of landed property in these counties, affords but little hope that the question of labourers' cottages will be effectually dealt with until the aggregation of estates has made much further progress and the existing anomalous relation between the agricultural labourer and his employer, referred to in ss. 38–40, gradually disappears under the influence of progressive civilization.

Gardens and Allotments.

Gardens attached to cottages too small.

83. Although many cottages in these counties possess gardens they are too small to add appreciably to the resources of the agricultural labourer, and they are little valued except in a few places where flower and vegetable shows have given a stimulus to their cultivation. To grow potatoes seems to be the only purpose to which cottagers apply any little ground that is attached to their dwellings, other vegetables being rarely seen in a labourer's garden. "In my own case," says Mr. Thomas Ainsworth, a gentleman conspicuous for his efforts to improve the condition of the labouring class in Cumberland and to promote education, "I was obliged to take away the gardens from "those houses which had them, as they were rarely cultivated, and where not cultivated became "receptacles for filth or waste places for children to make puddles in."

High wages the reason why gardens are not generally valued by the labouring class.

84. The high rate of wages partially accounts for this indifference to gardens, and as a rule a well-paid agricultural labourer prefers buying the few vegetables that he needs to raising them himself. On some farms day labourers are granted the use of a portion of land sufficient to grow potatoes for a year's consumption, the labourer usually supplying the manure while the employer carts it to the land. By this arrangement the labourer is able to feed a pig from which he is generally able to make a profit of 4*l.* or 5*l.* The general indifference to the advantages and pleasures of a garden yields, however, to the influence of societies for encouraging garden cultivation, and there are several which have kindled a spirit of emulation among cottagers, some of whom compete successfully with the best horticulturists in the district.

The allotment system but little applicable to these counties.

85. The allotment system to which so much importance is justly attached is less applicable to Cumberland and Westmorland than to any other county with which I am acquainted. This is sufficiently accounted for by the prevailing high rate of wages. A man who fairly earns from 18*s.* to 1*l.* 1*s.* a week is seldom disposed for further work at the conclusion of the day. The taste for vegetables among the other labouring class rarely extends, as I observed, beyond potatoes, which they prefer obtaining by the arrangement before explained, or by buying them in the market. I only met with one instance of allotments being in request and appreciated by agricultural labourers, namely, on property of Lord Kenlis in Westmorland, where small pieces of land from one-sixteenth to one-eighth of an acre are let at the rate of 3*l.* per acre, and I attribute this exceptional case to the allotments being situated near to the town of Kirkby Lonsdale which afforded a market for a part of the produce.

Allotments offered but declined.

86. Allotments in other places had often been offered to labourers in agriculture, but generally declined. Mr. Hasell, the chairman of the quarter sessions for Cumberland and Westmorland, stated to me that he had proposed a plan of allotments a few years ago, but it was not accepted by his men, high wages and regular employment not disposing them to work beyond their stated hours. The Rev. Wm. Dacre, the vicar of Irthington, Cumberland, also stated to me that in many cases the labouring classes do not care to have even gardens. "I tried the allotment system," he said "but I did not find it answer. The holders of the allotments would not cultivate with the spade, but "with horses and ploughs, and did not care about the allotments. The labouring class if good "workers are so well paid, and work so hard when they are at work, and are generally so well fed by "their employers, that they do not care to work in their gardens after the day's work is done; and bad "workers are too indolent to cultivate a garden."

The Rev. Christopher Benson, rector of Brampton, also stated that he had tried allotments but that the poor did not seem to care about them, and the Rev. Arthur Wilkin, rector of Bootle, informed me that he had a field let off into 28 allotments but that they were not appreciated. A few years ago when Bootle Fell was enclosed, from three to four acres were set apart for cottage gardens, but not being close to the village the cottagers would not avail themselves of them, although the greatest distance from the furthest cottage in the village was but half a mile. The rent was merely nominal.

Education.

High position of Cumberland and Westmorland in respect to education.

87. Cumberland and Westmorland take high place in educational statistics. The proportion of the population under instruction being, according to the report of the Duke of Newcastle's commission on education, in Westmorland 1 in 7·9, and in Cumberland 1 in 11·2, while the proportion in all England was at that period 1 in 11·82. Much has been since done in Cumberland to increase the per-centage, and it is probable that the county would now take a higher position in education than at the time of the inquiry above referred to.

Large proportion of educated adults.

88. The proportion of educated adults in the rural districts to the population is probably greater than in any other county of England, although the amount of education may be but moderate. The clergy of both counties informed me that very few persons who came to be married were unable to sign their names, and of those who signed the marriage register with a cross the greater number could write their names if pressed to do so.

Ample means of education.

89. There are 135 endowed schools within the diocese of Carlisle, which embraces the two counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, in which education is almost gratuitously provided for the children of the labouring classes.

Education generally appreciated.

90. There has always been a very great appreciation of education to a certain amount in both counties; endowed grammar schools are numerous; the various classes of the community are very much intermixed, and the children of the smaller statesmen, tenant farmers, and labourers generally attend the same school.

Endowed schools very numerous.

91. Of the 300 endowed and national schools in the diocese of Carlisle, only about 90 derive assistance from the State, and I heard frequent complaints of the effect of the proviso in the revised code which requires the amount of the endowment to be deducted from any grant to which a school may be entitled on inspection. Many of the small endowed schools are suffering from this enactment

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and have been obliged to economize by engaging inferior masters, and dispensing with pupil teachers. The means for providing elementary education, particularly when the small endowed schools shall have been placed upon a satisfactory footing, are ample for the wants of these counties if the labouring classes would take advantage of them.

Parents often indifferent to the education of their children.

92. The indifference of parents, and their desire to profit by their children's labour at an early age, are here as elsewhere the great impediments to effectual education. The practice of withdrawing children from school for four, five, and even six months at a time is common. One-third, and in some places one-half of the children do not attend school at all from the beginning of April until the end of October, and this absenteeism occurs chiefly among the elder children, who return to the school during the winter months simply to regain what they have lost during the months of continuous labour in the fields. The education of a boy who, after 10 years of age, leaves his school for five or six months at a time may be said to be virtually at an end. He will make no further progress, and in a year or two after he has entered farm service he will probably have forgotten nearly all that he ever knew. I found this to be the opinion of all the schoolmasters with whom I communicated on the subject.

Farmers favourable to education.

93. There are no prejudices against education on the part of the farmers in these counties; on the contrary they appear to value it highly. I often heard them regret that the ample means of education which are available were not more generally taken advantage of. They have no fear that, should education become universal, it would lead to a general rise of wages, but should wages generally rise, their view is that it would not necessarily diminish profits, for a permanent rise in wages must be followed by a corresponding reduction of rents.

Opinions favourable to restriction of early labour without a certificate of education.

94. I found a general concurrence of opinion in favour of an enactment that no boy should be employed in agriculture until he was 14 years of age, unless he could produce a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance, or of having attained a certain proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, for example, in having been able to pass Standard IV., and that such an enactment would be attended with great advantage to the children of the labouring classes generally. It would introduce a principle of competition into the juvenile labour market, and present the strongest inducement to parents to push forward the education of their children. It would also act as a strong incentive to farmers to interest themselves in the same cause by giving them a motive to urge the labouring classes to perform their duty to their children, from which both parents and employers would be mutual gainers.

Indifference of parents the great evil.

95. When advantage is not taken of the ample means of education provided in these counties, it is to be attributed not so much to the poverty as to the indifference of parents. To counteract this, a system of moral compulsion has been found to produce an excellent effect in one of the largest of the schools which I visited. In the Penrith Boys' National school there are three rules, to the enforcement of which the master attributes the very high average attendance which he obtains. They are,—

1. No child may stay away from school without leave from the master. Leave of absence will be readily granted either by application personally or by note; this application must be obtained before and not after the child absents himself.
2. If any child makes a practice of coming late, or be absent without permission for several days, a form of enquiry will be sent requiring a reason from the parent.
3. If this form is not returned the child will not be allowed again to attend the school until a satisfactory answer has been given by the parent.

These rules have been found to act most beneficially; and one or two examples of expulsion for systematic irregularity of attendance have been attended with the best effect. The parents of the boys of this school are generally poor, the earnings of the children, therefore, in field labour, for which there is a great demand in that district, must be of considerable importance, yet the average attendance in a school consisting of 160 boys is kept up to 130, and the greater proportion remain until 13, and some to 15 and 16 years of age. Much good has also been effected by visits of the master to the parents when he finds the attendance of their children begins to flag.

Effect of irregular attendance on the finances of schools.

96. The apathy of parents in respect to education is without excuse. Even an offer of the payment of the school fees proves ineffectual to induce them to do their duty, or if, under these circumstances, they allow their children to attend school, the smallest excuse, such as a wet Monday, is sufficient to induce them to withdraw them for the remainder of the week. This not only entails the loss to the school funds of the children's pence, but, in many instances, renders it impossible to make up the number of attendances required for the Government grant; thus the children who derive the least benefit from the school entail by far the heaviest burthen upon its supporters. The neglect and indifference of parents is the more to be condemned because the children of Cumberland and Westmorland are endowed with remarkable natural abilities, and no schoolmaster could desire a better material upon which to work.

Endowed grammar schools very numerous.

97. I have before adverted to the number of endowed grammar schools in these counties. In Westmorland there are not less than 40 for a population little exceeding 60,000, *i.e.*, in the proportion of one school to every 1,500 inhabitants, and Cumberland has 30 schools of this description. These were long the only schools in the district with the exception of a few village schools, and in them the sons of the statesmen and tenant farmers obtained an education far above the standard of the present day.

A classical education was one of the wants of the time, and to place a son in the church was once a common object of ambition.

Not adapted to the present wants of the population.

98. Many of the statesmen endowed schools suitable to their peculiar social position, but the grammar schools have ceased to be applicable to the changed state of society. The sons of statesmen who formerly remained at school until they were 17 or 18 years of age became in time of too much value at home to permit so many years to be devoted to their education. They were wanted to assist in the work of the farm at an earlier age, and these schools have with some conspicuous exceptions declined in character and usefulness, and become comparatively unfit for supplying the educational requirements of the day. Without altogether neglecting the classics a good commercial education would perhaps be most valued by the classes who are in a position to benefit by a re-organization of these schools.

Grouping of the small endowed schools.

99. Another class of schools chiefly available for the lower classes consists of small endowed schools which are exceedingly numerous. Where the endowment is very small they are, to qualify them to receive the grant, generally submitted to Government inspection. Where the endowment is sufficient to

support the master, the trustees generally decline to place the school in connexion with the Committee of Council on Education. These non-inspected elementary schools are generally in a very inefficient state. In some of them, I was told by the Secretary of the Carlisle Diocesan Education Society, all the children in the two first classes were found to be decidedly superior to their master in acquirements. The system of grouping on Miss Burdett Coutts' plan has been successfully carried out in many of these schools. Six are combined and, with the consent of the trustees, periodically visited by an ambulatory master, the effect of whose lessons upon the schools is speedily felt. They afterwards compete for prizes on inspection. It has required much management to induce the old and generally incompetent masters to submit to inspection, but there are now on an average three combined schools in each rural deanery of the diocese. The system of grouping is not confined to the small endowed schools but all small county schools are admitted provided they comply with the proposed conditions. L.

100. The necessity of a change in the management of the small endowed schools of these counties has been so strongly urged by Mr. Roby, one of the Assistant Commissioners of the Royal Commission on the endowed schools of England and Wales, that I beg to quote his opinion in corroboration of my own. Reforms required.

"There can be no manner of doubt that in many instances the endowments as now administered is a source of unqualified evil; it introduces a body of trustees who, if the clergyman is not one of them, are altogether unfitted for their duties; it acts as a retainer for an incompetent master who without it would probably be provided for at the workhouse, and it takes away the main inducement, as it must always be, to invite Government inspection, viz. the chance of obtaining substantial pecuniary aid. But it is scarcely possible to conceive a wider gulf than that which separates the cleanly, well-ordered, cheerful school, which thrives under a well-earned Government grant, from the slovenly, neglected, repellent aspect of the worst non-inspected schools."

The farmers of these counties, while generally acquiescing in the importance of interposing no unnecessary obstacles to education, rarely omitted to dwell upon the importance to the children themselves of habituating them in a moderate degree to labour while young; therefore, schools combining industrial employment with elementary instruction were considered as best suited for children in agricultural districts. Industrial schools desirable.

101. There is scarcely anything at the present time in the constitution of our rural schools to counteract the natural tendency in those who have received a tolerable education to evade husbandry as an occupation for life, and to seek employment and preferment in towns. The earliest and most successful of the attempts to combine labour with instruction in the education of the children of the labouring classes originated in Cumberland. Mr. Curwen, whose zeal for the welfare of the agricultural labourer I have had occasion to notice, was one of the first to direct his attention to the subject, and his plan for adapting education to the real wants of the rural districts was so successful that I hope it will not be considered out of place in this Report if I venture briefly to allued to it. He established in the town of Workington, in close proximity to his great model farm, a school comprising 300 boys. He connected this school with his farm, and on it the boys learned their first lessons in agriculture and were taught the value of labour. A certain portion of the school was told off every morning and marched, under officers selected from their own body, for their good conduct, and receiving a higher rate of remuneration, to the farm. They were thus enabled to earn not only sufficient to pay for their schooling, but to clothe and partly maintain themselves. The school was thus not only self-supporting, but a source of pecuniary gain to the parents themselves. It was also a school of admirable moral training, for no boy was permitted to work unless he was attentive at school and his character was good; and as a small portion of the earnings was allowed for pocket money, such a prohibition was felt not only as a degradation but as a pecuniary loss. Work changed its nature and became a privilege and an enjoyment. The revolution effected in the demeanour of the boys, who were the children of the lowest classes of Workington, was of the happiest kind, and from intractable and unruly little barbarians they became examples of docility and obedience. Mr. Curwen was justly proud of his success, and says, in describing the plan, "I have more pride and more pleasure in this institution "than in anything I possess, or than I ever accomplished in the whole course of my life."* Mr. Curwen's industrial school at Workington.

102. Schools on Mr. Curwen's plan seem to be most suitable to the rural districts, and to present the fairest prospect of solving the problem of combining due attention to the development of the intellect and the physical powers of boys with the interests of agriculture. Such schools would be nurseries of agricultural labour, and might afford material aid to farmers in seasons when juvenile labour is most in request. Arrangements might be made with the schoolmaster instead of with the gangmaster, and children old enough for employment in farm work might be formed into companies and employed on farms, under proper superintendence, without detriment either to their morals or their health. Schools organized on this plan doubtless require a certain concentration of population. Large agricultural villages or towns can alone supply an adequate number of boys to take an effective part in the work of farms. The dispersion of the population of Cumberland and Westmorland over a wide area forbids the hope that such schools would be found generally applicable to those counties, but there are several places, such as Workington, Whitehaven, Wigton, Cockermouth, Carlisle, Brampton, Penrith, Appleby, and Kendal, all connected with important agricultural districts, where they might be established with every prospect of success.‡ Schools on this principle best adapted for the rural districts.

103. The earnings of children in field labour are, no doubt, often of considerable importance to the parents in paying for their clothing or otherwise contributing to their support. Value of children's labour to the small statesmen and tenant farmers.

* The President's Report to the Workington Agricultural Society, 1809.

† The labour account of the school might be kept distinct, and the fund after certain deductions divided among the parents.

‡ The establishment of industrial schools seem to have attracted much attention in the last century. The following extract from a speech of Mr. Pitt shows the importance which he attached to them:—

"Experience had already shown how much could be done by the industry of children by early employing them in such occupations as they were fit for. The extension of schools of industry was an object of national importance. If any one would take the trouble to compute the amount of all the earnings of children who are already educated in this manner he would be surprised when he came to consider the weight which by their own labours they took off the country, and the addition which by the fruits of their toil, and the habits to which they were formed, was made to its internal opulence. The suggestion of these schools was originally drawn from Lord Hale and Mr. Locke, and upon such authority he had no difficulty in recommending the plan to the encouragement of the legislature."—Speech on the Labourers' Wages Bill, Feb. 12, 1796.

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Among the class of small statesmen and tenant farmers of Cumberland and Westmorland, the price of a boy's labour if brought into the market, would by no means represent the value of that labour to the parent. The sum earned in occasional employment might not be more than 3*l.* or 4*l.* during the year. If a small tenant farmer or statesman is unable to do all the work on his farm himself, he hires a servant; but if the work is too much for himself and not sufficient to afford full employment for another man, the inducement to keep a child from school during the busy months to assist at home, rather than hire a farm labourer for the half year at a cost of 10*l.* or 12*l.* with his board is very strong. In such a case, the saving which the parent is able to effect by employing his children at the sacrifice of their education, is too great to be resisted, for in the case supposed, the average annual money value of a child's labour would be only 3*l.* 10*s.* but the hiring a servant for a half year would involve an expense of 18*l.* or 20*l.* reckoning both wages and food. It will be readily understood from this calculation how strong the inducement must be among the class of small proprietors and tenant farmers to work their children on their farms instead of sending them to school, and I conceive that it affords one of the strongest objections to such small properties and holdings.

Proportion of school life to be devoted to labour.

104. The difficulty in fixing upon the proportion of a schoolboy's life that should be devoted to labour is no doubt great, but from the opinions which I heard expressed by some of the most intelligent and experienced schoolmasters whom I met, I am induced to think that such an arrangement as the following would, in this district, be productive of satisfactory results. If a boy goes to school at five years of age and attends regularly until he is 10, he will, in all probability, be able to pass standard IV. If during the next two years he attends school for a prescribed number of days during intervals of work, he will probably be able to satisfy some of the further requirements of the Revised Code, while he has also been gradually becoming familiarised with his future employment. On finally leaving school the change would not be so great; he would not be so awkward at his new work as if he had never handled a hoe or bound up a sheaf, and he would also have been able to render some assistance to his parents, and he would, without having acquired much general information, have the means of carrying on, if so disposed, the work of self-education, the only education, as has been often said, of any real value, with success.

Hours of labour in the case of children not objectionable in Cumberland and Westmorland.

105. There is little to object to in the counties upon which I have the honour to report, either as to the number of hours children are employed in field labour, the distance they have to go to their work, or the ages at which they are employed. Generally children have not to walk more than a mile or a mile and a half to their labours, and in most instances shorter distances. I met with only one case in which children were required to go great distances, namely, in the vicinity of Cockermouth, where I was told they had to walk out and home a distance of 10 miles. Children are very rarely worked under 10 years of age, and many farmers refuse to employ them until they are 12 or 13. Bird tenting is not much resorted to; ploughboys are not wanted, the plough being invariably drawn by two horses abreast and the reins held by the man who holds and guides it. Thinning turnips by the hand is generally the first labour to which children are put, but as some care is required for this work very young children are not employed.

Long average attendance at schools.

106. In nearly all the schools which I visited the children generally continued to attend with more or less irregularity up to the age of 13, and frequently 14. The children of the smaller class of statesmen leave school earlier and have generally made less progress in their education than those of other classes, owing to the demand for their labour at home.

Non-attendance at school the fault of parents.

107. The high rate of wages rarely places parents in these counties under the absolute necessity of looking to the earnings of their children for assistance, and if poverty is pleaded as an excuse for not sending children to school, offers of assistance are often refused or if accepted are not taken advantage of.

In almost every part of the counties which I visited instances were brought to my notice of parents systematically neglecting this duty to their children. In the town of Brampton, for example, where there is an excellent national school, the attendance of such children whose schooling was paid for was more irregular than that of other children, and a boy 10½ years of age, whose school pence were paid by a lady, attended school only five days in seven weeks, and the attendance of another boy under similar circumstances amounted to only 13½ days in three months.

Farmers' suggestions with regard to future education.

108. Before bringing my remarks upon the state of education in these counties to a close, I ought to record the opinions of several of the most enlightened farmers with whom I had the advantage of conversing on one portion of the subject which they conceived to bear especially upon their interests.

They thought that if any steps should be hereafter taken by the legislature in the direction of compulsory education, it should be borne in mind that inasmuch as the owners and occupiers of the soil would be the persons on whom the burthen of rates for schools must principally fall, they should receive special consideration, and as the children of the rural population would constitute by far the larger proportion of those who would attend such schools, it would, they conceived, be but reasonable that the means should be placed within their reach of acquiring a knowledge of the first principles of agriculture, and of its allied sciences,—botany, chemistry, and geology, and the increasing use of machinery in farming would render it highly desirable that the future labouring classes of the community should receive some instruction in the elements of mechanics.

Early labour not the cause of neglected education.

109. I have appended to the Report a table showing the extent to which a great many of the schools which I visited are affected during the six busiest months of the year by the employment of children in field labour; but a far more serious evil results from the systematic neglect and indifference of parents. Out of 20 boys between the ages of 10 and 13, whom I stopped within the space of half an hour, and questioned in the streets of Cockermouth, eight had never attended any school. "So "far as early labour is concerned," says Mr. Jenkinson, a considerable landed proprietor in the neighbourhood, "there is no reason whatever why all under 13 should not go to school; ample pro- "vision is made at a cheap rate, but they will not take advantage of it, and the parents as a rule "care nothing about sending them to school, the consequence is that the streets are swarming "with children all the day, doing all sorts of mischief." In another town (Egremont) deriving support both from mining and agriculture, and containing, with the suburban districts, a population of 3,480, Mr. Thomas Nelson, of Catgill Hall, states, "There are day schools amply sufficient for those who are "inclined to send their children to them at an easy charge, but the advantage taken of them is very

"limited; I do not consider early labour a bar to their attendance, but the negligence of parents in "the great majority of cases." At St. Bees, the centre of an important agricultural district, Mr. Carter, one of the largest farmers, says:—"There are multitudes of idle boys who will not take "advantage of the means of education provided for them, but the fact of working has nothing to do "with it. There will always be found such characters in all places until education is made compulsory. "These are not the characters that are fondest of early work."

Night schools and association for mutual improvement.

110. Night schools, excepting in a few of the towns, are rare in these counties. The term "school" is not liked by young men who have entered upon a career of independent industry, and they prefer calling them mutual improving associations. The Burton Mutual Improvement Institute is a good specimen of such societies; any resident in the parish above 13 years of age and subscribing a penny a week may be a member; the class or lecture rooms are open three evenings in the week, and the reading-room every evening except Sunday. The success of this association has been in some degree owing to its originators having introduced a popular element into its government. Four agricultural labourers were placed on the committee, they take an active and useful part in the management, and their presence divests the society of that patronizing character which is too often apt to attach to such institutions.

Remarkable exemption from crime.

111. Cumberland and Westmorland present a remarkable contrast to most other counties in the general prosperity of their population, and they are singularly exempt from crime. Such serious offences as burglaries and highway robberies are unknown; and I cannot bring these observations to a close without stating that it was announced in a report of the chief constable of these counties, a year or two ago, that in the returns made to him by his superintendents, there was not recorded a single person or house under the respective designations of "known thieves or depredators," "receivers of stolen goods," "prostitutes," "suspected persons," "houses of receivers of stolen goods," "beershops of bad character," "coffee shops of bad character," "houses of ill-fame," and "other "suspected houses."

112. In conclusion, I beg to express my sincere thanks for the uniform kindness and hospitality which I experienced while prosecuting my inquiries in these counties, and for the readiness which all classes with whom I had occasion to communicate evinced to afford the information which I sought.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
J. HENRY TREMENHEERE,
Assistant Commissioner.

May 22, 1869.

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REPORT by Mr. J. HENRY TREMENHEERE on the NORTHERN PART of LANCASHIRE.

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To Her Majesty's Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

1. Having been instructed to prosecute some inquiries in reference to the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture in the county of Lancashire, and it having been intimated to me that it would probably be sufficient for the purposes of the Commission if I restricted my investigation to the northern part of that county, where probably some interesting facts might be collected as to the effect which the higher rate of wages and improved mode of living prevailing in the adjacent manufacturing and commercial districts have upon the material prosperity and social condition of other portions of the county, I now have the honour to present my Report on the points to which it was suggested that my attention should be chiefly directed.

2. The portions of the county which I visited are:—

Districts visited.

(1.) The Furness district, which is bounded on the north, east, and west by the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, and which, from its geographical position, may be considered almost as an integral part of those counties.

(2.) The Valley of the Lune, which extends from the town of Kirkby Lonsdale to the embouchure of the River Lune, below Lancaster, which gives its name to the district.

(3.) The extensive tract which lies between the rivers Ribble and Lune, called the Fylde. I will preface the observations which I have to make by shortly describing the physical peculiarities of these districts.

Another district, that of the Hills, not visited.

3. There is another part of Northern Lancashire, known as the hill country, north of Preston, and which extends from the London and North-western Railway to the borders of Yorkshire.

This being simply a district of small sheep and dairy farms I did not feel it necessary to visit; but it has been so well described in a paper contributed a few years ago to the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society by Mr. W. Garnett, of Quernmore Park, Lancaster, that I beg to quote his account of it:—

"The inhabitants of the hills are a manly and independent but rather uncultivated race; shrewd enough as far as their own immediate interest is concerned, but incapable of looking forward; unwilling to lay out sixpence this year in the chance of receiving a shilling next, and jealous to an extreme of any alteration or innovation on the customs of their fathers. Many families have lived on the same farms for generations, and by frequent intermarriages they have become connected together almost like one family, and, with a strong attachment to their native hills, care little to receive or visit strangers."

"Their farms are not large; some of the most important amount to 250 or 300 statute acres of enclosed land, with a large right of sheep pasture over the moors adjoining, and held for the most part on yearly tenancies. The stock on the farm is generally all the capital they possess, which consists of a herd of milch-cows and their calves of different ages, little or no care being given as to the breeding of them; a flock of black-faced sheep of very inferior quality, and a pig or two, with perhaps a couple of horses when the farm is large, make up the total of their property. They generally keep their land in grass, with a plentiful crop of rushes, which serve, as they say, "to keep it warm," or if they plough it up and take a crop of oats, which is the most they ever aspire to, they leave it to time and nature to grass it over again, and never think of putting any manure on; this is all preserved for the meadows, which are really of importance, inasmuch as they produce the hay which is to keep the stock through the winter. The hay harvest is, therefore, the most critical time of the year, and they give it all the attention they are capable of. They mow with large scythes, five feet or five feet six inches long, very heavy, and therefore slow in action, and they shake out the swathe, not with forks or any implement, but with the hands. The climate being precarious, and the population small, the haymaking on a moderately-sized farm takes a month or six weeks, part of July and August, and as it is made it is secured in close barns, not in stacks or open fields; two tons to the acre is a good crop. The produce of the cows is made into cheese and butter, mostly the former, and the whey given to the young calves. They have no green crops nor farmyards for turning the cattle into and preserving the manure during the winter. Simple and hardy in their habits, they have few wants beyond the actual neces-

saries of life. Their houses are built of the rough gritstone of the county, and the turf on the moors adjoining serves the purpose of fuel. Wheaten bread is a rarity, and the bakestone, or hot hearth, for baking the large oat cakes upon, forms a necessary appendage to the farmhouse and the cottage; in fact this is the case throughout the whole of North Lancashire. The oat cake is still the favourite food both of farmers and labourers."*

Northern district of Lancashire, the most advanced in agriculture.

4. The northern district of Lancashire is, perhaps, more advanced in its agriculture than any other portion of the county. There are many large farms of from 600*l.* to 1,000*l.* a year rent, and which produce excellent crops of wheat. Intermixed with the property of the large landowners are numerous small freeholds, the moral and political causes which produced the remarkable subdivision of land in Cumberland and Westmorland having given rise to the same social phenomena in a considerable part of North Lancashire.

The Furness district.

5. The Furness district is celebrated for the richest deposits of hæmatite iron ore known in Great Britain.

Great scarcity of agricultural labourers.

The mines materially affect the supply of agricultural labour. The wages of a common miner are so high that it is extremely difficult for farmers to procure any day labourers and still more so to retain them in their service. The deposits of iron ore being at an inconsiderable depth from the surface, the labour of extracting it partakes rather of the character of quarrying than of mining, and the employment, being highly paid, is eagerly sought. Remarking upon the great scarcity of cottages, excepting in the immediate vicinity of the mines, I was informed by a considerable farmer that it would be useless to build cottages for agricultural labourers in a county where, if you established a man in one, he would certainly abandon his work in a few weeks for employment in a mine. Farmers in this district, therefore, rely almost exclusively upon servants whom they board and lodge for the cultivation of their land. Even the lightest operations of husbandry, such as weeding crops and thinning turnips, are performed by men. Neither women nor children can be hired, and the cost of wages constitutes, under such circumstances, a very heavy item in the balance sheet of the farm.

The Valley of the Lune.

6. The rich and beautiful valley of the Lune forms a remarkable contrast to the district of Furness. The soil is a rich loam, in many places 10 feet deep, and capable of growing every description of produce. The whole of this valley of unsurpassed natural fertility is, however, in a state of permanent pasture. There is scarcely the trace of a ploughshare to be seen, and year after year its natural grasses spring up in the utmost luxuriance without the expenditure of a shilling on top-dressing or manure. It is a country of perennial verdure devoted entirely to grazing. Bullocks thrive so rapidly on the rich pasture that they require no other food to fit them for the butcher. The only labour required on a farm of 800 acres is that of two men to look after the stock and to keep the fences in repair. The scantiness of the population would alone prove an obstacle to cereal cultivation, and from its great natural fertility and the few hands required to manage even a considerable farm, it has probably been found most remunerative to keep this fine valley in grass. The rent of land varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* per acre.

The Fylde.

7. The remaining district which I have to describe is that known as the Fylde, and which, in an agricultural sense, may be termed a modern creation. Linconshire has its fens, Yorkshire its wolds, and other counties have their distinctive peculiarities, but the improvement of moss or peat land on an extensive scale is one of the great agricultural features of Lancashire.

Great improvement of moss land.

8. The original mosses of the Fylde have been estimated at 20,000 statute acres, and, from a state of absolute sterility, a district once covered by them has been converted into a garden. The breadth of land under potato cultivation is probably greater, in proportion to its area, than in any other part of England. Luxuriant fields of beans, oats, and wheat also meet the eye on every side, and the only apparent trace of the bogs which formerly almost covered the surface of the county are occasional stacks of peat which present a somewhat gloomy contrast to the cultivation around, and which constitute almost the only visible traces of a moss once, in some places, 30 feet deep, the greater portion of which has been drained, cut, and carted away at an expense which has been abundantly repaid by the productive soil which has been created in its place. Land which was worth, a few years ago, only 5*s.* or 7*s.* 6*d.* an acre now readily lets for 35*s.* or 2*l.* The improvement and cultivation of the Fylde have been greatly facilitated by the presence of large quantities of marl, which, mixed with the lower portion of the peat, produces a soil of great fertility.

Population of the Fylde very scanty. Immigration of Irish.

9. The population of the Fylde is very scanty, and the greater proportion of the work on farms is done by Irish labourers who arrive in large numbers early in April and return to their native country about the end of September. Their ordinary wages are 2*s.* a day, finding their own food, with the exception of butter-milk, which is supplied to them gratuitously at the rate of a quart per day. At harvest time they have an additional 1*s.* a day. Wheaten bread is their only substantial food. They sleep in barns and outhouses upon straw, with a sack for a pillow. Their object being to save money, many carry back to their country from 10*l.* to 12*l.* of the wages of the half-year. They are most efficient labourers, and a more industrious, honest, cheerful, easily managed, and well-conducted class of men is nowhere to be found.†

The Fylde could not be cultivated without Irish labour.

10. This periodical immigration of Irish labour has become a necessity in the Fylde and is an essential condition of its cultivation. The men generally return to the same homesteads year after year, and employers and employed are mutually pleased to see each other again. If, from a closer approximation of wages in Ireland to those in England, or from any other cause, this supply of labour should at any time cease, it is difficult to conceive how the cultivation of the Fylde, in its present form, could be continued; in anticipation, perhaps, of such an event a tendency is already perceptible to lay down land in permanent pasture and to encourage the increase of dairy farms.

General scarcity of agricultural labour in Lancashire.

11. The general scarcity of agricultural labour in Lancashire is the necessary consequence of its vast manufacturing development. Its coal mines and cotton mills afford a remuneration far more attractive than anything that the farmer can offer; the great mass of the native inhabitants, therefore, reside in towns and the rural districts are comparatively deserted. It appears by the last census that three-fourths of the population of the county are engaged in commerce and manufactures or dependent upon them for employment and support.

* Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, vol. 10.

† The number of Irish who take up a temporary residence in the Fylde amounts, I was told, to several thousands.

L. 2.

Women very little employed in agriculture.

12. Under such circumstances the employment of women in agriculture is, as might be expected, quite exceptional, and only in districts remote from manufacturing towns, andeven when so employed their wages approximate to those of men. I found in the Fylde 2*s.* a day, with their food, given women when they could be procured, even for the lightest agricultural work. In certain districts neither women nor boys can be procured, and work which almost everywhere else is done at a trifling expense by women and children is necessarily performed by men.

No agricultural gangs.

13. Agricultural gangs, whether public or private, are entirely unknown. In the seasons for planting and taking up potatoes, and for getting, dressing, and stacking peat, as in the Fylde, the father of a family often takes his children, with one or two of his neighbours', to assist in such work. This is the nearest approach to the combined employment of children and adults which I met with. On small farms the employment of the children of the occupiers at a very early age is as general as I found it to be in Cumberland and Westmorland.

Children engaged very young as farm servants.

14. An objectionable practice, however, prevails of hiring children into farmhouses as farm-servants at an earlier age than is consistent with their education. I found 12 a common age at which children are first engaged as farm servants. The paucity of adults available for agricultural labour, doubtless, partially accounts for this practice ; but there may be another reason for it, viz., an anxiety to secure labourers as young as possible and thus prevent their being attracted to the towns which, in this county, compete in the labour market so successfully with the country.

The farm servant system general.

15. Farm servants are almost as much employed in the north of Lancashire as in the adjoining counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, but their wages do not range so high; for, whereas, in Cumberland and Westmoreland 28*l.* and 30*l.* a year are not unfrequently paid to the higher class of farm servants, from 16*l.* to 20*l.* a year, with board and lodging, is the average rate of remuneration for that class in North Lancashire. The difference in the rate of wages in favour of the farm servants of Cumberland and Westmorland may possibly be owing to their superior efficiency, for I often heard Lancashire farmers express their admiration of the great physical powers, industry, and intelligence of the agricultural labourers of the adjoining counties.

Diet of farm servants good.

16. The mode of living in the farmhouses is much the same as in Cumberland and Westmorland. The diet is ample and good, with fresh meat always once, and in many places twice a day. Oatcake seems to be in more general use than wheaten bread, and is said to be preferred by the labouring classes.

Education of labouring classes not satisfactory.

17. The state of education among agricultural labourers is not so satisfactory as in the adjoining northern counties, a natural result of the early age at which the schooling of the children of the labouring classes generally ceases, the acquirements made at school being quickly lost from the want of opportunities of keeping them up.

Night schools not general.

18. Night schools are well supported in a few places, such as Heysham and Quernmore, near Lancaster, where the population is sufficiently numerous to support them, but the great distance of the generality of farmhouses from any village or town where such institutions are likely to be established must preclude young labourers generally from taking advantage of them.

Moral standard comparatively high.

19. The moral standard among the labouring classes in the county is higher than in Cumberland and Westmorland, and there is, I was informed by the clergy, comparatively little illegitimacy ; a state of things, I conceive, in some measure attributable to the very little employment of females in husbandry, women being more appropriately occupied. There is at the same time a public opinion on this subject which makes itself felt and has a decided influence upon the demeanour and character of young females even in the most secluded districts of the county.

Wages of day labourers.

20. The wages of agricultural day labourers are slightly lower than in Cumberland and Westmorland, except in those districts where the mines come in competition with agriculture. In such places agricultural labourers are paid from 16*s.* to 18*s.* per week. In the purely agricultural and pastoral districts wages range from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, often with the addition of certain privileges, such as permission to grow potatoes on the farmer's land and pasture for a cow. The material condition of the agricultural labourer is satisfactory ; there is little poverty and no distress ; and the general state of the rural population is one of prosperity and contentment.

Cottage gardens general and good.

21. Nothing struck me more than the contrast which Lancashire and the two northern counties which I had previously visited presents in the value attached by the people of the former county to gardens. They are generally of considerable size, and form a really important addition to the labourer's resources. Potatoes constitute the chief crop, but attention is paid to other vegetables; fruit trees are common and highly prized, and the cultivation of flowers is not neglected. A cottage without a good garden is the exception, but although most cottages have gardens all cottagers are not gardeners. There may occasionally be observed instances of slovenliness and neglect, but, generally speaking, the gardens are cultivated with neatness and care, in favourable situations and with a good soil often yielding a profit of from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year.

Allotments procurable when desired ; small allotments preferred.

22. Although a labourer in receipt of good wages is often not insensible to the advantages and pleasures of a garden and is willing to bestow upon its cultivation such spare time as he can command, his appreciation of an allotment, even if not inconveniently situated, is not so common if it is large enough to require a considerable expenditure of labour to make it pay. To a poor man on low wages an allotment of even half an acre may doubtless be a most important addition to his means of living ; but an agricultural labourer in the receipt of high wages is seldom disposed to work much after the business of the day is over. He then naturally looks for amusement and social intercourse, and if he can often find these on the allotment ground he regards it rather as a place of recreation than of toil. I found instances of this in several parishes which I visited, and where allotments were appreciated, not for their size, but their comparative smallness. In Heysham, for example, the Rev. T. Royds lets off four acres, in pieces of one-twelfth of an acre each, and a farmer in the same parish lets the same quantity of land in similar proportions, and although the labourers renting them are in receipt of excellent wages they are readily taken up. At Cartmel a piece of land contiguous to the town is let in allotments of one-twentieth of an acre, although larger had been offered. The reasons for this preference of small to large allotments, when agricultural labourers are well off, are obvious, the work required being light men meet on the allotment ground, smoke their pipes, and chat with their neighbours. It thus becomes a place

of pleasant *réunion;* the crops (little vegetable delicacies, perhaps, which add a zest to a labourer's meal) are duly tended; the growth of the early potatoes, for which the labourer probably anticipates a good price, is watched with interest, and a taste for gardening is created which is often thus diffused throughout a parish.

Cottages good.

23. The remarks which I have made with respect to gardens apply almost in an equal degree to cottages. In no returns which I received to the circular of questions which I distributed is the condition of cottage accommodation described as otherwise than satisfactory. This favourable testimony was to a great extent borne out by my own observation. In some cottages the ventilation was obviously defective, but the number of rooms provided for the labourer and his family was generally sufficient; but it is found difficult where there are three bedrooms to prevent an occupier from taking lodgers and making all his children sleep in one room, an abuse which calls loudly for a remedy.

Great improvement of cottages in the Fylde.

24. Although the condition of the cottages in the parts of Lancashire which I visited is on the whole very satisfactory, I should state that the improvement is comparatively recent in one portion of the county. In the Fylde nothing could be more deplorable than the cottages which on its first reclamation from a waste were erected for the scanty population that could be induced to make it their abode. Hovels built of mud with thatched roofs and provided with only two rooms were the only habitations available for the settlers, as they might have been described, in this new territory. Some of these cottages remain, but by the liberal expenditure of the Earl of Derby and Colonel Clifton, the two largest proprietors in the Fylde district, these wretched dwellings are rapidly disappearing, and in their places have been built substantial brick cottages with slate roofs and amply provided with all the conveniences which a labourer's family can require. All have three bedrooms, and the rent is fixed less on a calculation of the outlay than on what a labourer, in receipt of fair wages, may be reasonably expected to pay.

Education.

25. I have but few remarks to make upon the state of elementary education throughout the districts which I visited. The supply of schools is ample, and, so far as my observations extended, are, with the exception of some small endowed schools in which the old type of master is still found, efficiently conducted. The only drawback to the satisfaction which the existence of good schools is calculated to afford is the indifference of parents (frequently half educated or wholly uneducated themselves) to the education of their children. Many of the answers which I obtained to the circular of questions pointedly comment on this evil.

Attendance of children good, excepting those of small farmers.

26. The attendance of the children of agricultural labourers is much more regular and extends over a longer period of the year than of small farmers. The Rev. Mr. Powis, the rector of Farington, states:—

"In my parish full half the year is almost, if not altogether, lost to education by the children of small occupiers. It is only where small farms prevail that the education of children is materially interrupted; the children of the labouring classes generally attend school fairly, and if they were not removed so young, the education they would obtain would leave little to be wished for, considering their position in life."

Savings' banks and friendly societies.

27. Habits of providence among farm servants and the labouring classes are common, but there is a greater disposition on the part of agricultural labourers to subscribe to friendly societies than to deposit their earnings in the savings' bank. In the extensive parish of St. Michael's in the Fylde there is an excellent friendly society which does much good; almost all the young lads become members of it when 14 or 15 years old, and the present number of benefited members, some of whom however reside out of the parish, is 236. The club has no connexion with any public-house.

Great abuse of children's labour in gathering shell-fish on the sands of Morecambe Bay.

28. I have now to advert to a subject, which, although it is not included in the terms of the Commission, is so important in reference to the employment of children and young persons, to the total neglect of their education and the permanent injury of their morals, that having communicated what I learned, together with my views on the subject, and it being the only instance in which I have had occasion to notice the abuse of children's labour in this county, I readily obtained your permission to notice it in this Report. I refer to the constant employment of great numbers of children and young persons in gathering cockles and other shell fish on the shores of Morecambe Bay. The business of "cockling," as it is provincially termed, appears to combine all the worst abuses of agricultural gangs, with some peculiar aggravations. It prevails on other parts of the coast of England, and I find a reference to it in a communication by the Rev. W. T. Becket, rector of Ingoldsthorpe, Norfolk, and diocesan inspector of schools in the deanery of Heacham,* in which that gentleman observes:—

"The remarks I have made respecting the employment of child and female labour in field-work are applicable also to the same classes in musseling and cockling upon our sea shore, which occupies a great number of women and children with the same injurious results morally, bodily, and religiously. I think the inquiry should be extended to that kind of labour, in order to prevent the increase of evils which might arise if restrictions were applied to field-work and not to shore work."

Money earned by "cockling."

29. The business of "cockling" is very lucrative. It is carried on by a class of men called provincially "badgers," a kind of middlemen between the persons actually employed in the work and the wholesale buyers, generally fishmongers in the manufacturing towns. Great numbers of children, young persons, and women who reside in the small villages around the coast of Morecambe Bay go upon the sands on every recession of the tide in parties of from 10 to 20, and pursue their occupation until the advancing tide compels them to return. The cockles lie about an inch under the sand, and their presence is detected by the appearance of a small hole; the cram, a small three pronged bent fork is then applied, and the shell fish is jerked by it into a basket held to receive it. The stooping posture required by this work for several hours is very trying. An expert "cockler" will sometimes obtain eight quarts in an hour, if cockling is "good." I heard of a father of a family who, with the assistance of his four children, frequently made as much as 4*l.* per week. The extent of this business may be conceived from the fact stated to me by the manager of the railway at Morecambe, that the carriage of cockles and mussels from that place alone to the manufacturing towns of Lancashire amounts to more than 2,000*l.* a year.

* Appendix to First Report, p. clxxv.

L. 2.

Great profits of the middlemen.

30. The gain of the "badgers" from the labour of the children employed may be estimated from the fact that a child or his parent is paid for the cockles collected at the rate of 5*d.* per eight quarts, called a "heap," which they sell at the rate of 1*d.* or 2*d.* a quart, thus making the profit upon the labour of these poor children from 150 to 200 per cent., at the expense, as I shall proceed to show, of their intellectual and moral debasement.

Places where the employment is pursued.

31. The places in which cockling is chiefly carried on are Fleetwood, Poulton-le-Sands, Hest Bank, Bolton-le-Sands, Warton, Silverdale, Allethwaite, Flookborough, Bardsea, and Baycliff, on the shore of Morecambe Bay, and Sandscales and Southergate in the estuary of the Duddon. The number of children and young persons employed amounts, as nearly as I have been able to ascertain, to rather over 300.

Early ages at which children are employed, and its consequence.

32. The age of the children when first taken on the sands, or the "skeer," as they call it, is often only 5, but at that age they are sent more for the purpose of learning than for the utility of their services. Owing to the value of their labour to their parents, and the early age at which it is made available, cocklers are never sent to school, and grow up in a state of absolute ignorance, and, I fear I must add, of heathenism. The working together on the sands for many hours together of boys, girls, and young women, in groups, which generally keep near enough to carry on conversation, leads, as may be supposed, to great evils, and while at work, as well as in going to and returning from the sands, their language, is, I was told, in the highest degree obscene and profane. In the short intervals of employment, idling and loitering about the villages are their only amusements; and respectable persons shrink from coming within hearing of their language or observation of their manners.*

Testimonies to the greatness of this evil.

33. The Rev. T. Rigg, incumbent of Flookborough, says, in reference to the employment of the children of his parish in "cockling,"—

"The children employed go upon the sands as young as 7 or 8; they get no education, rarely going even to an infant school. The occupation is continuous throughout the year. One of the principal cocklers of this village has seven children on the sands, not one of whom has had the slightest education. All the children and young persons engaged in this occupation are in a very demoralized condition; their habitual language is shocking, and they never enter a place of worship. At 14 both boys and girls become so independent that they frequently leave their parents and board and lodge with strangers, spending their earnings, even at that early age, in drunkenness. It is very desirable that some restriction should be placed by law on the age the children should be allowed to pursue this occupation. I think none should be allowed to go on the sands before 11 years of age."

The mother of three girl "cocklers" at this place says,—

"My girls are out on the sands from 10 to 12 hours together, and in spring tides they have to walk five miles to the banks. They have nothing while away but a piece of bread, of which they eat a bit now and then, just to keep off hunger. None of my children ever went to school."

The Rev. Canon Hurbersty, vicar of Cartmel, says,—

"When I was the incumbent of Allithwaite I saw much of the system of cockling. It is the only abuse of children's labour that we have to complain of in this district, and I am of opinion that in any legislation for the regulation of early labour, this class cannot with propriety be omitted."

The Rev. Robert Gibson, vicar of Bolton-le-Sands, says,—

"Almost all the children in my parish are engaged in the cockling business. They receive no education except, perhaps, some little at the Sunday school, but being unable to read they derive little benefit from that. I certainly think it very desirable that the labour of these children should be brought under some legislative regulation. There are some hundreds of them in the villages around Morecambe Bay."

I did not hear that this employment produced any injurious effect upon the health of the children, although it is difficult to suppose that protracted labour, barefooted, on the wet sands for hours together, should not lay the foundation of diseases which must manifest themselves in after life.

In concluding this necessarily brief Report, I beg to express my thanks for the assistance rendered me in my inquiries by persons of all classes with whom I had occasion to communicate. To the clergy, especially, my acknowledgments are due for the readiness and zeal with which they entered upon the discussion of any subject on which I felt that it would be desirable that I should obtain their opinion and I shall always entertain a grateful remembrance of the kindness and hospitality with which I was everywhere received.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient faithful servant,

August 10, 1869.

J. HENRY TREMENHEERE,
Assistant Commissioner.

* I may mention a circumstance connected with this subject which came under my own observation. Being a few years ago at one of the small cockling villages of Morecambe Bay, I ascertained that a "badger," having collected his workers of both sexes, was accustomed to shut them up for the night in a barn which he hired for the occasion whenever the state of the tide made it desirable to be upon the sands at early dawn. I have no reason, however, to suppose that anything so bad is now practised.

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COMMISSION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (1867).

APPENDIX PART II.

TO

SECOND REPORT.

EVIDENCE

FROM

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

23822. 1869.

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1. TABLE showing the comparative Duration and Regularity of School Attendance in the under-mentioned Counties (compiled from returns sent in to the Commission).

Mr. Stanhope.

g.

	Per-centage of Children on the Books who are between 10 and 13 years of age, in Summer and in Winter respectively.				Per-centage in average Attendance (1), under 10; (2), between 10 and 13 years of age.							
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys under 10.		Boys from 10 to 13.		Girls under 10.		Girls from 10 to 13.	
	Summr.	Winter.	Summr.	Winter.	Summr.	Winter.	Summr.	Winter.	Summr.	Winter.	Summr.	Winter.
Kent - -	27	29½	30	33	73	73	63	72	74	69	65	73
Dorset - -	19½	22	26½	28⅓	80	78	59	57	86	78	76	69
Chester - -	32	32	30	29	76	78	69	73	76	76	72	73
Salop - -	27½	30	30	33	70	71	63	67	64	66	51	57
Stafford - - (From few Parishes only.)	20	24	27½	31	68	74	68	89	69	75	78	76

Note.—Boys appear to be withdrawn from school soonest in Dorset, and latest in Cheshire.
Attendance is *most* irregular in the case of the younger boys in Salop, and of boys over 10 in Dorset. In the latter case regular employment is indicated by there being no improvement in the attendance of these boys in winter.
Girls attend most irregularly in Shropshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

g.

2. TABLE, founded on the Census of 1851 and 1861, to show the comparative Employment of Juvenile and Female Labour in the under-mentioned Counties.

Counties.		Male Agricultural Labourers.	Between 5 and 10.	Between 10 and 15.	Per-centage under 15.	Female Agricultural Labourers.	Under 15.	Increase or Decrease. of Female Labour.	
								Increase.	Decrease.
Kent	1851	Outdoor 41,462	143	3,549	8½	520	51	—	—
		Indoor 4,994	4	254		1,756	140	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 43,186	163	3,604	8	589	50	69	—
		Indoor 3,698	3	352		252	14	—	1,504
Dorset	1851	Outdoor 19,302	232	2,327	13	1,919	144	—	—
		Indoor 602	1	72		1,293	111	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 19,070	271	2,397	14	1,413	95	—	506
		Indoor 364	2	80		689	39	—	604
Chester	1851	Outdoor 14,296	6	488	7	316	12	—	—
		Indoor 7,279	15	929		1,496	173	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 16,861	11	526	7	315	12	—	1
		Indoor 6,452	4	1,063		1,513	61	17	—
Salop	1851	Outdoor 18,851	48	822	9	328	10	—	—
		Indoor 7,593	16	1,216		1,934	168	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 18,288	15	593	8	412	8	84	—
		Indoor 7,389	21	1,463		1,632	15	—	302
Stafford	1851	Outdoor 18,556	28	716	6	455	19	—	—
		Indoor 5,770	6	756		984	82	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 18,494	13	935	8	412	12	—	4
		Indoor 4,629	13	883		1,316	39	332	—
Rutland	1851	Outdoor 2,486	5	195	9	8	—	—	—
		Indoor 409	2	49		6	—	—	—
	1861	Outdoor 2,911	14	254	9	10	6	2	—
		Indoor 339	1	26		127	3	121	—
Lincoln	*1851*	*Outdoor 39,840*	*127*	*3,080*	8	*589*	*53*	—	—
		Indoor 10,878	*5*	*769*		*769*	*57*	—	—
	1861	*Outdoor 42,984*	*211*	*3,669*	9	*729*	*104*	*140*	—
		Indoor 9,897	*8*	*843*		*3,417*	*249*	*2,648*	—

[From this table it appears—

(1.) That far the largest proportion of *boy* labour is employed in Dorsetshire.

(2.) That *outdoor* regular female labour is most employed in Dorset, but is very much on the decrease.

(3.) That indoor female labour is most employed in the dairy counties of the west, and is very much on the decrease.

3. TABLE showing the Per-centage of Marriages where Marks were substituted for Signatures, and of Parishes which have Night Schools in the under-mentioned Counties. Mr. Stanhope. g.

Note.—The former is extracted from the reports of the Registrar General, the latter from that of the National Society (1868).

Counties.	Per-centage of Marks to Marriages.				Per-centage of Ecclesiastical Districts in which *Night Schools* exist.
	Males.		Females.		
	1855.	1865.	1855.	1865.	
Kent - -	30·6	20·5	31·9	20·	27
Dorset - -	30·8	25·2	35·7	24·9	44
Chester - -	32·1	23·7	50·8	37·7	23
Salop - -	39·3	29·5	46·6	33·6	13
Stafford - -	44·3	38·2	56·7	47·6	24
Rutland - -	31·8	20·5	23·4	26·9	31

Read thus:—Out of 100 men married in Kent 30·6 did not write their names; 27 in every 100 parishes have night schools. The per-centage of marks to marriages is of some value as a *comparative* test. If so, the state of education is far lowest in Stafford, but among females very low also in Cheshire and Shropshire.

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4. *The Rev. Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne*, Rector of Durweston.

Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which boys should not be allowed to be employed in farm labour?

In answering this question I must first observe, that in my opinion there should be a very strong case made out to justify interference with labour at any age, where the actual power to do the work for which wages are paid is sufficient. Such a case is made out when it admits of proof that there is an age when prolonged physical exertion, or exposure to excess of wet, cold, or heat, must so far injure in the child the growing constitutional forces, as to make it inevitable that its health will be permanently affected. In another view a case may be made out, viz., that there is an age at which the child should not be removed from the influence and protection of the parents and "the home;" an age at which child companionship is of great value to children, and the mixed society of the labour field prejudicial. The child sent out to work is in a great degree removed from all that nature seems to have pointed out as proper and profitable for child life; it is yet wanting in much which can alone qualify it for that life, which is one of all toil, or at least one that can afford it play time only in *tired* time. There is still one other view of this subject, if it is held to be the duty of the State to see that none of these children are reared in ignorance. As it must be admitted that to secure the mere rudiments of education requires a certain number of years, it follows that legislation may wisely interfere to prevent children going to work until they have acquired at least this much of education. In my opinion, no male child should go to farm work before the age of *ten* years; it would be more wise to make the age *eleven*.

At present, children do go to farm work at 10 years of age, and even under. Although it would in a paper of the nature I am now writing be impossible to state in detail the various forms of injury thus done to them, I have no hesitation in stating as the result of long experience and observation, that the seeds of much *physical evil* are thus planted in the soil of their life; the fruit may not be, I cannot say it is, a shortening of that life, but it is seen in their after years, in a way to me most clear; there is a want of physical energy, of what I may call labour pluck, a deadening of mind and body force; they may work up to what they are worth, as regards the value of what they do in the labour market, but even this is done after a very listless fashion, they form farm machinery in their mass, but the motive power is weak. In after life, and especially in its latter third, they are subject very generally to rheumatism, and other indications of the effects of exposure to all weathers, on low diet; had they started in life with power to earn more, they would have been better fed. That they yet live, as the rule, to a very advanced age, I admit; but their latter years are those of men, paupers and afflicted.

The taking them away from home so early, the giving them that sort of independence which a boy soon assumes who has entered the labour field, their early association with adults of all ages and characters, all this is prejudicial to them. What they there hear and see goes to destroy many of the most valuable natural dispositions of their age. They are boys before they have ceased to be mere children, act and speak as men before they have ceased to be boys.

I believe that where there is a good infant school and the usual day school, well conducted, an amount of education may be given before the boy is even *nine* years of age, which will enable him, if so disposed, to read fairly, write with some facility, and do sums in arithmetic, equal to any demands his position in life may require. Where Sunday schools exist, and they do so very generally, what has been thus acquired may be further advanced, that is, presuming the managers of such schools have the good sense to combine some secular teaching with that justly considered as more appropriate to the day. I have observed of late years, that there is a rapidly increasing desire, in the boys of the agricultural class, to improve their scholarship; the parents also set now a higher value on their education. In the night schools which have been carried on by members of my own family, we have the most satisfactory proof of this being the case. The result is just what I ever expected. A very large number of boys who went through the day school, the Sunday and night school, acquire an amount of education which makes them restless *at home, i.e.*, working after the manner of their forefathers at farm work in their own parish;

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they go out into the world, and get higher wages in employment of a character they know they never could have obtained, had they not persevered in acquiring the knowledge it demands.

Seeing then, that education is of this value to the agricultural class, that it can only be obtained in its rudiments at an early age, and that it can be so acquired without that injury to the physical power which farm labour is likely at that age to effect; seeing also, that at this early period of life it is better for them to be under school discipline, rather than have that too early independence, and too early association with their elders which the labour field is sure to entail, I think that no boy, as the rule, should leave school to go into regular farm work before the age of 11 years. The only way, however, in which I can see it possible to arrive at such result, or to approach it, *by legislation*, appears to me to be, to enforce the rule, that no boy, *where there is opportunity for him to be taught*, shall be hired for regular farm work until he can read fairly, write with ordinary accuracy from dictation, and be able to answer questions in the early rules of arithmetic. I believe the result of such legislation would be that the boys would be physically better able to work without injury to health; they would be in some degree better protected against the evils of too early association with the mixed adult labour of the farm; they would be more intelligent, and have just got enough of education to lead them to seek more whenever it may be offered them.

That thus some inconvenience would be felt on the part of employers, for young, very young labour is valuable, I admit; that the parents would feel the loss of their earnings, cannot be denied; that it would follow that very many would leave farm work at from 18 to 20 years of age for better paid, more intellectual, *i.e.*, less monotonous, drudge work, I have no doubt. But all this only brings me back to a conclusion at which I have long since arrived, viz., that it is a problem yet to be solved, how low class work, requiring little mental cultivation, can hope to retain the service of those whom education has taught to think; has made, after a sort, socially ambitious; caused them not only to feel that the work they do can be done with less mental cultivation, and that this cultivation has qualified them for work more grateful to them, and far better paid. The diminished supply to the family cupboard, the prolonged cost to the parents, of children who do not earn, would be borne patiently, in the hope that such children were gaining a qualification for another position in life, one which would make them not only independent of all parental help, but probably enable them to help their parents in their old age. It may be said there is little real difference between the going to work at 10 or 11 years of age. It is my conviction that the eleventh year is just the most valuable at school; education drudgery is then reaping its fruit, and the boy then first feeling its value in the ease with which he learns, learns more, and values more what he then learns.

I do not see my way to any rule to limit the hours of work in the case of boys. I am satisfied it might in many cases be feasible to work them alternate days, the intermediate days being given to schooling; but I cannot see, having regard to the distance they go to work on the farms, and the nature of that work, how at any given hour, the juvenile labour could be called on to cease, it is so amalgamated with the adult labour.

"Is legislation required for the purpose of fixing the age below which girls should not be employed in farm labour?"

I have no hesitation in saying that, in my opinion, there is no greater evil, social and physical, affecting the agricultural labour class, than the employment of young girls in out-door farm labour. They are the destined mothers of another generation; on their healthy condition as wives will much depend the health and strength of the parents of both sexes of that generation. In this climate of ours the alternations from dry to wet, from heat to cold, are so capricious, that the trial is severe to male labourers; their acclimatizing is not obtained but at much physical risk. The physique of the female is in many most important features very different from that of the male; and just where it differs most, lies the greatest danger to health, from over-tasking the strength, and exposure to cold and wet. In the young growing girl are found those constitutional features which make her especially liable to life-long injury from overwork, work in seasons in which she is exposed to great fatigue under rapid changes of atmosphere. It is quite true that women do in some places go out early to field-work, and do so work to an advanced period of life without shortening existence. But I have yet to be told how much cruel suffering it has cost them; and how many have sunk under, or had life made miserable in the attempt to do this. I have no hesitation in stating it to be my opinion, that regarding simply the physical phase of the question, it were better that no female under 16 years of age were allowed by law to work regularly at out-door farm work. I am not prepared to say that in the hay and corn harvest girls of good health, between 13 and 16, might not be employed, without any great risk, any more risk than at other hard work, and I cannot deny that in indoor service a great deal too much severe work, and to them dangerous work, is for ever imposed upon them.

As to the social or moral feature of the question, I am satisfied that field work, when entered upon at an early age, or even at any age, is as the rule most destructive to the female character. It is sad to write, but it is incontestibly true, that whenever any number of females work in company at farm work, especially when in that company there are also some male workers, the conversation is of a character most destructive to all purity of thought; affording also every temptation to learn that coarse language which is the free translation of thought impure. It is folly to expect that from the very nature of the things which surround the birth and rearing of a class where little can be veiled, and young ears are early accustomed to hear very free conversation, we can preserve to our poor people's children that modesty which we profess to value ourselves. We have in all these questions to consider the inevitable compromise which character, in thought, speech, and habit, has to make with earning industry. We cannot raise labourers without some regard to what labour will afford them in the matter of food and shelter. The best of cottages leaves necessarily much undone, that a mere moralist might wish for, of what is necessary to rear up children according to that standard which we might, as moralists, desire. It is the tax that poverty pays, its most direct tax, that the preservation of absolute purity of thought must be sacrificed at a very early period of life. It being thus, it does appear to me incontestable, that it is our duty to do all we can to preserve, as long as we can, young girls, so inevitably disposed to be precocious in knowledge of a demoralizing tendency, from that mixed association which necessarily advances that knowledge in a degree at their age deadening to all modesty, and destructive of all in the contrary direction, which good schooling may have taught. The Poor Law, I believe, puts the age at which children are no longer to be chargeable on the parents as such at 15. I assume therefore that at this age the law gives adultship to them. If therefore it should be held necessary to lay down an age before which no female child should go *to outdoor* farm work, I do not know that a better one could be chosen, than that, which the law has already named as that in which childhood may be said to altogether cease.

I cannot say that I am aware that there is ever any difficulty in the case of the children or young persons working on farms, obtaining time for their meals. There can be no doubt, that the distance to which children of either sex have to walk to their labour should be considered as so much of the actual day's

labour exacted from them. I am of opinion that between the age of 11 years and 14 no child should, as the rule, be called on to work more than 10 hours in a day, including the time required to go to work and return. I assume that at least one hour is allowed for *meals*.

Without writing at a length for many reasons undesirable, I could not go into all the details necessary to be considered, if legislation was to rule a hard and fast line as to the distance from their home children are to work on farms. There would be found many difficult questions in the matter, arising from the different nature of the employments in which the work of children is valuable. In some, the child, once on the ground, has comparatively little call to walk any more, the work being of a nature done on one spot; in other cases, it is walking all day.

I cannot see my way to any definition at which legal enactments could arrive, as to what employment in agriculture is so unhealthy and unsuitable for women as to make it necessary to legally exclude them from it. Anything which tends to form in women masculine habits, in my opinion, is unsuitable; everything which overtaxes female power, and is dangerous to the female constitution, is unhealthy; there is much in female farm labour which it needs no argument to prove must act in both directions, and the same may be said of many other species of labour where women work with men, or are set to work requiring prolonged muscular labour and exposure to wet and cold. I, therefore, can only say that, believing as I do, all outdoor female labour to be as the rule unsuitable and unhealthy for women, I yet cannot see how the law could step in to prevent it. Women must earn; their earnings form an important part of the family revenue, and when and how they are to do it is a subject most difficult, if not inexpedient, to define by law. I am not aware of any species of farm labour which can be considered as exacting anything which can fairly be called want of decency in those employed.

As to education, its amount, &c., where there are good schools accessible to the children, which is now generally the case, I believe there is every disposition on the part of the parents to avail themselves of them. It is no proof to me that the schooling has been defective, because after a year or two, or less, of working, the boy or girl may be found to know little of what it had professedly been taught. The flow of learning once interrupted, in every class soon proves how easily lessons are forgotten after lessons cease. I have my doubts whether it is not very rare that children are kept from school through the poverty of the parents. Village schooling is very cheap; there is great convenience in getting them away so long each day from the cottage; they wear out less clothing; being further from the cupboard there is less crying out for food.

There doubtless are cases in which there is some indisposition on the part of the parents to forego the weekly earnings of children. Where the family is large, if one or two children could only earn their shoes and some portion of their clothing expenses, it is a very great gain, and one the loss of which must straiten the means of the family. I have long, however, been of opinion that the very extensive use of young labour has the effect of keeping down the value in the market of adult labour. But the direct immediate gain to the parents is in the way of any view, which would lead them in agricultural work to pursue the policy "of trades," restricting arbitrarily the supplanting of the adult by the cheaper labour of the very young. They have yet to learn that children being left longer at school in greater numbers would probably tend to raise their own wages.

As to the low moral tone of the agricultural labourer, in the case of ordinary labourers, *i.e.*, those not under the pressure of circumstances, fast becoming exceptional, I don't believe in it. I believe a labourer, as the rule, is as moral as any member of any other class. Where circumstances have tended to demoralize the labourer, he may be idle, a drunkard, one who swears and breaks the Sabbath, perhaps a poacher, or dishonest. But comparing class with class, I assert that the good of this class are as good as those of any other; the bad are certainly not worse; they may pursue vice after a coarser fashion, but it is the same vice. We are apt to forget what we all like to deny, but yet must know to be true, that the crime and immorality of the labourer being more or less a nuisance and injury to those above him, is for ever exposed, reprobated, pursued by the law; that of the rich has an amount of privilege, from the fact, that their vices, whatever of ill they may cause by the force of their example, are of a nature which custom, fashion, the ways of their world seem to condone on the ground, that the sinners' sins do little injury to the persons and property of others, are primarily most hurtful to themselves. As to what is known as immorality, there are a certain number of illegitimate children born in our villages, and the marriage ceremony is but too much one following what it ought to proceed, and the more attention is called to this state of things, from the fact that illegitimate children and their mothers become a burden to the poor rate, unless their support is made a matter of magisterial decision. In either case that sin is published, which in other classes admits of far easier concealment, and we are also in justice bound to bear in mind that upper class licentiousness has a field ever open to it as yet, thank God, not open to the men of our villages in any serious degree. Adultery is little known.

With regard to the wages earned by this class it is very difficult to get at the truth. My own belief is that in the county of Dorset 11 shillings a week, taking all earnings throughout the year, is as high as they can with truth be put. I include in this all advantages whatsoever, and also all labourers (male) at farm work who are considered able-bodied. I also assume that a great deal of this is earned at task work, work done by the piece. I am quite satisfied of one thing, that be the wages what they may, it is generally admitted, and acted on, that good labourers, the best of them, are ever on the verge of pauperism, a week's interruption of work generally throws them on the poor rate; a sick child; the confinement of the wife, any the least excuse for union aid is made and rarely refused. The relieving officer's books will prove the truth of this. It is clear to me that this class are as much pauperized as ever they were in my recollection, indeed, I cannot see how they could be more so.

It must in fairness to the employers be borne in mind that when a tenant farmer takes a farm he makes the rate of wages of the district and the poor rate important elements in his calculations. Union rating has the effect of producing very naturally great laxity in rate expenditure. For his own immediate interest a farmer will not help to raise the district rate of wages. As the relief comes out of the whole union, he, as naturally, cares little to be strict in contracting the relief which enables his men to work at wages inadequate for their support if not thus supplemented by relief from the board. The result has ever appeared to me to be that the low rate of wages obtains only a low amount of labour. Men so fed and so paid do perhaps all the work that such pay and sustenance can fairly demand. I much doubt whether if the cases for the last 25 years of labourers who have been rewarded for long service and agricultural skill were closely examined, it would not be found that they had, as the rule, been in life very often paupers, very generally had been buried as such. It is within my own knowledge that in many cases this has been the case.

With regard to the cottages of the agricultural labourer, there has been, in the 27 years I have known Dorset, the greatest improvement. I see it in my own parish; I can travel nowhere and not see it. It is

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true I could point to a few notorious localities where the state of the dwellings of the poor is disgraceful to humanity, but these are now exceptional, the fact very often arising from the embarrassment of the proprietors absolutely preventing them laying out one farthing on their estates which they can avoid. The great legal obstacle in the way of cottage building is identical with that which affects the whole question of estate improvement. So long as estates can be tied up for generations, loaded with settlements, and so parchment-hampered that the proprietors are such far more in name than in fact, society at the same time expecting them to live up to the standard of their supposed proprietorship, it is clear that estate improvement is out of the question. What can be done, when anything is attempted, is chiefly in the direction of making the farms larger to save repairs, &c., and get higher class tenants. This certainly may carry with it some cottage building, but the real working of the system is simply this, that where there must be pressure it falls heaviest on the lowest class of the estate. And hence it is, so long as labourers can be got to work on low wages and dwell in crowded bad cottages, there is little probability of it being otherwise. Legal enactments which shall give embarrassed landed proprietors power to sell land to pay their debts, or the charges arising from the debts and extravagance of their predecessors, would remove some of the obstacles to cottage building; but there must be a very great change of public opinion before we can hope for the day, which must arrive, when the questions which relate to the inheritance of real property and its encumbrance, will come under that direct legislation which shall in any way obviate some of the most evident evils of the present system.

The old obstacle to cottage building, the argument that the rent does not pay proper interest for the expenditure, is fast becoming less and less. It is seen that labourers are not creatures of the open air; that they must be housed; that the house must be in some consistency with the habits and breeding of the being for whom it is built. As I said many years since the time would arrive when outdoor labour would come more in this respect under the category of domestic service. We don't regard the bedrooms and the servants hall of our houses in their cost as a matter of money return; we must have the maids and men; to have them we must find them house room. I am of opinion that the improvement of the cottages of the labourers, which is now in Dorset and other counties so marked, will yet continue. It is difficult already to retain on most estates a good supply of efficient labour; there is a leaven at work amongst this class of labourers, which will ere long, as I believe, produce a state of things analogous to that which has so disturbed every other labour market; education has begot thought, and thought is fed by the cheap press, which now circulates in our villages. I anticipate a time, *not far distant*, when this class will rise still further above that mere local serfdom, which in its past history has so characterized it; it has learnt what has been done by law to protect other species of workers, to give them a higher national status; it will apply that lesson to further its own interest. The extension of the range of settlement has worked to destroy parochialism with all its old loyalty and subservience to parish authorities. The agricultural labourer is now a unit of a great national interest. While every "interest" is questioning its own *right*, he will take his place in the struggle. He will get higher wages; he will not with these be content with the old cottage hovel. I already see symptoms of this, and I know some of the largest landed proprietors, foreseeing what must come, if a little late in doing so, are yet showing that a new way of dealing with their labourers must be chosen, if good contented labourers are to be retained on their estates.

I regard the Commission in connexion with which I am now writing as valuable evidence that at last the agricultural labourer's condition has so pressed itself or been pressed on the attention of the legislature, that whatever it can effect to ameliorate that condition will be done; that whilst it is held wise to give to this class education, the effect of such education will be studied, and endeavour made to provide that what is taught in the school is not neutralized, either by the circumstances which attach to a bad home, or to labour in itself morally prejudicial, or where it is not so, to labour too exacting on the physical powers of the age at which it is undertaken.

It remains only that I should now advert to one of the great sources of poverty and demoralization, which is, I think, beyond all contradiction, the habit of excessive drinking which so extensively prevails. It is strange, but true, that at the very time when the utmost energy and zeal is at work to enforce total abstinence from strong drink as a virtue of the highest order; when every argument is put forth to prove that such drink is altogether prejudicial; in our hospitals, in the treatment of the poor under the Poor Law, there never was a time when the medical men so profusely order it to be given. An inquiry into the present expenditure of hospitals and Poor Law unions for brandy and porter would in its result astonish the public. I have had experience in workhouse management, more or less, from the first days of the present Poor Law. When I regard the enormous amount of porter and brandy ordered for the in and out door paupers at the present time, I am induced to ask how was it the case that when, say, some 20 years ago, we so rarely gave these stimulants, we yet had equal longevity, we had no real evidence offered that the paupers suffered from the want of them. I am satisfied that the effect on the poor is bad, it gives them a craving for the use of that which is too costly for their position, it also tends to strengthen a habit, the one of all others, the easiest pursued to excess, such excess being their ruin. It is curious that more beer and cider is consumed in the counties where wages rule the lowest. In some measure this may arise from the fact, that a lower class of being is content to give his low class of work for such wages, and thus is one more disposed to mere animal enjoyment. If education raises the man, one would hope that with his rise may come a desire for a character of a higher grade. The very worst parishes with which I have ever been acquainted, I have ever found to be those in which there are the greatest number of low beer-shops. I know no one source of evil to compare with that which arises from the way in which the labourer is thus tempted to become a drunkard, and being one, to poison in his family all the school can teach; to waste their means and thus secure their pauperism. I am happy to say the employers are now very generally paying beer money to their men, instead of the beer or cider given in the field. This is a valuable step in the right direction. It does not force the sober man to either drink, or lose that which formed a portion of his wages. But no good will be done in the way of any serious arrest of the evil until legislation restricts the number of these small beer-houses, and places them all under better supervision. There is a fine for the drunkard; so far the law stigmatizes drunkenness, and yet the law sanctions the greatest competition amongst a class of dealers whose profits so much depend on the promotion of drunkenness. The beer-shop, as it is, is now the greatest impediment in the way of raising the labourer's condition, it is, of all, the most destructive of the work of the church and the school.

When requested to write on the subjects comprised in the instructions of the present "Commission," I was reminded that I had written a paper for that of 1843. I did so, and its publication brought on me an amount of local animosity hard now to be believed. I will only add that to every syllable of that paper I still adhere. How true it was has been well proved, by the great change in public opinion and public action in the matters of which it treated. Now, as then,

I have endeavoured to state my own conscientious opinion, founded on an experience of more than 27 years in the county from which I write. How far what I have written may be of any great value it is not for me to say.

S. Godolphin Osborne.

October 23, 1868.

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5. At the monthly meeting of the Dorchester Farmer's Club, on Saturday, January 30, 1869, Dr. Aldridge, F.R.C.S., read a paper on "Agricultural "Hygiène," of which the following is an extract:—

(1.) The air they breathe, and the houses they inhabit:

What are the conditions necessary to protect our rural population from exposure to the noxious effects of daily living in an impure atmosphere, whereby their physical energies are impaired and disease engendered? In the first place their homes or cottages should be erected on somewhat elevated situations, well drained, with a south or south-western aspect, and removed from the effects of marsh malaria on the one hand, and the noxious gases emanating from confined and exposed fœcal matter in farmyards on the other. It is absolutely necessary that all should have the beneficial effects of light and air, but this is unhappily overlooked in the construction of the dwellings of our rural population; not only are their cottages placed in unhealthy situations, and oftentimes exposed to noxious miasma, but without any suitable ventilation, for it is evident that if the air within an apartment be not continually renewed from without, it will necessarily become loaded with animal effluvia as to be literally unfit for human habitation or for the purposes of respiration. There is no doubt that very many lives are sacrificed every year from want of proper ventilation, more especially amongst our industrial classes, and so ignorant are our poor of the importance of ventilation, that it is a fact that in the model cottages recently erected in London the means of ventilation provided have actually been stopped up by the inmates, with the object of keeping them warm. "In a sanitary point of view (says Dr. Combe) "it becomes a matter of great practical importance "to determine the amount of fresh air that ought to "be supplied to every individual, as necessary to "healthy respiratory action. Suppose each individual "inhales 16 pints of air per minute, and returns 4 "per cent. of the respired air as carbonic acid, we "have an hourly consumption of 120 gallons of air, "and a formation of five gallons of carbonic acid." 120 gallons of air, then, is the lowest amount which must be supplied hourly to every individual for respiration, provided all the carbonic acid is carried off as formed. But a much larger supply will be necessary if no means are adopted for carrying off the carbonic acid; in other words, if there be no outward ventilation, the proportion of carbonic acid in the atmosphere is about four parts to 10,000, and consequently if five gallons be diffused through the air, 5,000 will be required to give the proportion of ten parts in 10,000. Hence though 120 gallons, or 19·25 cubic feet of air would, with perfect ventilation, be a sufficient hourly supply to yield the necessary oxygen, an individual would require 5,000 gallons, or 802 cubic feet, if shut up in a close room, when all renewal of air is impossible to keep the carbonic acid from exceeding one part in 1,000. In ventilating apartments, therefore, the object must be to remove the foul air as fast as it is formed, and for this purpose a minimum supply of 250 cubic feet of fresh air should be hourly introduced for every individual. Every bedroom should have direct access to the outer air, either by the window being slightly opened or the door on ajar, which with an open chimney secures the proper supply of pure air. Now what do we see in our cottages amongst the labouring classes in rural districts—not only cottages built on ill-drained situations, and surrounded on all sides by noxious gases, small, low, ill-constructed, with the entire absence of all attention to ventilation; bedroom, for seldom do we find more than one, without a fireplace, lighted by a window, perhaps, two feet square, half of which, perhaps, only opens; the room not more than 5 feet 6 inches in height, and accommodating a family of, perhaps, two parents and five or six children of different ages, the atmosphere of which, when I have had occasion to visit such homes in times of sickness, could only be compared to the black hole of Calcutta, and quite as injurious and fatal in a degree from the existence of the same causes. And if the respiration of pure air is so important to our rural adult population in their cottages, how much more important is it to young children. And to what other cause is to be attributed the great mortality which exists amongst the children of the poor, as the imperfect oxygenation of the blood through the daily respiration of atmospheric air impregnated with excessive carbon from the want of proper ventilation? This may be more particularly traced by the development of tuberculous diseases in some form or other, which proves yearly so fatal to large numbers of our young people in rural and town districts; but my time will not allow of my making more than these general remarks, and indeed it would not be suitable to further enlarge on the present occasion.

I may say, generally, that cottage accommodation hereabouts is certainly very defective. It is true that much has been done by many landlords, but still very generally the cottages occupied by agricultural labourers are radically very bad. And the high rate of mortality in our country proves the deplorable state of its sanitary condition. The necessity of a remedy is continually forced upon our attention. In England alone it is estimated that 150,000 persons are annually attacked with typhus fever, of which number 17,000 die. This dread disease appears in several forms, but the most fatal is certainly attributable to impure air and water, and, as this is oftentimes attributable to the treatment and disposal of domestic refuse, this may be considered a most prominent feature of the question. The usual mode of collection has been generally to provide a cesspool or ashpit immediately joining the convenience, which is made the receptacle for cinders, ashes, vegetable refuse, and fluids of all kinds; to this is added human excreta. The removal takes places at different periods, and it is not difficult to conceive how, in the meantime, this mass of putrifying matter, especially when encouraged by heat, putrifies, and decomposes, and in this way generates all those poisonous gases and the hosts of animalculæ which, combined, produce that fever so fatal to children and adults, which is known to our profession by the name of typhoid fever. In addition to this, from imperfection in the characters of the cesspool not being water-tight, the liquid in its polluted state finds its way by percolation to the wells, from which may be drawn a considerable portion of the water for town and village purposes. A striking instance of this kind was noticeable in this very street. When the cesspool system was done away with, and deep drainage with water supply instituted, in several of the wells at the bottom of this street the polluted liquid matter from cesspools in close proximity were seen to be percolating through the solid chalk, and in this neighbourhood the prevalence of typhoid disease had been noticed.

(2.) The labour they are engaged in:

With respect to the *employment* of the agricultural labourer, very little can be said on that subject, for of all employments, that of the agricultural labourer is not only the most primitive, but also the most healthful, for they find in their calling ample air and exercise, and of that character, such as walking, which is very invigorating. But I sometimes think that the continued and exhausting labour of the ploughman especially, is injurious, by inducing a collapse of the vital forces, which the period of rest and the slight nutrition afforded, is not sufficient to relieve him from. We often find that excessive exertion has an effect upon the nervous and muscular tissues, which

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gives rise to enfeebled health, from which oftentimes the individual never recovers, more particularly as he has not, as many other more favoured individuals, the opportunity of laying by, and getting weeks, nay months, of complete repose. How often was it observed during the Peninsula war that large numbers of our soldiers became invalided from long marches without intervals of repose and rest. Therefore I would most strongly advise a division of the labour to be made ; instead of the ploughman working eight hours consecutively, that the period should be divided equally, and at the end of four hours there should be two hours' rest, and then the labourer and his horses would, I feel assured, resume their work with renewed energy, whilst at the same time more efficient labour would be accomplished. The result of such a division, as in Scotland and elsewhere, would be seen in more vigorous health, and less premature decay. An agricultural labourer of 40 or 50 years of age is generally a much older man in constitution than a man of similar age who has been a mechanic.

No young lad should engage in farm labour more than eight hours a day under the age of 12, whereas on many farms they are called on to perform nearly adult work, to the prevention of proper muscular development, and very often to the production of tuberculous diseases.

Much of the excessive mortality may be safely attributed to two causes—excessive labour, with defective supply of suitable nourishment.

(3.) The *food* they eat, &c. :—

We now come to the subject of food, on which it will be only necessary for me to make a few general remarks. It is very important that the agricultural labourer should be supplied with proper food for the nourishment of his body. In his case the waste of tissue must be great, and therefore he requires a due supply of nutritious food to make up for the daily loss. The food should, therefore, be of a character easily digested and assimilated, nutritious, and inexpensive. But some persons may say that "It is very "difficult to combine these in the case of the agri-"cultural labourer." This I grant, but still at the same time think I shall be able to show that something in the way of improvement may be done. Digestion is the process by which those parts of our food which go to the repair and waste of the tissues and the formation of animal heat are made fit to be absorbed and added to the blood. The heat of the body is kept up by articles containing carbon and hydrogen, and the repair of the tissues those made up of nitrogen. Man may be supported as easily by food made up wholly of vegetable substances, as by that which is formed entirely of animal matter. The poor man, however, is unable to get a dinner of beef or mutton, and he is therefore obliged to fall back upon the fruits of the earth. When we examine carefully the composition of animal food, and that of vegetable substances, we can discover a close analogy existing between them. Thus we find albumen in meat, and also in the juices and seeds of nearly all plants. Also fibrin in meat, and in corn and other seeds and grasses we get a substance called gluten, which is identical in property to that of fibrin. More might be said upon this most interesting part of my paper, but I must not tax your time and attention too much for fear of wearying you. The food of the poor principally consists of wheaten bread, cheese, vegetables, and sometimes milk and butter or cream. Milk when it can be had is certainly one of the best articles of food we can have, as it contains all the elements of blood requisite for the support of the body. Cheese can be digested in small quantities by the healthy and active, but I sometimes think that too much of it is eaten by the labouring poor, as there is not that support and nourishment in the common cheese which is requisite for maintaining the strength of the body. When we turn to the vegetable kingdom we come to bread. This certainly deserves our first attention, and it is clearly the duty of the farmer, seeing how dependent his labourer is upon the nutritious character of the bread, it being that upon which he principally subsists, that the bread be made from the best wheat, and not, as too often is the case, from the pinched and unmatured corn called the tailing, which contains necessarily much less of the nutritious elements. With respect to the diet of children I would most strongly advise the use of the Scotch oatmeal as a most economic, nutritious, and healthful food, and I am satisfied that, could we introduce this article into consumption amongst our labouring poor, their little ones would grow infinitely stronger and more robust, and very many lives now sacrificed for want of sufficient nourishment would be saved. In districts where the labourer has a cottage and garden attached, he may have the meals varied by the vegetables he gets from the garden. The cottage and garden plan so excellently given by our esteemed president is by far the best for assisting the labourer in making up his housekeeping. Give the labourer his pay in money, and with his house and garden he will be able to live more comfortably, and bring up his family healthfully and vigorously, being supplied with an adequate amount of nourishment. Time would fail were I to enter more minutely into the various bearings of this important subject. This I may say, before leaving the subject, that I have not the slightest doubt but a great deal might be done to improve the diet of the labouring man by the ladies of the district teaching the labourer's wife how to make the best use of the food which a kind Providence has bestowed upon them, as well as pointing out to them that which is most nutritious and within their limited means. A clergyman (eight miles off) assured me that he had seen a piece of uncooked mutton, supplied to a labourer's wife, thrown under the table for the cat to eat. *She did not know how to cook it.*

I would also dwell upon the importance and value, as appears to me, of the allotment system, as not only a means for providing increased necessaries for the working man, by the cultivation of vegetables and other articles of diet, but other beneficial effects are produced in his mind, as a feeling of self-respect and comparative independence, thereby raising him in the social scale. But in addition to this, the cultivation of his little plot of land affords him recreation and amusement when his day's work is done, whereby he is kept from injurious associations and drunken habits in the village or town tavern in which he may reside. I am aware that many esteemed agriculturists, for whose opinion and experience I have the greatest respect, are opposed to the system, and are of opinion that no good is derived by the labouring man from his allotment. But from my own observation in this and other neighbourhoods I have always been impressed with the advantage which the system affords, by the improved condition of the labourer and his house and family. I would not here omit to mention and point out what is, I think, a powerful and efficient means whereby the social status and condition of the labouring man may be improved, more particularly from having now for so many years seen the good effects it has had upon the condition of our industrious mechanic and artizan. I refer to the great friendly societies which have now for so many years advanced and benefited the industrious classes of our beloved country. I firmly believe that the improved condition of that class is mainly attributable to those great societies. If it be a duty according to the highest code of morals to provide for those of our own household, or to "provide things honest in the "sight of all men," it cannot be less a duty to make such provision as the cost of a small sacrifice will ensure for unforeseen events. I would ask, what is more likely to produce in the hearts of all honest men a feeling of self-respect and independence than the ability of his being enabled to provide for his own and his family's maintenance in times of sickness and affliction ? There is no right-minded man but would

feel himself happier and more contented could he realize the fact that, by his own frugality and provident habits, he has, by connecting himself with one or other of those useful institutions, been enabled to secure a sufficient maintenance for himself and family during Nature's distress and decay. All this could be most readily done if they could be induced to lay by say one 6*d.* per week for such a laudable and important purpose. This would afford them, according to their age, 10*s.* or 12*s.* per week in sickness, and at the same time furnish means for a respectable burial in case of death. I would therefore respectfully urge upon you all the incumbent duty of pressing your labourers to connect themselves without delay to one or other of these societies. It is worthy of your consideration whether in making your yearly engagements with your labourers, that their connection with some friendly society should not be imperative, both for their sake and their families, as also for the interest of the employer and ratepayer.

In the discussion which followed the Vice-President (Mr. R. Genge) took exception to some of the remarks respecting the agricultural labourer being overworked. It had been the fashion to make out the calling of the agricultural labourer worse than it really was. He argued that the occupation of the agricultural labourer had much in it that was attractive. In the first place he lived in the purest of atmosphere, and a great part of his existence was spent in the fields, and he enjoyed the beauties of nature. His hours of labour were not long, and his work was not excessive, and on this point he could not at all agree with Dr. Aldridge. There certainly were seasons when extra exertions were necessary to save the crops which Providence bestowed, but on ordinary occasions the labourer began his work at 6 and continued till 8, when he got his breakfast, and then worked as hard as he could until 11, at which time he had half-an-hour for the refreshment he needed. From 1 to 2 he had another hour. Then came the most trying period of the day when the sun was shining hot. He was worked until 4 or half-past 4, when he got his "mammut," or second lunch, after which he was enabled to go on as long as the sun allowed him. He worked till sunset and no longer, so that supposing his day was 14 hours long, he had two hours at least for refreshment and re-invigorating his frame. He did not think that was excessive labour, and did not believe the Factory Act was at all required for the agricultural labourer. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. J. G. Homer, after warmly commending the lecture, said he thought one of the most important points referred to by Dr. Aldridge, was the proper supply of food to the labourer. The allotment system he believed to be of great consequence and almost a necessity to the rural population. He did not mean that a man should have a large extent of land, but merely enough to cultivate during his spare time on summer evenings, whereby he could produce a large quantity of nutritious food and keep a pig at very little cost. He considered a man with a family should not have less than half an acre, which himself and his boys could keep in excellent order. The farm labourers were under a great disadvantage in purchasing their food, as they were obliged to buy at the dearest rate. His men had often mentioned the high price they paid for provisions, and he had told them he could buy the same articles for two-thirds the price; but the fact was they were obliged to go to the small shops, and, under these circumstances, a man with 14*s.* a week was no better off than another with 10*s.* if he could lay out the money to better advantage. Dr. Aldridge had not referred to one disease of the labouring population—the rheumatism, which was caused by their lying down under the hedges when they were warm. The first thing a man did when mowing was to get enough wet grass to lie down upon during the rest of the day, and this was a good bed to get the rheumatism. He did not think the rural population were sufficiently advanced to take charge of the ventilation of their houses. They had windows if they chose to open them, but they very seldom did so, either by day or night.

Mr. C. H. Saunders said he had been much gratified by the lecture, and he agreed with Dr. Aldridge in all he had said, excepting with reference to the overworking. As to the allotment system he thought half an acre would be too much land. His experience showed him that where the people had good gardens and potatoe grounds, if their employers did not manage them the people would not attend to them. He had not much faith in the allotment system, and unless the men were differently disposed from those he had met, he did not think they would cultivate them in the way they would expect.

Mr. J. G. Homer observed that he intended to refer to the system of paying the labourers partly in wheat. 12 months ago he raised his labourers wages from 8*s.* to 10*s.* instead of the wheat, and some of them shortly after asked that the old system should be restored. He refused to comply; but it showed the attachment of the Dorsetshire labourer to the gristing system. He made a calculation the other day by which (with their house) he found they would be paid 12*s.* a week; but he knew they preferred going back to the old system of perquisites.

The Vice-Chairman said he would make a remark he had intended to include in his former observations. He believed it was of the greatest possible benefit to the labourer to have grist, and it was worth at least 2*s.* more a week to him, as they found by experience in eating home-made bread they would get more nourishment than if they had baker's bread, and Dr. Aldridge would doubtless agree that home-made bread was far more suitable to the labourer than what he purchased. Therefore it was far more advantageous to the labourer to get his grist from his employer than to buy his bread at, perhaps, a ½*d.* dearer.

Mr. Andrews inquired what was considered to be the proper quantity of land to be appropriated to the garden of a labourer's cottage? He had heard different quantities advocated.

The Vice-Chairman replied that the quantity should be in proportion to the size of the family. In having cottages built he should consider 30 or 40 perches would be enough for each cottage.

Mr. Whittle said he felt very strongly on the grist system, which he believed was an erroneous one, although he did not suppose any of his friends gave his labourers pinched wheat. (Hear, hear.) He thought if they paid in money rather than in kind it would be better both for the employer and the labourer, and the odium and reproach would not be brought upon the county, of which it was not deserving. He agreed with everything in the lecture except with regard to too much work being put upon the labourer. He could point in contradiction to the ruddy health of the labouring population.

The President (Mr. J. Homer) said that Dr. Aldridge had not been very liberal with regard to the labourer's food, as he had left out meat entirely. The greater part of their labouring men could, if they pleased, have meat in their houses the whole year—at least that was his (the president's) experience. Most of his men fattened two pigs every year, therefore it was their own faults if they had not always meat. With respect to gristing it was a question which had been "carpeted" and talked of very seriously as to whether or not the men of Dorsetshire should persist in it. Himself, and his father before him, during a period of 50 years, had followed it, and he believed if he were to pay his men two or three shillings a week more, instead of grist, they would prefer to go back to the old system. If he were a young man, beginning life again in a county where the system had never been adopted, he should discontinue gristing, because it was generally looked upon in the light of the truck system, and an impression prevailed that the farmers gave their men tailing wheat. It was true it was not the best wheat, but it averaged in his case

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60 lb. a bushel. He had a carter who had been with him 30 or 40 years, and left him about four years ago. He was giving him 9*s.* a week and three bushels of wheat. He went to road work at 12*s.* a week, but he only remained at it one year, when he returned and he asked to be taken back saying he could not live without his grist, and he had continued ever since. He merely mentioned this to show that these men, having their wheat and their fuel found them could not be broken of this method of payment. He would be obliged to get rid of every man at present on his farm if he wished to alter the system. With respect to allotments he had seen it in operation for the last 20 years at Martinstown, where Mr. Sturt had adopted it, and it had answered very well where there was an industrious man who would make the most of his half or quarter of an acre, though latterly there were some who had not cultivated their half-acre allotments as they should have done, therefore Mr. Sturt had divided them into quarter acre portions. He had come into town that day with a man who told him he lived entirely from his half-acre allotment. He paid 40*s.* or 50*s.* a year for his cottage and 13*s.* for the ground. Being asked how he lived he said he and his wife lived entirely from the produce of his half-acre of ground. He bought twelve loads of manure every year, and grew two crops of potatoes, greens, or other vegetables. He also said that he paid his rent every year by his bees, and no man had a more respectable cottage. He merely mentioned this to show what might be made by a man cultivating his half-acre properly. Unless a man had really time to cultivate the half-acre he would be better with a less quantity.

Dr. Aldridge expressed his thanks to the meeting for the kind way in which they had received the imperfect remarks he had brought forward on this very interesting question. He had endeavoured to make them as practical as possible, so as to lead to a useful discussion. Many gentlemen had offered observations on his paper, and the first he noticed was with regard to the over working of the labourer. He had never stated in his lecture that they were overworked. He had merely drawn attention to the subject. Having had some experience of the effects of work among the agricultural population it had struck him oftentimes, not that they do too much work, but rather their work was not equally divided, especially as regarded ploughmen. He had seen where men had been taken from their beds at six and worked till two, without the slighest possible cessation ; that the effect on the tissues was bad and tended to promote disease. He had thought it right to notice that point. In Norfolk the day was equally divided ; persons went home for two hours of rest and to take their meals, and then went on to work again. He would not lessen the amount of labour : he only suggested the advisability of dividing the eight hours' labour into periods of four hours each, with two hours rest for meals. They all knew from personal experience, when they went out partridge shooting on the first of September, how desirable it was to have lunch and how thoroughly it enabled a man to go to work again with renewed vigour. It struck him that some such plan could be conveniently carried out as it was in other counties. It had worked well in Essex and Norfolk. He thought it would be better both for man and horse. He did not wish to intrude his opinion, but it was his duty, in considering this question, to make such suggestions as occurred to him relative to the sanitary and physical condition of the labouring poor. There was another question with respect to home-made bread. He agreed with Mr. Genge that home-made bread was infinitely preferable to the bread sold by the baker, whose object was to make it as white as possible by the introduction of deleterious ingredients, no doubt sacrificing the nutritious particles. Home-made bread was infinitely preferable because it contained a portion of the bran which helped digestion and made the bread more nutritious. He had seen the bread the poor usually had, and it was of a different description ; it was made of pinched corn—he fearlessly made use of the word "pinched corn." He knew that the poor had been supplied with it ; it was immature corn that had run through the sieve ; it was like the "third run" in a brewery. He thought it was unwise and prejudicial in every way that this should be so, for the nutriment of the poor so much depended upon the bread they eat. As to meat, Mr. Homer said they had meat all the year at Martinstown—he suspected that Martinstown was an exception to the general rule. (Laughter.) He did not see it in his rounds. If the poor had meat it was not the most nutritious. They usually had pork, which was about the worst sort of meat they could have. Therefore he urged upon employers the necessity of their labourers being supplied with the best possible wheat, whereby the best possible bread could be made. He believed the condition of the agricultural labourer in Dorsetshire had been grossly misrepresented. He believed the labourer was no worse off than in other counties. The question of perquisites had been already mooted and the public are alive to it, and he thought if the club took the initiative and paid their labourers in money instead of in kind they would not have the reproach cast upon them to which they were constantly exposed.

With respect to cottages there were some in that neighbourhood very bad, some belonging to some of their best landed proprietors. He knew a cottage not half so large as the room they were in, without ceiling or floor and containing 8 or 10 persons, with a window certainly a foot square but without the possibility of being opened, the consequence being fever among the inmates. In Fordington the cottages were very bad. He ventured to say they would not fat their animals in such places—they would think them too bad even for that—and yet they were occupied by families of five or six individuals. In many of these cottages one could not stand upright, and the smoke, dirt, and filth altogether made a state of things not to be equalled in St. Giles'. He thought it was high time some notice should be taken of this matter.

A large amount of *fatal disease has been for many years the deplorable consequences*,—in fact Fordington has been a hotbed for the generation of the most frightful phases of disease. Cholera, small-pox, typhus, and typhoid fevers have many times *almost* decimated the parish as a consequence of the filthy and wretched dwellings of the poor.

6. The *Rev. W. Barnes, B.D.*, rector of Came, near Dorchester, and author of "Poems in the Dorset Dialect," &c.

It may be allowed that young boys would be none the worse for work of no greater strain or sameness of strain on their body and limbs than that of the hard games which they follow of their own will ; but the evils of continuous and hard daily work may be those of an overweighting of their young and yielding bones and an overstraining of their half-strung muscles with a too great length of stedfast work, or a too great sameness of limb action, so that whereas in the toil of play all limbs and muscles are evenly worked and strengthened, yet in hard and long lasting daily work some may be overstrained and marred.

That a boy may become, and be for a working life, a man of well-shapen and readily working body, he should have (I suppose) a nearly even action of all his limbs and muscles, and it is an evil of a great division of labour, that it often holds a man to one kind of work of one or of a few of his limbs, while the others are less or not at all worked, or that it holds him too long in one posture, or in an unhandy one, or in an unhealthy place, so that the reaction of his work unchecked by the counteraction of timely change, mars at last the shape and action and health of the whole body, and the man often carries, in his very shape, the tokens of his calling. And the sameness or overhardness of toil will mar the young and yielding bones and muscles of a child sooner than the set ones of full grown men.

I can see in a great gathering of labourers and farmers at a fair, that the young farmers are, in the main, finer and more shapely men, and men of a better bodily carriage, than are the often very ungainly, if not stunted, young labourers. It may be said, and allowed that the young farmers are of finer size from better food; but this is an evil worthy of all thought, that our labourers' children are so far underfed that they are stunted, and live on to take the heavy work of the land with less than man's full might.

The worse forms and less easy limb play of the labourers, however, must, I think, be too often imputed to a too early call to settled hard work.

I have thought that the gain of a year's too early labour is the loss of more than twice as much at the other—the later end of life—and that the community in the end always loses by the overheavy and overmuch labour of the working man.

Boys are sent out to work so very young under two forces:—

1st. The pinch of need, as on a father with four, five, or six children, and only his own two hands to feed and clothe them, so that as soon as the eldest can earn a shilling or two for the wants of the house, he must earn it, or else all the household must become less fully fed and worse clad.

2nd. The other force is that of the employer's will, that the boy shall go to work or that the father shall be dismissed, since there are jobs and kinds of work to which, if there were no boys to take them at their low pay, men must be put at much higher wages, and in such a case it is a gain to the employers that the boy should be put as high in the scale of heavier work as his powers can reach, and thence may come the evil of the overworked and marred boy and man.

Though small boys may very well be put to lighter work of hand and foot, such as bird-keeping and wardships of animals, and the carrying of fittingly light weights, and the handling of lighter tools, yet I believe it would be a great blessing to the poor, and in the end a gain to the community itself, if the two forces of which I have spoken could be so met without injustice to the master or the starving of the poor household, that the young body could be allowed to ripen to greater hardness before it were put to its hard work, and that the boy may be longer at school.

Women mostly go out to field work under the same two forces that take out the little boys, the want of earnings beyond the husband's wages, and the will of the master, who often hires a man with the condition that his wife shall go to field work whenever she is wanted. Some women choose to go afield, but many others go out only under a very unwelcome compulsion.

On several grounds I am sorry to see women at regular work in the field, otherwise than at haymaking and harvest. I have known children locked up in the house while their mother was out at work, and in such a case the mother would come home in the evening and most likely find crockery smashed, clothes torn, and furniture broken, with tokens of quarrels, and the house in disorder, while the children had missed the training of a mother's words and care.

With these losses and evils, as well as with the faster wear of shoes and other clothing, it is allowed by most mothers that even if a neighbour overwatches their children they do not gain much, if anything, by their field earnings. I think, moreover, that at outdoor work in which women become wet legged, from wet skirts, as among wet turnips, they sometimes take chills which leave ulcerated legs.

A wife without any child may, if she will, go to field work, though even in this case, as in others, there will most likely be a loss of evening comfort to the husband, who is less likely to come home to a clean hearth and his hearth chair by a clear bit of fire, and a ready evening meal, or in short, to a house awaiting his weary step with every little comfort it can afford.

As to bigger girls a little field work may be to them physically good, but the evil of it with them, and more or less with all women, is that it is mostly a very bad school of refinement, and from the too often coarse talk of the men, tends to tarnish the purity of their minds and feelings, and to make them "mannishly" coarse, and if the woman, one of whose missions is to refine the man, be made as coarse as himself, how can she refine him.

Cottage.—The great want for the improvement of the life and mind of the poor landsfolk is that of better cottages and of more of them.

The evils of very bad hovels may be of several kinds, and all of them of great weight against bodily health and improvement of mind.

One most awful evil is the want of rooms, so that there is a most unbecoming and pernicious nearness, not to say openness, of sex to sex in their bed rest, an evil to which we can hardly look in thought without seeing its taint on the mind.

Another evil is that of the overcrowding or closeness of rooms in which the working man dozes in unwholesome air, and rises only half refreshed, and although not ill, yet not in the sprightliness of high health and full strength. The house may be so bad in its floor, walls, or timbers that the housewife hopelessly baffled in her will to keep it clean and tidy, at last acquiesces in uncleanness and falls into a deadness of mind to dirt.

Where houses are too few for the hands that are wanted for the work on the lands, there comes one of two evils, either "strappers" come into the parish as workmen, and lodge in the overcrowded houses in the bad way of which I have spoken, or men come every day to work from some neighbouring parish, and whereas they rise in the morning with only their days strength, and spend a good share of it in reaching their work, so the master gets less than their full day's work, so if the man yet puts forth a full day's strength some of it is borrowed from tomorrow, and he becomes outworn before his time.

In either case the workman or the master is the worse for the want of a house, and it may be that the community is a loser by the man's shortened reach of working years.

I know of no other so good means of improvement of the tone of life with the poor as a good instead of a very bad cottage.

Some may look for too early results from improved dwellings, and may be ready to believe from some very short trial, that the slack housewives from dirty houses will always make a good house like the bad one.

The great good of the change may be seen in the generation of better housed children. The elders with a life settled to the hopeless hindrances of the bad hovel may not at once take a high tone of cleanliness, but it will be mostly caught up, like fashion, by the upgrowing daughters, and I have seen the tokens of a higher feeling within even four or five years.

I have seen appear around the rather lately built good house the well trained climbing plant blooming by the wall, and a bit of ground before the doors turfed into a tiny lawn, with a flower-bed in which the blooms were tied to sticks peeled to whiteness, and a housewife who had come this spring from a good house to a dirty hovel with a floor of rough stones said to me, "Oh! I have not relished a bit of "food since I have been in this dirty place. If I had "seen it before my husband was hired, I would not "have come into it."

It is a hardship to the labourers that all the cottages should be let with the farm. It opens room for cases of great tyranny on the part of the employer, and as often keeps the houses in a bad state of repair.

From my knowledge, such as it may be, though it cannot be very small, of the qualities of the mind which mark the West English landsfolk, I believe that while there are bad people among them as among all other men, the would, as they now do, very readily rise in life and feeling, wherever they could find the way of improvement.

I have seen improvements among the poor. They

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are better clad than they formerly were, and in the matter of food they no longer eat as they eat formerly in hard times, barley instead of wheat flour; but they have not, I think, risen in welfare at the rate of ranks above them, meat too seldom reaches their board, and when bread is dear, they are sorely pinched for clothing with food.

A good garden is a great help to them, and would be greater if farmers would all as many will not allow their labourers to keep a pig.

By the disappearance of small holdings of land, or of orchards, or rights of common, and the upmaking of great farms, a very discouraging gap has been made between the farmer and the labourer.

Formerly in a part of Blackmore where the holders of the common-side cottages with orchards could keep a cow on the common and in the orchard, if one of them was unhappily on the parish, his neighbours looked down upon him as fallen below their standing, but now I am fearful that the people of such places begin to look on the law relief as a right for which they may apply with as much honour as wages.

If the more national burdens, which are now bound up under a false name with the poor rate, could be sundered from it, I believe that the land poor might be nearly kept in their sickness and infirmity by the church through her weekly offertory, to which the healthy poor would very freely give. In the offertories of three Sundays I have lately received 7*s.* in coppers from the poor of this village. (Population 125.)

The Union Chargeability Act which was meant for the good of the poor, has put them in a worse than their former plight, as the employer now recognizes no duty towards his good labourer, but if he is ill for a week or two, he sends him off to the union, with some such words as, "I cannot pay two ways, to the "union for the man, and to the man himself," and now when a man has spent the strength of his whole life on the land of a parish, the land as soon as his strength is spent cast him off as an incumbrance.

What is wanted for the land labourer is a "rung" in the ladder of rural life, by which he may hope to raise himself by his industry towards a higher position. He cannot now hope ever to step from day labour to farming. The smallest of our now great farms is beyond his wildest hope, and so he toils without the hope that has led on the poor lad in commercial work to the honourable estate of the high risen merchant.

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7. A meeting of the Blandford board of guardians was held on Saturday October 31st, when the Hon. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, attended to confer with the guardians upon the subjects comprised within the inquiry.

In the absence of the Rev. R. Farquharson, Mr. Malachi Fisher took the chair. There were present the Revs. J. Watts, T. H. House, A. W. Maunsell, and Lord S. G. Osborne; H. J. Bower, Esq., J. C. Mansell, Esq., Messrs. G. Hill, W. Fookes, J. Keynes, R. Roper, R. Fookes, John E. Tory, and 11 others. In the discussion which took place one of the guardians deprecated any interference. The less education labourers have the better. Whenever a boy can earn 2*s.* he ought to go to work. Some of his best men were uneducated. There was a school in his parish to which he did not subscribe, as he considered it a landlord's question. These remarks were received with some applause, and a discussion took place, during which the effect of education in withdrawing children for agricultural work was remarked on, and compulsory school attendance and rates were strongly condemned.

The employment of females was then discussed. Several gentlemen present were large employers of women, but it was stated that few young girls worked in the fields owing to the "gloving."

It was stated that two women were employed with every threshing machine. One guardian mentioned a case in his parish where a woman had lost a limb in this way. Another stated that within his recollection only four accidents had occurred in his neighbourhood. Others considered it less dangerous on a steam than on a horse machine. Ultimately the following resolutions were carried, one guardian declining to vote:

"That the board fully acknowledge the value of good early education afforded to the children of agricultural labourers.

"That they have the satisfaction of finding that there are few (if any) parishes in this union which do not already afford to such children every facility to be so educated.

"That they will be most ready always to promote in the labouring poor a desire to avail themselves of the benefits of education for their children.

"That with regard to the employment of young females in agricultural labour, they will gladly take into consideration any measures which may approve themselves as necessary to prevent moral or physical evil from such employment, where such evil can be shown to exist."

8. On Saturday, November 14th, some of the leading employers of labour in the neighbourhood of Dorchester met at the Antelope Hotel to confer with the Hon. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, on the subject of the employment of children, &c.

Among those present were Mr. J. G. Homer (chairman of Farmers' Club), Mr. R. Genge of Waterson, Mr. T. Roper of Little Bredy, Mr. Levi Groves of Knighton, Mr. T. H. Saunders of Watercombe, Mr. J. Pope of Symondsbury, Mr. J. A. Pope of Sutton, Mr. A. L. Cooper of Whitcombe, &c.

After some discussion, the following statement was unanimously agreed to:—

"That the employers of labour of this neighbourhood could dispense with the labour of boys up to 10 years of age, but that the loss of the earnings would be too serious to the family for them to be dispensed with entirely.

"That it would be better for the employers to have men with a better education than the men now have, and that they would wish to see boys kept at school at part up to 10 years of age, or taught to read, write, and do a little arithmetic."

9. Opinion forwarded by the Poole Board of Guardians, January 4, 1869.

1. Very few children are employed in agricultural labour before the age of 10 years.

2. Women and girls are only employed during the summer in haymaking and harvest.

3. The hours of employment for women and children are generally from 8 to 5, the distance from their homes would not usually exceed one mile.

4. Health generally good. Education under the superintendence of the minister of the parish, and the schools are well attended in each parish in the union.

In the out parishes garden ground varying from 20 perches to half an acre is attached to each house, and in the town allotments are let to all persons requiring the same.

10. Statement by the wife of a shepherd living in a cottage on a farm in a "close" parish in the neighbourhood of Blandford.

I have lived there for 27 or 28 years, I am not sure which. I have had 12 children that lived. There are seven living at home with me now. My second boy was only 7 when he went out to work. He was "bird-keeping." I can't remember whether he had 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week when he first went. Some of them did not go so young; but when a boy goes out he most times leaves school altogether. Now and then he goes back in the winter, but they don't generally allow it in the school.

We don't think it right for the girls to go out on the farm. We kept them at home at anything when they could earn 6*d.*, but not in the fields. As my boys got bigger they went on living at home. They were put to go with the sheep between 10 and 11 years old. They'd first get 2*s.*, and 3*d.* more for working on Sundays. At harvest, one boy has to stay with the sheep, the others go to help on the harvest.

None of my sons do piecework; none of them do it at harvest. They let some of them do it that can't trust to do a good day's work.

They don't get their full pay till they get to be 19. There's our J——, he's 19, and he gets 8*s.* 6*d.* a week; next time he'll be raised, and will get 9*s.* My eldest boy is the carter; he gets 9*s.* and a house, and his beer allowance; he's 27 or 28, I can't remember which. They get beer for five months, 2*d.* a day the first month, 4*d.* the next three (from June to August), and 2*d.* the last month. Most of the farmers give money now; a little lad will get it according to his wages, so much to the shilling. [N.B.—If A., with 9*s.* a week, gets 4*d.* a day for beer, B., with 2*s.* 3*d.*, will get 1*d.*—E. S.] When he goes a journey, he gets 6*d.* They take it in turns to go. He doesn't gain much by the journey, because the money's for him to spend on the way.

My husband is the shepherd. He has 10*s.* a week and the house, because he works on Sundays. He has 1*l.* at harvest, and 2*l.* at lambing (but he has to buy fuel at lambing, sometimes he doesn't go to bed for a night or two); he has nothing extra for the lambs he saves. If we had to pay rent for a house we shouldn't be so well off, but then my husband has to go to work at all times, early and late. We have no "tailing corn" now; we may have a sack of wheat, but we have to pay market price for it. My husband has to find his own tools, even his shears for clipping; they all have to buy their tools; they say they used to be found; hooks for hay-making were not. I have known our boys lay out 9*s.* in tools.

What potato ground we have is close to the house; it's more than 30 long, but 'taters, 'taters, every year, they don't turn out very much. We can't afford to buy any more potatoes; when our's are out we have to do without them. I have seven at home with me now. Last winter we got but a very little after we'd had our bread. We'd had a bag of flour, we gave 3*l.* for it; that would last about three weeks. Shoes is very dear; our little children's is 7*s.* or 8*s.*, a man's is 12*s.* 6*d.*; one of my boys doesn't wear out above one pair in the year, but they must be proper good ones. I expect they'd wear them right out, and they would'nt last without being soled and mended. That would be when they are shepherds' lads, after that they'd were very much quicker.

We don't have a bit of butchers' meat not for half a year, not from Christmas to Christmas; we sometimes get a bit of mutton at 3*d.* the lb., when a giddy sheep is killed on the farm; it is good when sticked in time; sometimes we buy a bit at Christmas. We have a pig; sometimes we kill, perhaps, two in the year. We live on potatoes, bread, and pig-meat, and are very thankful if we can get a bit of pig-meat; we often sit down to dry bread. For harvest dinner we send out some boiled potatoes, a bit of cabbage, and we put a bit of fat to the potatoes. I don't know that butchers' meat ever goes out to the harvest field. They drink cocoa at harvest. We never have a bit of milk. They used to have what they called chickory, and we drinked a good bit of it. But now it seems to have gone away. In the evening they sit down to what we've got, sometimes a bit of bread; sometimes a bit of bread, cheese, and butter. They are very fond of butter. They drink tea; we give 6*d.* and 8*d.* for a quarter of a pound of tea.

We buy our firewood; we don't have even the carriage given us. Sometimes our wood will come to 2*l.* for the winter. We had it all drawn for a few years, but somehow it is not hauled for any one now. We have to keep up a fire to dry their things at night, sometimes we have to keep it up all the night through. We have wood mostly; we get a little coal through the coal club, I have sometimes got a bit besides. We get our candles at 6*d.* a lb.; in the winter that would last a week, they have to get up by candle light.

We sometimes pay the shoes when we get the lambing money; at the harvest time, we have *that* money for the fuel. The lambing won't pay the shoes; we should want it twice a year for that.

The dearest thing we did have was the bread; we did not have enough with five loaves a day, when I didn't bake. The clothes was not so much. When the lads was little, they hadn't a second jacket; as they got on they give me so much and buy their own clothes.

We have three girls at home, the two eldest do a little "gloving;" I used to try to earn a good bit at "buttoning" when we was first married, but the "gloving" is not so good; if they came to sit at it all day, they might perhaps earn 15*d.* a week. It's a help to buy a little of their clothes, and shoes, and such like. When we used to do "buttoning," and take it down, we used to get it half in money, and half in "truck," as we used to call it; now with the "gloving," we don't have it in this way.

Our third bedroom was put up the summer before last. Before that time, we had only two, and we used all of us to sleep in them; at one time there were 13 or 14 of us. One of them is a tidyish room; in the other the door only opened for you to go in sideways. Downstairs we have only one room with a fireplace, and we have to dry all the wet clothes, and sit there too.

We have one blanket that was given us. We had one that we got from a man who came round; we paid for it by 1*s.* a fortnight, we can't get enough money at one time to buy one.

I have had five sons working at once on the farm, and living at home. The smallest would be getting 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. When they were all in their best work, I don't suppose we could stand very well if two of them had been ill for a fortnight, even in a good year. We should have to go for help.

My second boy wasn't a good scholar when he was here, he went to work so early. He's gone to a powder magazine to work (at Portsmouth.) He sent for ——— (another son) to come to him too, because he thought he'd be better than he was at the farm. He gets 13*s.* a week, and has to pay for lodging. They don't seem so much better off, but you've no need to work so much, and don't wear out so many clothes. Mr. ——— (the employer) is a very good man, but farm chaps work so hard that they might as soon be "transports." They don't like being "drove about" as they are at farm work; they don't know what sort of work they may be put to. It's slavish work, and I've heard many of the people say they would go away if they could.

One of my sons is gone to America; and there's our Jim, he says he'd be away too, if it wasn't for his bad leg. They like to be good scholars, because it helps them to go away.

11. Statement of the wife of an ordinary labourer.

My husband worked 17 years for one master in the neighbourhood of Bridport before we came here. We have brought up 10 children, and have never had sixpence from the parish. His wages there were 9*s.*, and we had 1*s.* 9*d.* to pay for rent. But we heard it was large farms in this country, and we could all work together, so we came here; that is 13 years ago.

My husband has 8*s.* a week and his cottage and garden. We mayn't keep a pig, but instead of this master gives us 6*d.* a week for the wash. Some of them will let their men have a pig, and trust them till it gets fat, and then take half of it to pay for it, and for the food to fatten it.

Near Bridport we'd have the "gristing" of the farmer, and he'd keep it back out of our wages. He'd charge us the market price for it. Here we pay 1*l.* a sack for flour. We have it ground for 2*s.* Sometimes they let the miller take some of it for grinding. They will take 7lb. out of a bushel. We do not think always that we get the flour back of the corn we sent. We bake our own bread.

Sometimes if anything happens, master 's glad to sell us some of the meat. In the last three years we have got perhaps seven or eight bits in this way. We have bought a bit at Christmas, when the

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children are here. We buy a little pig meat; we use it with the potatoes; we don't have a dish of pig by itself. At harvest we eat some cheese, but not at any other time. We don't often get potatoes. When we'd 10 at home we couldn't live on the bread we could buy. We'd get a little rice if the potatoes wasn't good. We could make a meal a day off rice. We'd buy a few peas; my husband could never eat barley.

My children never used to drink much tea. I'd mix them a little broth (bread, hot water, pepper, and salt). At harvest and haytime we get money to buy cider.

We can buy wood at 8*s.* the hundred. Mr. —— will give us furze, but we have to cut it.

Clothing's cheaper than it was. We've bought two blankets here; my husband got them at a sale very low. We didn't have none before.

My girls worked in the fields before I got them places; they went out with me. I could go now if I liked. I used to get 8*d.* a day, and if I went out the whole harvest Mr. —— would give me 10*s.* more.

I have three boys at home. The eldest is 19; he's carter, and gets 8*s.* a week. He got this since turnip hoeing. He get's 16*s.* at harvest, and beer. He takes a pair of horses.

The boy of 17 does odd jobs about the farm; he does as much as a man. I suppose he can lift a sack of wheat. He gets 7*s.* He has not had this a twelvemonth. He never has piecework.

My youngest eats as much as his father; he's 10, and gets 3*s.* 6*d.* I never had anything from the parish my whole life. My husband was ill about a fortnight, and the doctor's bill was 7*l.* 1*s.* We paid it by degrees.

PIMPERNE.

Population - 495.

12. *Rev. W. Bury*, rector.—In spite of the prevailing wages here being only 9*s.* a week in money, exclusive of piecework, it is a very prosperous place, as any industrious woman can get a great deal of washing from Blandford to do; therefore I do not think that being required to keep their children rather longer from work would be a hardship here. Boys from 8 to 10 are employed by the farmers, and it is very unusual to keep any boy after 10. I believe that for this parish, which all belongs to Lord Portman, the best plan would be that the farmer should not be allowed to employ a boy till he can read and write, or till he is a certain age. The present results are not satisfactory. Sometimes we have boys of 13 or 14 coming to our night school, and being taught their letters again, because they have forgotten what they learnt. One difficulty now is that the parents have no control over the children when they begin to grow up and earn a little money.

Girls we can keep at school till 12 or 13. There is a little gloving then for them to do, and this rather keeps them away from service.

Almost all the cottages here have been replaced by new ones. Two have been built of wood, the rest of brick and flint, by Lord Portman. The former are certainly very nice, and are very warm and comfortable. The rent is 1*s.* a week. All have small gardens and allotments besides. In the latter ploughing has crept in, and I regret it because it does away with some of the moral effect of these bits of land. Any man who is too busy to attend to his plot, can afford to pay a man to do so for him. The only persons you feel a difficulty about are the widows.

STOURPAINE.

Population - 658.

13. *Rev. R. R. Watts*, vicar.—"Women and girls "are not very regularly employed here in field work, "and all such employment tends to make them "coarse in manners and language, and compel "them to keep the elder children at home to look "after the younger. A few go 'machining' and "'couching,' but the greater number do not work "regularly in the fields. There is a great deal of "knitting and gloving done in the parish, which is a "great hindrance to the school, as the girls are taken "away early to work, even at 10 or 11 years of age. "They work long hours, and get very little profit by "it. Another special hindrance in the case of the "boys is the large quantity of allotment ground. "Many of them are taken away from the school "for weeks at a time to attend to the cultivation of "the allotments, and this makes it very difficult to "maintain anything like uniform progress. The "result is that there is a great deal of ignorance in "the parish. In my Sunday class I find many of the "lads have great difficulty in reading the Bible intelligently, and it is plain that such education is useless, "if not worse. The allotment ground is, however, a "very great benefit, as few of the cottages have "gardens of any size, and is the only means by "which some of the families are able to pay their "rents and supply their household wants. The "wages are lower here than in some of the parishes "round, and in consequence of a good deal of the "cottage property being either lifehold or belonging "to owners of small means who are not particular "about their tenants, this parish is the refuge for "those who are turned adrift from other parishes, "and the result is irregular employment in winter. "A large number of persons are employed in the "neighbouring parishes of Durweston and Bryanston, "because there is not sufficient cottage accommodation there; but for educational purposes, and in "times of sickness, they are thrown upon this parish. "To keep the children away from work till 11 or 12 "years of age would be a great hardship, but I believe "that if some pressure could be put upon the parents "not to let their children be employed till at least "10 years of age, or till they can read and write, they "would easily find the means of doing so. A good "many children are seldom or ever sent to school, "and mainly through bad management and indifference. I don't think that the school payment is any "hindrance.

"The cottages are very bad. Many families have "not more than two bedrooms, some not more than "one. The bedroom accommodation generally is "very bad; it has a demoralizing effect on the young "people. Many of the cottages are let at high rents, "and have no garden or outlet, but there is a gradual improvement where the cottages fall into Lord "Rivers's hands. As I said before, the great evil of "the place is the existence of so many tenements "belonging to owners of small means, who cannot "afford to keep their cottages in good repair, and are "obliged to exact a high rent.

"I do not think that the employment of women "and children in field work is *excessive*, or that the "results are necessarily more demoralizing than home "work. I believe that much evil may be traced to "the *sedentary* life of knitting and gloving. Wages "are low, but there are many advantages which are "received by a steady labouring man which are not "reckoned under the head of wages, and the fact is "certain that many families do manage to live respectably, and to send their children regularly to "school. The great drawbacks of this parish are "the number of out-parishioners driven into it, and "the miserable state of so many of the cottages. I "should wish to see a gentle pressure put upon "parents to send their children more regularly to "school between the ages of 6 and 10, and I think "then much might be done, and this would best be "done voluntarily by the employer of labour; but if "this is impossible, I think some form of certificate that "a child can read intelligibly, and write legibly, might "fairly be required before they were allowed to be "taken into regular employment. Night schools "might then be made much more useful than they "are now, when very often the time is taken up with "teaching the very elements of reading and writing "and arithmetic. At the present moment I have "three big boys who have had to learn their letters

" and spell monosyllables, requiring in consequence " almost the undivided attention of a teacher if they " are to make any progress, and others who might be " making progress are hindered."

WHITECHURCH.

Population - 554.

MILBORNE ST. ANDREW.

Population - 647.

14. *John C. Mansel, Esq.*, Longthorns, Milborne St. Andrew, landowner and magistrate.—In these parishes the boys are usually taken from school at the age of 10 and 11. Indeed, when a boy can earn about 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* a week, it is hard for the parent to forego such an acquisition to his income. As there is some danger that the boys might forget what they have learnt at school, we endeavour to obviate it by a night school in each parish, and we hope to have a special master at Milborne next year during the winter months; three nights for the adults, and three nights for the boys.

Secondly, we have endeavoured by the establishment of reading rooms in both parishes, to enable the lads to keep up the advantage of their school education. These reading rooms are now firmly established.

As soon as they were started we handed them over to the sole management of the working men, which is in my opinion the secret of their success. At Whitechurch we began in 1864 with 39 members, of whom 10 were real agricultural labourers; now we have 61 out of a population of 554. The average daily attendance in 1867 was 25. At Milborne, which is managed on the same principles, the average was 19 out of a population of 647. In both there are a certain number of honorary members, but now the annual surplus exceeds their subscription, so that the room may be said to be self-supporting.

Among the rules made by themselves is the prohibition of smoking, and of course of drinking beer or spirituous liquors. No rent is paid. Mr. Michel built the rooms in both parishes for this special purpose.

To the men employed in the Whatcombe estate I pay 10*s.* a week. The ordinary rate among the farmers is probably 9*s.* a week. Then they give 1*l.* for harvest and oftentimes piecework (this latter amounts to an average addition of 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week per annum). Some give also 'grist,' or wheat at 5*s.* per bushel, irrespective of the market price. The quantity allowed is in proportion to the working portion of the family, so that a labourer who has a son or more in his master's employment is entitled to more "grist." Beer is also given for certain kinds of labour, such as reaping, mowing, and thrashing, turnip hoeing, &c. &c. Several farmers in this neighbourhood give their men money instead, which is found to have a most favourable result and does away with much excess of drinking. I have adopted this plan, also, as well as giving the men harvest money.

Instead of "grist" I give a quarterly payment varying with the average price of wheat during the previous quarter until it reaches a 5*s.* level.

15. *Mr. Henry Fookes*, farmer, Whitchurch, chairman of Blandford Farmers' Club.—In my village, which is a favoured one, we have some difficulty in getting women to go to work. They are so much wanted for household work, &c. that they do not go to the fields. But in other villages round many more go. In some cases I know farms where 10 or 14 women are employed. Sometimes they go with threshing machines, but on account of the danger I never think this a fit employment.

We never employ girls; boys seldom before 9, unless the father wishes it; and in the winter time we want no boy till he can stand the weather. This would be about 10 or 11 years old, but it all depends whether a family is well off or not, because at task work, such as turnip singling, &c., a father will take very young boys or girls to help him. My weeding is all done by boys from the reformatory which is in my parish. A man from there will bring 30 of them at a time to reap, or tie up oats, or weed. I pay them, taking big and little together, at the rate of 1*d.* per hour. Boys generally start at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and earn 6*d.* a week more each year. At 15 a good boy is worth 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. We never lodge and board any of them; that custom has quite gone out here.

I think it doubtful how far it is an advantage to have cottages on the farm away from the village. My shepherd complains very much of being one and a half miles away from the school.

We never allow liquor now, and never have the men drunk on the premises. Some farmers give the men a hogshead of cider a year to take home. I give half a hogshead of ale for a harvest of 24 days, or if they prefer not to take it I give them 10*d.* a day.

16. *Miss Kington*, schoolmistress.—The attendance of the girls is much affected by "gloving" and "knitting," and not at all by field work. We allow knitting to be done one day a week in school. I believe that there are no families here that do not send their children a little. Some come three miles from an outlying hamlet and are among the most regular. Indeed, all the children coming from the hamlets are more regular and give less trouble than the girls from the village.

I give lessons to all girls over 12 in the theory of cooking, cleaning a house, and so on. I have not found it possible to teach it them practically, though I tried the plan at Ilfracombe. We had no one to buy what we cooked.

[The girls stayed in some cases till 14 or 15 years old at school. The boys apparently left school by the time they were 10 years of age. There was a separate master for them. At Milborne St. Andrew the mistress said the boys all left before 10. Only three in her school over that age. Girls stayed rather later, but left very early for service.]

STURMINSTER MARSHALL.

17. *The Rev. C. Kegan Paul*, vicar.—"Few boys " stay at the day school after 8." [In November 1868 there were only six of this class over 7.—E. S.] "The " majority begin farm labours at that age, some much " earlier, even at 5 years old.

" Of the five principal employers in this village, " two are giving 10*s.* a week to their labourers, three " are giving 9*s.* a week; the latter give a few advan- " tages. A man on full wages pays his mother 5*s.* a " week for food and lodging, if he lives at home. If " he lives in lodgings, he generally pays about 1*s.* 3*d.* " to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for lodging, and with washing and " food spends about 6*s.* a week."

The names following are taken at random from the list of those on the books of the night school. All are farm labourers.

Names.	Age.	State of Education.	Whether living at Home or in Lodgings.	Wages.
				s. *d.*
1 -	17	Imp. -	H.	9 0
2 -	19	R. W. -	H.	9 0
3 -	18	Imp. -	H.	9 0
4 -	16	None -	H.	5 0
5 -	17	R. W. -	H.	7 0
6 -	16	Well -	L.	5 0
7 -	19	Imp. -	H.	8 0
8 -	16	Well -	H.	7 0
9 -	14	Well -	H.	6 6
10 -	18	Very imp. -	L.	9 0
11 -	20	R. W. -	H.	—
12 -	13	R. W. -	H.	3 0
13 -	13	Fair -	H.	2 0
14 -	17	R. W. -	L.	5 0

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Names.	Age.	State of Education.	Whether living at Home or in Lodgings.	Wages.
				s. d.
15 -	14	Well -	H.	2 6
16 -	15	None -	H.	5 0
17 -	21	R. W. -	H.	9 0
18 -	17	Imp. -	H.	7 0
19 -	16	None -	H.	6 0
20 -	13	Very imp. -	H.	4 0
21 -	16	Imp. -	H.	5 0
22 -	25	Very imp. -	L.	10 0
23 -	17	R. W. -	H.	7 0
24 -	19	Well -	H.	8 0
25 -	15	Imp. -	H.	5 0
26 -	15	R. W. -	H.	3 6

[The young men above 17 average only 8*s.* a week. —E. S.]

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18. In Answer to a Further Inquiry as to Early Employment, Mr. Paul writes, Feb. 2, 1869.

1. There is at present no boy in my school above the age of 9, except under exceptional circumstances. The four who are above that age are (1,) the son of a gamekeeper who has no other children ; (2,) a cripple ; (3,) grandson of a carpenter who has adopted him ; (4,) a servant of an old lady who sends him half time.

2. I take my list of candidates at the last confirmation, and find that 17 candidates (sons of labourers, and labourers themselves) were all unable to read tolerably, having all gone to work at ages varying from six to nine years. Only one of those, who was a labourer's son, had stayed till he was 10. The 17 were my only candidates from the strictly labouring class.

3. I have to day called at five labourers' cottages who are average specimens. I have avoided calling at those which I knew were exceptional cases, either from great poverty or great carelessness, and as I walked through the village, took the fairest I could select.

The result is as follows, the facts being given me by the mothers :—

Names.	*Ages at which they began regular work.*
Singleton, John -	- 8
,, Charles -	- 8
,, William -	- 9
,, Arthur -	- 9

The father is a carter and they *wish* to keep the children at school; Willie and Arthur were kept at my earnest advice against pressure from the master, but the parents were at last obliged to give in.

James, Harry - - - 5

Son of a shepherd, he has never been at school, is *regularly* with his father in all weathers, and has been so all the winter ; he is sharp and useful, and will not be six till next August ; he is the eldest child of this family.

Henley, William - - 10
,, George - - 10

The husband, though a labourer, has at odd times acted as groom, and has usually earned higher wages than the average ; the mother an exceptionally tidy active woman.

Carter, Fred - - - 5
,, Harry - - 7

The mother made a sort of excuse for not having sent Harry to work earlier, because he was delicate, and had such a bad stammer.

Courage, George - - 10
,, William - - 8
,, Charles - - 9
,, Eli - - - 7

The elder of these boys was kept at school longer than he would have been at the persuasion of the curate. He was an exceptionally good, painstaking, clever boy, is now 21, and has quite risen out of the labourer class, as have Charles and Eli to some extent, both of whom, as George, have left the parish.

The two children of 5 I have specified are by no means the only ones who have been working since that age. But I think these four cases fairly represent the state of the case.

You will understand I have given the age at the commencement of *continuous* work ; nearly all these boys had previously led horses in the hay and harvest time.

19. The following passage is from an article in the Theological Review (Jan. 1868) by the Rev. C. K. Paul.

The children are removed from school by a pressure their parents are unable to resist, at the very time when first their teaching becomes useful to them. Wages are so low, that a man with children above 8 years old is glad of the few shillings which may be earned by them, and the employer of labour insists on these boys being sent into the fields, even if the parents would willingly make an effort to keep them at school. The farmer finds it pays him well to get two boys who, under a man, will do a man's work, but whose combined work costs less than an able-bodied man's wages.

And the boys so hurried off to the fields soon forget the little they have learned at school. We have known many lads, not without intelligence, attending a night school when they reached the age of 16 who have had to take up again their learning almost where it was begun at the age of 6. The want of use, and hard drudgery, in early years, have blotted out all that had been acquired between the ages of 6 and 9.

Night and Sunday schools are but inadequate palliatives of a system which keeps the child of the average labourer in a state of crass ignorance to minister to sordid greed.

MILTON ABBAS.

Population - 1,014.

20. *Rev. R. Roberts*, vicar. — We never reckon on keeping the boys at school here much after 9. We think we do well if we can. Many farmers hire their men in consequence of their large families, and then very young boys must go to work. Some of 7 or 8 "keep" horses in a field during the late spring and summer. You see boys of the same age constantly employed with horses. In hay harvest you see them leading a waggon with two horses in narrow lanes and under circumstances where it seems scarcely safe to trust such young lads ; I never remember any accidents to have occurred, nevertheless.

My night school was started 25 years ago at the request of some of the young men of the village, and among the 60 scholars who then attended nearly one-third were married men. I do not think that men of that age would be likely to attend to the same extent when the night school is conducted by the schoolmaster alone. I look to the night school as the great means of keeping up education.

The number of boys and lads employed on our farms amounts to 30 or 35. 12 women and grown-up girls work all the year in the fields.

Glove-making with machines was introduced here by Baron Hambro' 16 years ago, but he does not consider it has answered his expectations, nor is the remuneration at all adequate to the labour, which, from the posture required by the machine, is both irksome and fatiguing. Another objection is that it keeps young women at home, and these marrying early have generally large families, and thus add unnecessarily to a population which, it so happens, has doubled itself in 60 years. Twenty years ago the staple trade of this place and the dis-

trict was the manufacture of thread buttons, to the great injury of the young people thus employed.

The system of letting cottages with the farms is open to abuse by placing the poor man too completely at the mercy of his employer. I have known very hard cases result from it. Some of them are built on the farms, where most of those recently erected are situate; but there are not sufficient for the labour, and in two or three parts of the parish the men have two miles to go backward and forward.

Fuel is so scarce here that the families, as a rule, never have a fire except at mealtimes, even in the depth of winter; one of the evils arising from this is that the poor people have difficulty in drying their clothes when they come in wet. I have known instances in which they have had to put them on next day just as wet as when they took them off. Shepherds and carters suffer much in this respect, the former especially, as it is a rule with them that the worse the weather the harder the work. Their diet is bread, cheese, and potatoes, with a little bacon in the families that are best off. But for the last few years pigs have not been so common, owing to the high price of barley and the greater scarcity of potatoes.

LANGTON.

Population - 174.

21. *Mr. Meikle, Jun,* assistant bailiff to J. J. Farquharson, Esq.—For an arable farm here four men or less are required for every 100 acres. Almost every farmer has a woman or two occasionally to "hoe" and "hack" turnips, or on the machines at threshing. It is very doubtful whether a woman with a family gains much by going, and the fields are not the place for any woman, young or old.

Men are regularly employed here; very few men are out of work in bad weather. They would earn 10*s.* a week in money regularly, besides one month of harvest work at 15*s.* a week and two or three months of other piecework. Each man has 15 "lug" of potato ground for nothing; each has 1½ pints of beer a day, and more at harvest. Most farmers hereabouts give it only at harvest and at threshing. A great many farmers are no longer giving it as they used. There is no comparison, to my mind, between the educated and uneducated labourer. The latter goes on well for a time in an ordinary way, but if anything unusual happens they are completely put out. The best security for keeping our labourers, and for preventing them from striking and giving trouble, is a good cottage and garden.

Men and boys work from six to six, with two hours for dinner and quarter of an hour for breakfast. The carters and the boys who go with horses stay later to feed their horses at night. Women work from eight to six, with an hour for dinner.

TARRANT HINTON.

Population - 253.

22. Notes of conversation with *Rev. C. D. Saunders,* rector, *Mr. George Hill,* farmer.—"Women work a "great deal. Some would work five days out of six "all the year. Some of them are very skilful reapers. "Young girls very seldom go.

"Boys work at 10 or 11 year old, but not regularly. "They begin with minding birds."

Mr. Hill has no doubt of the advantage of education to a labourer, if it is not carried too far.

Rev. C. D. Saunders says, "that the rule has "always been, if you come to school at all you shall "come regularly. This plan has answered, and he "does not think that there are any children in the "parish not attending school. The children come "here also from Gunville, where there is no school "except a dame's school."

THE DORCHESTER DISTRICT.

23. *Mr. W. Swatridge,* miller and corn dealer, Maiden Newton.—The usual mode of hiring a man hereabout is to make a condition with him that his wife or a daughter shall go to work, and his sons as they get old enough to go. One effect of this is the reduction of the father's wages, which are made up by the employment of his family. He, of course, is anxious to push off his son at 7 years old, or as soon as he can, to plough, and the farmer is quite ready to get the cheaper labour which he has thus the means of getting. As the boys grow up they go on living at home, but although they are doing men's work, the employment of the whole family lessens their earnings also, and they do not get man's pay. A farmer does not care to hire a single man. The wives go out at 6*d.* and 7*d.* a day if they work regularly. Sometimes, if a family does not get gristing, 2*d.* extra per day will be paid to her. It would be much better for the comfort of her home if she did not go to work, especially as she does a great deal of work fit for a man to do, and at which he could do no more than she does.

The worst work they do is hacking turnips and cutting them up for the sheep, which they do in cold and wintry weather.

Boys ought not to work before 10 years old, especially at ploughing. Not only do I complain of their loss of education, but also of the physical injury done to them. Boys of 7 and 8 go to plough. A boy of this sort gets up with his father at 4 or 5, has to help to prepare and feed the horses, walks from 6 till 2, except a little halt for meals, then comes home to dinner, and returns to feed the horses. I see the effect of this early work in making the boys bowlegged.

There are no bad cottages here; but in the villages round there are plenty. One of the great evils is the way in which the old people are kept at home in a cottage already overcrowded with children, to the injury of the health of the people living in it.

Wages generally paid fortnightly, sometimes monthly. Then advances would be made and the account balanced at the end of the month. But by this system the labourer is the sufferer, because he has to pay for his credit at the shop.

[On the subject of hiring families, Mr. Levi Groves, of Knighton, says—"When I hire a family the boys "are shown to me, and I see whether they are big "enough for my purpose." Mr. Symes and Mr. J. A. Smith, of Bradford Peverell, say—"When we hire a "man we look out for a family suitable to the farm, "the condition being that all shall go out when "required."—E.S.]

24. *Mr. J. Brown,* schoolmaster.—"The poorest "of the labouring class frequently send their boys to "work under 8, sometimes under 7 years of age. The "result is that their education is very defective, in "proof of which I give two facts:—

"(*a.*) In my school, which (when I made this "calculation about a year ago) contained 167 children, "61 of these were children of agricultural labourers. "The three upper classes contained 48 children, but "only five of these were children of agricultural "labourers, and four out of these five were girls. So "you see it is quite an exception for children of this "class to remain at school long enough to obtain any "really useful education.

"(*b.*) On comparing young men at our evening "school with each other it is often difficult to see any "difference in attainments *between those who have* "*attended a day school and those who have not.*"

FORDINGTON.

25. *Rev. H. Moule.*—"*Girls* under 16 or 17 years of "age are rarely employed in Fordington field; occa- "sionally in the spring a few are hired for weeding. "*Boys* are taken from the day-school for the same "purpose. Those brought up to the plough generally "commence at 8 years of age. In some parishes

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" they have commenced as early as at 7 years of " age.

" Women are employed in the barn, in the field, " and at the thrashing machine. The evils arising " from the employment of women and children in " agriculture are in this part of England less than in " some other parts, and far less than those attendant " on their employment in many branches of manufac- " ture. Yet, and especially in a parish like Fording- " ton, forming the suburb of a small town, their cure " or relief is far more difficult than those existing in " manufacturing towns.

" This increased difficulty arises mainly from the " smallness of the income of the agricultural labourer " compared with that of the manufacturing operative ; " which of itself renders it necessary (and the more " necessary in proportion to the number of young " children) that advantage should be taken of any " help which the wife, or which any of the children, " may afford to add to that income. This facilitates " the practice, so unfair to the agricultural labourer, " *of hiring not the man alone, but his wife and* " *family also ;* so that whilst he continues in the " employ of his master, his wife and any boys old " enough must work when required.

" I. Let the case of a woman under such circum- " stances be regarded in connexion with the education " of children, say of girls. Suppose her to have four " or five children, one of them a girl 7 or 8 years " old. The mother is required to go to the barn, the " field, or the thrashing machine. The elder girl " must then be kept from school to take care of the " younger children, perhaps one of them a sucking " infant. What legislation can touch cases of this " kind ? And how can the very imperfect instruction " of such a girl, or the entire loss of all instruction, " excepting that which she may get in the Sunday " school, be prevented ? For the general order of " proceeding is this : the child having been so em- " ployed for a year or two at home enters service in " the family of a mechanic perhaps, or smaller trades- " man, as nurse-girl, serving either for her food, or " for 1*s.* 6*d.* or for 1*s.* a week.

" II. As to the early employment of boys. The " wages of a farm labourer in this parish may be 10*s.* " a week ; out of which, however, for his cottage, " with little or no garden, he may have to pay 2*s.* or " 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. He may have 4, 5, or 6 children, " and amongst them a boy of 8 years of age. The " farmer requires this boy to go to work, and offers " 2*s.* a week for that work. And although the boy " has to leave his school, and although he may have " to rise at 5.30 a.m., and work until 5 p.m., and " although if at plough he may have to walk 11 miles " a day for his 2*s.* a week, the father cannot refuse " for the sake of the so-called education of his child " the addition of 20 or 25 per cent. to the income of " the whole family, even though earned at such a sort " of labour. And can any legislation compel him to " refuse it ? Even for a mechanic with a large family, " and with wages amounting to 16*s.*, 18*s.*, or 21*s.* a " week, and having to pay as here he has 3*s.* or 4*s.* " a week for anything like a decent dwelling, it is " difficult to refuse to let a son earn 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a " week, either as errand boy or as plough boy. The " money spent on liquor may sometimes occasion or " increase this difficulty. But no attempt *to educate* " the children of the operative classes in such a " locality as this can be of any avail, which is not " preceded or at least accompanied by thoroughly " practical business-like and philanthropic efforts to " improve *the dwellings* of the parents, and with this " their *social condition.*

" III. The case of out-door pauper children calls " for special consideration. Mr. Moule has known " pauper widows bring up large families without a " day's schooling for any one child. The guardians " may *insist* on the children attending some school. " But who is to enforce their requirements ? He " never knew a relieving officer attempt to do it. " And if he did what must be the result ? How can " a widow out of 1*s.* 6*d.* a week and a loaf, the child's " allowance, afford to pay 2*d.* for the week's school- " ing of each child ? And if the child, whether boy " or girl, can by some casual employment add a penny " or two to the 1*s.* 6*d.*, is it any wonder that the " mother should for the sake of this keep it at " home ?

" IV. The experience of 45 years in two large " agricultural parishes, combined with no slight " acquaintance with large manufacturing towns, con- " vinces Mr. Moule that a people can be no more " *educated* than they can be made *religious* by any " *act of legislation.* The evils of the present want " of education are enormous ; but they are too " deeply seated to be touched by such means. By " nothing will they be effectually relieved, but by a " *general, serious, kind, and thoroughly practical* " *drawing of the upper and middle classes of society* " *towards the lower.* Sunday schools conducted by " voluntary teachers of true piety, and night schools " conducted in the same way, notwithstanding their " many deficiencies, have within Mr. Moule's range " of observation done far more for the *true education* " *of the working classes than day-schools. True* " *Christian principle* fairly carried out *by numbers* " would thoroughly educate the people. Nothing " without this can do it.

" Henry Moule."

PIDDLEHINTON.

Population - 414.

26. *Rev. T. H. Roper*, rector.—Out of 76 children attending this school, only 12 sons of agricultural labourers (and four of a rather higher class) are over 6 years of age, and only three out of these are 8 ; two of the three are attending very irregularly from field work.

As a comparison, 40 of the girls are over 6 ; and, as a rule, they will stop till 13, though they get a little irregular the last year or two.

Most farmers here hire their men at the annual hiring in February. The wife is bound to go out to work when required, or in her place one of her girls. " Couching," " spitting " (spudding) thistles, and weeding is done in this way, but rarely by girls under 14. Some, however, younger than this go to pig-keeping after harvest, or to bird-keeping. The boys are also bound to go when required, but as they are better paid in proportion than the men, it makes a great addition to the family earnings.

But by this system of hiring, the children in the school change every year, and leave generally betweeen two examinations. Could not attendance at the school in one parish count towards the Government grant, by being added to that in the parish to which the family removes ?

The boys leaving these at 8 years old, no assistance is given by Government towards teaching them in a night school until they are 12. During the intermediate years they must learn nothing, or a night school must somehow be provided for them.

PIDDLETOWN.

27. *Mr. Collins*, schoolmaster, also complains " of " the yearly hiring system, by which we get a totally " new set of children every year. Our maxim is " that a boy loses six months by change of school."

PIDDLETRENTHIDE.

Population - 793.

28. *Miss Gregory*, schoolmistress.—" I lose some of " the boys between 6 and 7 years of age altogether ; " most of them leave between 8 and 9. I don't " think I have any above 9. Now and then the " younger ones come back in the winter after pig- " keeping. Scarcely any of them stay the whole " year, what with potato picking and apple gathering.

A great many leave after they have passed Standard I.

"Girls are taken away for pig and bird keeping, sometimes about 8 or 9 years old. But few of them go unless their fathers live on the farms. Few girls stay after they are 10 or 11."

STINSFORD.

Population - 357.

29. EXTRACT from Notes of Conversation with the Rev. A. G. S. Shirley, vicar, and Mr. T. Lock, farmer. November 11.

About 11 adult women go to work in this parish. The only way they can be got to go is by making it a condition of hiring the husband that they should go. They get 6*d.* a day, or 8*d.* if they don't get "grist." Mr. Lock is the only farmer in the parish who gives grist. Boys leave school for regular employment at 8 or 9 years of age. Owing to the turnip cultivation they are more wanted in winter than in summer.

CERNE ABBAS.

Population - 1,185.

30. Notes of Conversation with Rev. A. H. Bull, vicar, and Mr. W. Beach, clerk to the Board of Guardians.

We hardly keep any boys in the school over 9; many leave at 8. Girls will stay till 11 or 12 years of age.

Mr. Beach is surprised at the very low state of education in spite of the means afforded.

Girls are sometimes employed after harvest a little, but as a rule they do not work. Women work on every farm, and during a great part of the year.

THE HEATH DISTRICT.

BERE REGIS.

Population - 1,400 (?).

31. *Rev. Francis Warre*, vicar.—"Acreage of parish, including the outlying districts of Hyde, and Milburn Stileham, 6,848; of which 3,453 are cultivated in farms varying from 50 to 700 acres, 1,745 by tenants in pieces under 50 acres.

"The state of cottages in this parish is very bad. They are built of thatch and mud, and many of them are miserable tenements; the rent is high, and instances of crowding very frequent. They have open chimney corners, no grates, and smoky and unwhitewashed rooms. The bedrooms are low, without a fireplace, or sufficient accommodation for families. There are, however, good hopes that some alteration may be made in the present bad state of things by the chief landowner in the parish, who has not until lately become personally acquainted with the state of the property.

"There are in the parish, excluding Hyde and Milburn Stileham, 135 houses inhabited by the labouring class, of which there are—

—	Having One Bedroom.	Having Two Bedrooms.	Having Three Bedrooms.	TOTAL.
Inhabited by persons with families.	33	64	9	106
Inhabited by old persons and without families.	17	11	1	29

"The education of the poor has been until lately neglected in this parish. We now suffer greatly from want of school accommodation. Our schools are small and scattered. We have three small schools, (1) a girls' (mixed), under Government; (2) an infant; and (3) a boys' school, besides (4) a school in a district three and a half miles off, several infant dames' schools, and a dissenting dames' school. In the two first only is the teaching up to the standard of the Revised Code, and these are nearly half a mile from each other. Nos. (1), (4) are supported by the landowners, on whose property they are built; (3) has a small but inadequate endowment. The rest of the expenses, including that of the night school, falls chiefly upon the clergyman. He is able to collect about 5*l.* from the farmers in the parish.

"The annexed table will show pretty correctly the number of 'labouring' children at school or work.

LABOURERS' CHILDREN.

—		Boys.	Girls.
Between 6 and 13		71	83
(1.) On Register of Schools	Under 10	24	50
	Over 10	11	18
(2.) At work	Under 10	7	—
	Over 10	8	—
(3.) Neither at school nor work	Under 10	8	11
	Over 10	3	4

[*Note.*—This table is made from a correct census of the parish, and therefore includes both dissenters' and church schools; but of course in a large and scattered parish (eight miles by five) changes are continually taking place.]

"A successful night school has been kept in this parish for now three winters.

"Last winter the attendance averaged 35. The number on the books were—

Below 12 - -	9
Above 12 - -	28
Total	37

"Of these, as far as can be ascertained, 15 had never attended any day school.

"The first year the greater part of the boys could neither read nor write. The lowest was the largest class, and of them five could not even repeat the Lord's Prayer; few could even now repeat the Belief.

"The largest class is now the first. They can read an easy story, and write copies in small hand. Six of them might be able to indite a letter to their friends. I cannot be sure whether they would be able to direct it legibly. Ten would be able to read a story for their own amusement, 16 could do an easy sum in addition, eight could add money.

"The very regular attendance is partly owing to the successful management of the classes, partly to a club held in connexion with the school, the subscription being a penny per week, but if any boy was absent for a week (*three* times running), a penny was taken off his former subscription.

"These night schools supply a real want in neglected places, although they may fall off after a time. Short lessons, strict order, and a popular mode of teaching are the secret of their success.

"Great credit is in this instance due to Mr. Hallett, the relieving officer of the district, for his most efficient help, kindly and constantly given. The expense almost entirely falls upon the clergyman. It is certainly to be regretted that where, owing to our poverty, we are unable to support a certificated master, the Government should not find means to extend the principle of 'payment for results' to night schools of this kind.

"I have made some enquiries into the state of education of married poor in two outlying districts.

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In the Heath.

	Can read only.	Can read and write.	Can do neither.
Men - -	18	8	9
Women - -	19	10	5

On Woodbury Hill.

Men - -	2	4	10
Women - -	6	10	—

"'Reading' means in this case to be able to make "out more or less imperfectly an easy chapter in the "Bible.

"'Writing' means little more than being able to "sign their own names.

"But of course such a statement, taken from the "people's own account of their acquirements, can be "only relied upon as approximately true.

"I have looked at the marriage register of the "labourers married in the church during the past six "years, and I find there signed their names—

Men - - - - 27
Women - - - 43

Could not sign their names—

Men - - - - 39
Women - - - 23

"There are in this parish of about 1,400 people, "four public-houses for sale of spirits, and three beer-"shops. Those in the village are the best conducted. "A beershop or public-house in an out-of-the-way "place is sure to have a bad name.

"There is not much actual intoxication among the "labourers, except at harvest, club times, and other "occasions; they cannot afford it. The publicans "say that they do not encourage drunkenness. A "drunken man drives away the sober customers, and "gives the house a bad name. There are twice as "many 'houses' in this parish as are necessary for "either the good of trade or convenience of the "people. Excessive competition in the trade leads "to the increase of drunkenness. The half drunken "man when turned out of one house goes to another; "and it is much to the credit of the respectable "landlords that they have the sense in most instances "to discourage the practice of admitting them as "much as they do. But on the other hand it may "be said that where each house is not overcrowded, "and the men have the choice of their company, "there is less likelihood of brawls and quarrels. The "system of granting licences to beershops through the "excise is bad. The officer grants the licence with-"out any inquiry into the character of the applicants, "and the power should be transferred to the magis-"trates.

"The beershops do not make a livelihood out of the "business. Those who keep them depend chiefly on "other occupations. One is a shoemaker, another "bakes, a third is a carter. Notwithstanding the "alleged decrease of drunkenness, there can be no "doubt of how much poverty and misery the 'drink-"ing' habits of the people are still the cause. Un-"happily the labourer lives in circumstances in which "social comfort is in most instances impossible. He "looks to the public-house for society; his club is "held there; there is no other place, except in the "corner of the street, in which he can meet his friends "or hear the news. And so it is not surprising that "he catches the custom, and 'drinks' more from the "love of company and excitement, than from the love "of beer.

"The system of giving credit to the poor is a cause "of much distress to them, and often loss to the "tradesmen. It has been practised to an extent by "the shopkeepers in this place, recourse being had "to the county court in the event of non-payment "within a stated time. The plan seems to have "failed, especially in the case of the 'moveable' "families, who have gone away at the end of the year "considerably in debt. The grocers would gladly "return to a ready money system, but to do so is not "always possible. The poor are nearly all in debt, "and they have no means of getting out of it. The "least reverse throws them farther behind. It is not "the custom of the farmers to settle with their men "oftener than once a month or fortnight. The men "draw money on account, by which when the time "comes the balance due to meet the bill of the wants "of the family for the time is rarely sufficient. A "balance is left unpaid, which is either allowed by the "tradesman to go on, or else the account is closed, "and the money has to be paid off, while another "debt is being incurred at a fresh shop.

"The hiring of farm labourers at Statute fairs is a "great social evil in Dorsetshire. It has helped to "demoralize a large class of the labouring population. "Those who go to the fairs to be hired, seldom stay in "a place more than a year. They 'rove' from one "parish to another, leaving the shops in debt behind "them; have little furniture, or idea of domestic com-"fort. They have generally large families growing up "without control, as they never stop long enough in "a place to come under the same moral influences as "the resident poor. The farmers dislike them, but "do not know how to do away with the custom. "'The men fall back upon the terms of the agree-"'ment and are uncivil and disobliging.' But they "fear the men's deserting them at busy times when "they could not find other men disengaged.

"If Statute hiring is to be abolished it must be so "by the Legislature; in which case the labour market "would be open at all times, and it remains to be "proved that under these conditions it would be more "difficult for a farmer to supply the place of a carter "or a shepherd, than it is for a gentleman to find his "coachman or gardener.

"I am quite sure that the labourer, if once he finds "a comfortable home, and a kind master, will never "seek change for change's sake. Of all men in the "world he is naturally the most stay-at-home.

"Farmers dread the word 'emigration.' They "think they would lose by it their best men. But "with better and sufficient cottages there need be no "fear that a sufficient supply of able-bodied labour "would not be forthcoming. It is the want of a house "that often drives away the young, or, if he marries "without one, keeps him in a state of dissatisfaction. "The decrease of the population in this parish is "owing to the badness and ruin of cottages, and to "nothing else.

"The bearing of the present system of relief and "workhouse life upon the moral condition of the poor "deserves attention.

"One never hears now what was six years ago "frequently said to me 'I brought up a large "'family and never troubled the parish in my life.'

"The poor are every day coming to look upon "relief as their right. As soon as they are sick they "apply for the 'doctor.' It has been said to me as "an argument against joining a benefit club, 'they "'didn't see why they should screen the parish;' "and this is a common feeling among them. That "is the danger by the very perfection of the admini-"stration of relief, of increasing the improvidence "and undermining the independence of the poor. "The workhouse itself is a nursery of pauperism; "What can be expected from children brought up "under such conditions? There is a dejected, "thriftless look about a workhouse child. If the "authorities could give the after history and cir-"cumstances of these children, it would be an "instructive return.

"Women that have fallen, are not relieved out of "the 'house;' this rule is perhaps, as a regulation, a "good one, but it is attended with this evil,—it "collects the corrupted into a class, sufficient to make "fresh comers of the same kind worse, to taint all "that take refuge in the house. These girls have

" little or no chance of marrying (as those of the same " character generally do that remain out of the house). " They are allowed to visit their friends at times, and " they not unfrequently return to the house to be " confined again.

" The labourer of this country is on the whole, " perhaps, improving in his condition. He has better " employment, more means of education, greater " independence than he had formerly. He has shared " in the general advance of society, but there is still " in his state much to be desired.

" He is miserably housed.

" He is under-fed. He seldom touches any fresh " meat. The wives do not know how to cook it, and " if they did, they have not the means of doing so. " Even their supply in the necessaries of life is some- " times insufficient.

" '900 loaves were last Christmas distributed in this " 'parish to 130 families. I made inquiries and " 'found that it was almost entirely properly con- " 'sumed; and yet, sir, it made but a little impression " 'upon their usual weekly demand. I drew from the " 'fact the conclusion that the poor were at that time " 'under-fed.'—(From a baker.)

" He is improvident and ignorant. In the begin- " ning of life, and before marriage, he has more than " is necessary for his wants; he never thinks of " saving.

" His school days are short, and his opportunity of " keeping the little he has learnt there, or picked up " afterwards, so slight that he forgets the greater part " of what was taught him, although the moral train- " ing of a good school may leave a lasting impression " on his character. Every clergyman knows the " great general effect for good that an efficient school " has upon a parish.

" But to insist solely on education, and to insist " upon it, especially in a compulsory form, as the lever " by which the condition of the poor is to be raised, " seems to me to misunderstand the real state of their " case.

" One has only to see the bad inscriptions on walls " and even in the pews in church, to reflect that ele- " mentary knowledge will not improve a mind tainted " in other ways with evil. It may only give it " greater means of expressing and developing its " wickedness.

" Along with education must go other advantages, " and these are to be sought partly from an improved " legislation in those matters which concern his in- " terests, chiefly in the improvement of his dwelling, " and in a great measure in the growth of a kindlier " feeling and sympathy toward him on the part of " landowners and employers."

32. *F. D. Lys, Esq*, Medical Officer to Union, Bere Regis. — After a long experience of an agricultural district, I am of opinion that boys do not suffer any injury from the early age at which they are employed, which, in some cases, is 6 or 7 years. It is rare to find affections of the hip or spinal complaints among them, which you would expect to result from overwork. Flat feet are not common, though there is a great awkwardness of gait among them, owing to the clumsy boots which they wear. Rheumatism is prevalent, but not in any special degree among boys, nor, as far as I can see, is it due to early exposure.

Girls work little when young. In many cases, however, farmers will not allow a father to send them into service, but require them to be kept at home to do field work. Knitting too keeps them at home. The result of this seems to me to be almost a complete ignorance of cooking and the ordinary domestic duties. The difference in the comfort of a house where the wife has been in domestic service and another where she has remained at home is very marked, and I believe want of home comfort often send the husband to the tavern. Give them all the materials for good food, and they cannot make use of them. Morally, I see very great harm resulting from girls going to field work. It is a bad school for them.

They are badly off, but the constant application for the parish doctor, or for parish relief, are no certain test of poverty. There is no such independent spirit about them as would lead them to refuse such aid, and many in good circumstances are not ashamed to receive it.

The windows in cottages should be larger, and should be made to open.

33. *Mr. Scutt*, farmer, Bere.—I employ women all the summer and almost every open day in winter. It is two miles to my farm, on which I have two cottages. My labour goes from here. The women hired start from here at 8 and leave work at 5. As for the boys you can't get them to start before the men when they're bird-keeping. They go at 6. I take a boy of 7 or 8 for this work, but don't want him at all times. The younger you take them the sooner they get useful. They would be better if they could be a little better educated.

Owing to my farm lying wide, have difficulty with my labourers. They wish to leave off work earlier. Sometimes if you are short of cottages you make it a condition with a man that all his family shall go out to work when you want them.

34. *Mr. Chas. Besent*, farmer, Bere.—I employ a few women. Young girls go too sometimes. When a family lives on a farm they are all expected to go out, but girls who go to work seldom are any use afterwards for indoor work. Boys of 7 or 8 often get regular work here. They keep birds and go a little with horses. I should try to find them work. I have one boy 7 years old. He goes to night school, but his father has seven children and all youngsters, and he says he would have liked him to have had more day schooling, but he did not know how he could keep him away from work longer. I find the advantage of an educated man in every way. I don't come across many men that are.

I seldom change my men. I try to impress upon them that we ought to consult each others interests. I had an agreement with my carter for six months, as I knew he was a rough character. After that expired we never have thought about making another. My men don't leave me in turnip hoeing. I never have occasion to hire at the fair.

I pay weekly. It is more trouble, but the men like it better. I think any other night than Saturday the better pay time.

35. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. J. M. Truman, Incumbent of Woodlands, near Wimborne.

This parish (population 495) scarcely presents a fair specimen of an agricultural district, inasmuch as—

(1.) By far the larger number of the cottages are lifeholds, and in no way connected with the farms, their occupiers being to a great extent independent, and only engaging themselves to the farmers for occasional long seasons, such as harvesting, turnip hoeing, &c., being as they are here styled "strappers."

(2.) A considerable portion of the parish is covered with coppice wood, which furnishes the main winter employment of a large number of cottages.

(3.) Their children are also employed by them (and not by the farmers) in various employments connected with the wood. The farmers employ only two boys between 8 and 10, six between 10 and 13, and 12 between 13 and 18. Total 20. But I can reckon at least 30 or 40 others who are occupied with such work as I have described throughout the greater part of the year, only being (like their fathers) hired by the farmers at busy seasons. 15 women are employed, three of whom are unmarried. The greater number of cottages are held by copy of court roll, or on leases for 99 years determinable on lives; others are built on the waste, for which a nominal rent is paid. The accommodation in these is in many cases very insufficient. They have not all privies. The other cottages generally are in good condition, and

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sufficiently commodious. The great difficulty in the way of education is the low standard of wages, more especially as it obliges parents to remove their children from school at a very early age, and before it is possible that they can acquire anything beyond the very first rudiments. This too is the great reason why there is such a general cry for labourers, from the fact that those young persons who, through the assistance of a night school or in other ways *have* succeeded in obtaining a moderate education, invariably look elsewhere for more remunerative employment.

Nine is probably the outside age for boys to remain at school.

At least two-thirds of those attending the evening school (59 on books) cannot write correctly or in a legible hand without the assistance of a copy, and the same may be said of about one-half the female scholars. This probably may be taken as a fair representation of the parish in general as respects young persons of both sexes. A very small proportion of them, certainly not more than one in 12, can neither read nor write.

One means of facilitating education for boys would be a requirement that the hours of work for those below a certain age (say 15) shall be in some measure curtailed, at least during the winter half of the year. This would be a great boon to those who have to walk some distance to their work or to the night school.

36. Extract from Letters from the Hon. and Rev. Walter Ponsonby, Vicar of Great Canford, dated December 29, 1868, and January 8, 1869.

About two-thirds of the parish is heath land, patches of which are under cultivation, and are occupied by small holders of from three to 20 acres, which are tilled by the mother and children, while the father goes out to work. I can say no more of these than that there are no children more difficult to get to school, or more unmanageable when there, than the children (both boys and girls) of these small holders.

The other third of the parish is fairly agricultural, and divided into large farms of 300 to 800 acres.

On these young *girls* are scarcely ever employed. *Women* are employed on them in small parties of three or four on such works as weed hoeing, barn work, milking, chopping turnips, attending the threshing machine, &c. It will be observed that none of these works are continuous, and the amount to be done varies on different farms according to the system. The women employed are the wives and daughters of the regular labourers living in cottages on the farms, and it is part of the master's agreement with them that the women should go out when required. They are generally treated well. The strong women thrive on work, and are very healthy. They stay at home on Saturdays to do the house work. I have seen women out at work within a fortnight of their confinement, and out again in six weeks after it, one of the children bringing the baby to the field at stated times to be nursed by its mother. I cannot say that as far as I know the morals of those who go out are worse than of those who do not. There are good and bad amongst all. Exercise and constant employment produce good health, and this we all know tends to good morals.

In my opinion, circumstanced as we are, it would be injurious alike to the employers and the employed to interfere by legislation with the employment of women on the farms.

Boys under 10 are never employed on our farms except at harvest, and when the father takes a piece of task work. They attend school, though irregularly. Three or four boys of from 10 to 15 years of age are employed on every large farm. This work is pig, cow, and bird keeping, stables, &c. Their home is usually in or near the farm. As their work goes on every day alike, few of them attend either church or school, and as they are tired at night I find it impossible for them to come any distance to a night school; the young men of 17 or 18 are more willing and able to do so. Most of the boys try and learn at home; and I do not think I could find a boy of 14 who cannot read more or less. The plan I have adopted lately has been to give a spelling and copybook to any boy who asks for them, and I have several who bring me their copybooks for inspection. I could point to at least 10 cottages where the boys would be found reading or writing almost every night.

I consider that the parents could ill-dispense with the boys' earnings, wages being very low here. The boys are kept out of mischief when at work, and they never make good industrious workmen unless early trained and inured to work.

37. *Rev. J. H. Carnegie*, vicar of Cranborne.—Cranborne proper contains a population of about 1,000, of whom 750 are concentrated close at hand.

Few girls go to field work before they are 16. When taken from school young it is to nurse, so that the mother may go out to work.

Boys are taken away earlier from school than they used to be. Boys who go to help a shepherd leave us about 7 years old, carter boys go at 8 or 9; but they go away earlier to "bird-keeping," returning to us in the winter.

I don't see any disinclination on the part of the parents to send their children. I only know two families with whom nothing can be done in this respect.

Some men work at a distance; two might go three and two a distance of two miles. One or two men would have one mile to go.

Gardens are deficient, but all who want them have allotments. Each has about 20 "lug" in potatoes and 20 in wheat or barley. The allotments cannot be worth less than 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week to them all the year. They never work for hire after 5, so they can cultivate their allotments after that. They never fail to pay their rent for them.

38. *Mr. T. J. Turnbull*, steward to Lord Shaftesbury, St. Giles, adds—"Boys go as early as 6 or 7 " years old sometimes to work. I do not approve it, " partly because of the danger of being trampled on " by horses. But I do not know of accidents. It " would be better for the men if they were not so " much employed."

WINFRITH NEWBURGH.

Population - 1020.

39. *Rev. Geo. Philipps*, curate in charge.—Boys here begin to go to work at 7 or 8 years of age. Two of the employers here fix the age of continuous employment at 9 and one at 10 years of age.

There are no boys in the day-school over 10 years of age, whereas we have girls of 15 and 16. With very few exceptions, every farm labourer sends out his boys to work at 8 or 9. Till last March, when I came here, there had been no school under a trained teacher in the parish for some years. The result of this is that we have a rush to the night school of lads who have been unable to get much education. Some of them are learning the merest elements. At Burton, one of our hamlets, there has been and is a partly endowed school, but this is three miles from Winfrith. We have found that for young lads under 12 the night school is not of much use, because they are so tired after their day's work as to be physically unable to learn. We have found it best to put them in a separate class, under the charge of some ladies, at an earlier hour than the night school, where they can be more closely attended to and sent home at 7·30.

40. *The Rev. Eldon S. Bankes*, rector of Corfe Castle (population, 1,903), in a return sent to the Commissioner.—"More than half the population are day " pitmen, so it is hardly an agricultural parish.

"I consider that we want no restrictions on female " labour, but we do want them on the age at which " boys are now going out to work."

[By the table affixed it appeared that 12 boys

between 8 and 10, and 12 between 10 and 13, were at work. 20 girls between 13 and 18, and 30 married and 10 unmarried over that age, were at work.—E. S.]

"Not many women or children are employed *regularly* on farms.

"Boys should not be employed under 9."

41. *Mr. J. T. Hillier*, schoolmaster at Swanage.—"Children who work in farms, gardens, or in quarries, &c., leave school as a rule at the age of 8 or 9 years. Their attendance between 6 and 8 or 9 is irregular, because school is made entirely secondary to anything in the shape of work that they are capable of doing.

"Children of the vagrant, migratory, or living-anyhow class, as a rule do not attend school at all. Fully 80 per cent. are educated in the streets or under worse influence. Fully 50 per cent. also of the children of out-door relief people are left to run the streets, and never attend school.

"My upper class in school is always of the children of the more thoughtful and better-to-do class. Farm labouring children rarely reach the fourth standard.

"After 15 years' experience I say that it is of no use having a good education within the reach of the agricultural class (as is very generally the case now), unless some influence, pressure, or compulsion, is put on them to seek it. The question is not how to multiply good schools, teachers, and apparatus, but to devise some law keeping children from the labour market (say) till 9 or 10, whether from the mine, factory, or field, and not allowing them to be employed, as a rule, till they can reach a certain standard of knowledge. After that age labour and school should be combined by requiring an attendance of so many days or weeks, either continuous or broken, for two or three years. After which they might attend a night school.

"Fifteen years' experience in teaching night schools proves that those who leave the day school at 9 or 10 with very imperfect education seldom come to the night school as a supplement, and those who do not attend a day school at all, or else but a very short time, keep away also from the night school, because they are ashamed to show their ignorance.

"Were such a scheme carried out, and boys required to attend regularly till 9 or 10, every skilful teacher would guarantee that, as a rule, they would leave the day school with such an amount of well-grounded knowledge as to be easily able to extend it by partial attendance afterwards."

42. *Mr. Rigby*, schoolmaster at Herston, near Swanage, writes:—

"The approximate age at which boys leave school is 8, girls 10.

"The attendance at school of these children commences to be irregular at about 6 years of age. Many of the children of the farm labourers do not go to school at all. The per-centage of children who rarely go at all is quite 25.

"Evening schools to them are mere drudgery."

THE VALE OF BLACKMOOR.

43. *R. R. Harvey, Esq.*, land agent, Sturminster Newton.—The farms in this district are small, varying in extent from 30 or 40 acres to 150, a very few only reaching 200 or 250 acres.

Women and girls are very little engaged in farm work. They work chiefly at glove-making, at which the former can earn from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a week.

It would be a wise regulation to prevent boys from working under 10 years of age, they should be at school to that age. For a boy to work regularly here under 10 years is an exception, but at 10 they are very much wanted to lead the first horse in ploughing or other farm work.

The large amount of allotment land in this and almost without exception in every other parish in this district (a married man having one quarter of an acre, and in many instances more) leads to a great deal of early labour, and for this work, as well as for bird-keeping, very young boys are taken from school by their parents; but besides this, many of the parents are careless about sending their children to school, seemingly grudging the penny or three halfpence a week, and are content to let them idle about the streets and do nothing. In the parish of Sturminster Newton there are upwards of 40 acres of allotment land.

Wages are paid generally to constant labourers every fortnight, and to occasional labourers weekly. Very little corn is sold to them, because so little is grown, but most of the dairy people retail their cheese and butter to their labourers; it is a bad plan, because they sometimes get an inferior article.

Excluding the superior labourer (the thatcher being reckoned a tradesman) the ordinary wages for adults in constant employ vary from 9*s.* to 11*s.* weekly, and in some cases a cottage rent free. Cider or ale is also given for about six months (summer) in the year being considered equal to about 1*s.* a week, no other extras. The quality of the cider is not always good, in many instances inferior; much depends on the soil on which it is grown. The system of paying a labourer 1*s.* per week all the year round instead of cider or ale is fast increasing.

In this district there is but little piecework comparatively speaking, the chief part is in hedging, ditching, or draining, but there is of that work only enough to employ about one man in five. Many of the regular labourers do not do piecework, but get an extra 10*s.* or 1*l.* at harvest. Good men will get perhaps three months' piecework, and will add 2*s.* 6*d.* a week to their earnings during that time. In consequence of the small amount of piecework, which in the summer is confined to mowing grass, cutting corn, and hoeing root crops, the smaller farmers often let their men go away for a time to get it elsewhere.

While the married labourer with a family is less well off, one of the great difficulties is that young men have more than they know how to spend properly. If they live at home they do not pay more than 4*s.* or 4*s.* 6*d.* a week to their parents for their keep.

The cottages in this district are many of them bad; one cause has been the old system, now fast wearing out, of letting on a lease for lives; in such leases there is generally a covenant to keep in repair, but it cannot be enforced through the want of means on the part of the leaseholder. Some building and repairing leases have been granted with very good effect. The cottages of the worst class are those belonging to small freeholders (masons and carpenters particularly), who build on speculation and for profit, and let them to the poor at very high rents; these cottages have usually one small room below, frequently only one, and never more than two above stairs, small, low, badly ventilated and badly drained, and as long as the demand for house accommodation in populous villages continues, the system will prevail.

I have had much to do with borrowing money from the improvement companies; their stipulations (through the Inclosure Commissioners) are usually that every room in a cottage about to be built should be 8 feet high, with not less than three sleeping apartments and the usual offices; the cost of building a pair of cottages on this scale is not less than 350*l.*, and when built with garden ground attached, let only at 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum each. This heavy cost is a great discouragement to cottage building.

STALBRIDGE.

Population - 1,929.

44. *Mr. Andrew Brown*, bailiff to Lord Westminster.—Farms generally consist here of from 200 to 300 acres, each of which would require two or three boys. In some cases boys will get regular work at 10 years old or younger, but not generally. Before that age it would be occasional only, and my belief is that

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up to 12 or 13 there would be three months in the year when boys would have nothing to do. Lads are sent very young with horses, and it's dangerous for them, as one would think. But I can't say that I ever heard of any accidents.

Boys do men's full work at 16 or 17 years old, but don't get men's pay.

Girls go early to "gloving," which is misery to them as long as they live. They are put down to it as soon as they can hold a needle.

The ordinary wages are 9*s.* a week in winter and a little cider, but I don't count the cider as any real addition. They are always paid in money. No potato ground is generally given. If they have any they pay for it.

"Tut" or piecework is often done by extra men, and not by the regular hands. It tempts men a great deal too much to leave regular employment at certain seasons.

Of the men that I employ I don't believe one or two in 10 can read and write at all respectably.

HASELBURY BRYAN.

Population - 761.

45. *Rev. R. Burdon*, rector.—"After a long experience in Northumberland I am able to speak as to "the real value of education to the labourer, when I "compare his independence in that county, where "good schools were common, and his dependence in "Dorsetshire. The moment anything goes wrong "here, the man has no resource but the workhouse. "When I came here there was only a little miserable "school, under a mistress. The effect of establishing "a good school has been to make the parents then "to send the children to it. They thoroughly appreciate a good school under a master. A mistress is "not supposed to have the power of keeping the older "children in proper subjection, and I have frequently "heard this complaint made by the parents. The "first thing we tried to teach was cleanliness; I have "seen the good effects of this spreading into the "cottages, and generally raising the condition of the "population.

"If I see the children come to the school so irregularly as not to be able to satisfy the Government "inspector, I threaten not to let them come at all, "and generally this has the desired effect. I believe "that the stricter your rules are the better your "school will be attended.

"A great fault among country schools is that "managers sometimes think they have done all that "is wanted when they have received a certificated "master or mistress. I suppose the certificate "guarantees their ability, but many of them are in "other respects quite inefficient.

"The very poorest will not keep their sons at "school after 10. I have had a good many instances "where they have said that they didn't like to stop "the boy's schooling, and so would'nt take him away. "But as a rule the labourer's boys leave by 10. "Some boys, younger than that, are employed in the "summer only, but the generality of boys are wanted "for milking or plough driving, and are employed "both summer and winter. The difficulty is that "the winter is the time when their parents really "want their earnings the most, and the summer is "when the farmers most need them. But supposing "boys to be required to attend school 100 days every "year up to 12, I don't think the families would be "much worse off on the whole.

"But no boy of this class ought to be kept at day-"school over 12 years of age, unless he shows "especial talent. If he is so kept he is worth nothing "afterwards. If you ask the parents, they say in "Dorsetshire phrase 'their hands get too delicate.' "The boys get an idea that they are too good to "work.

"By 12 a boy can get a fairly good education, and "if he is worth anything, he can afterwards help "himself by night schools or otherwise.

"We find that the girls don't as a rule leave before "12. Then they go to 'gloving' at home, which "is in many respects a very bad employment for "them."

MARNHULL.

Population - 1,444.

46 *J. Hussey, Esq.*, landowner and magistrate.—The farms in this parish are small, not one probably being over 200 acres. They are principally dairy farms. Each requires one or two boys on it. Hence boys are employed at a very early age, although I didn't suppose that they are as a rule wanted regularly till 13 years of age.

It's the most difficult thing in the world to get a woman to go to work here, even at the haymaking season. Girls never go. The "gloving" absorbs all of them. But they work a good deal in the allotment gardens.

The children in our Roman Catholic schools are taken away as soon as they can get anything to do. They, perhaps, learn to read a little, but as soon as the boys can get field work and the girls "gloving," they fancy their education complete and come no more.

Some few men in this parish work in adjoining parishes, as Fyfehead.

47. *Mr. Samuel Andrews*, farmer.—I have only one boy, who drives a plough for me. I give him 7*d.* a day. I can't get a lad to frighten crows for me; they are all wanted here. I want a boy too for sheep-minding. A boy of 7 or 8 will do this as well as a man, and that sort of work will often give him work all the year, and men here get 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week, and four pints of cider a day. They are all paid in money, not in wheat. They won't eat the second wheat; we farmers have to eat that. Their wages are paid every fortnight, on Friday.

48. *Miss Grimes*, national schoolmistress, Marnhull.—I have no boys now in my school over 8 years old, and no girls over 10. There are so many farmers here employing boys that they get work very young. Some will go out for 1*s.* a week to bird-minding. Men who work on the farms will get their lads to go when very young. One boy in my school went bird-keeping when he was not much over 4 years old. A good many go at 6 and 7. I had a boy in my school between 8 and 9 who was getting on nicely, and now he has gone off turkey-keeping, and I hear that he is not to come back. Lots of them that leave in this way can scarcely write at all. Just as they are beginning to learn they are taken away. I think they leave younger than they used to do.

The girls leave early to go to gloving. Little girls of 6 and 7 can do something. Even before they leave altogether they are very irregular, the parents wanting them from one cause or another; and then when they get to 8 or 9 years they are rather ashamed of the little they learn, and won't come any more.

The rector's daughters keep a night school in summer for the big girls, and in winter they, with another lady, keep a night school for the young men. The first winter I was here, I kept it myself.

STOURTON CAUNDLE.

Population - 395.

49. *Mrs. W——*, labourer's wife.—"What with 9*s.* "a week, and 15*d.* to pay for rent, and seven to live on "it, we hadn't much to spare, and so my boy went to "work at 9 year old to mind the birds. He's been "three years at it now, regularly all the year. Some "families don't like 'em to go so young. They like "'em to go to school. He used to get 1*s.* a week at "first, and he wasn't worth nothing to me, what with "clothes and everything. But I had to work when I "was young, so I must bring them up to do the same.

"I like him to go to school o' Sundays; but when "he's bird-keeping he's often out at work.

"Men get 9*s.* 6*d.* if they work o' Sundays, but they "have to work harder on Sundays than on any other "day. Some men get 'tut' work nearly all the year, "but if it's wet weather they can't do much in winter, "and I'd rather be sure of the money o' Saturday "nights.

"We've no 'lotments here. Sometimes a farmer "will set out a piece of land in the field; but we've "to pay for it."

. HOLWELL.

Population - 495.

50. *Rev. H. H. Wood*, rector and rural dean.—"One "disadvantage in the scattered nature of the parish, "some of the children have as far as two or even three "miles to come to school. Bird-keeping makes the boys "irregular, even while at school. Some go as young "as 5 or 6 years of age; one or two girls sometimes "go. But the schoolmistress cannot keep any boys "in the school after 7 years of age. They go out as "carter boys. You see such very little boys going "out with two or three horses. The girls stay till 10 "and then go to 'gloving.'

"We have a night school, which any boys not "attending the day school are allowed to come to. "So we have a few boys there only 8 years old, who "have left the day school and are at work. They "make very little progress."

. STURMINSTER NEWTON.

Population - 1,880.

51. *Mr. John Hammond*, deputy chief constable and inspector of nuisances.—"This is the only district in "the county in which the police have been charged "with the duty of inspecting nuisances. Here I look "after 20 parishes. The chief difficulty has been "with the outside of the cottages. Out of 120 notices "to abate nuisances which I have already given this "year, only one has been for overcrowding. That "case occurred at Marnhull, where a woman with six "daughters and one son were all sleeping in one "room. I believe that there are many bad cases, if "we could hear of them. Putting Lord Westminster "aside, I don't think that anyone else is building "cottages. As a rule, the cottages in these villages "are bad in size, in ventilation, in repair, &c.

"This place (Sturminster) has given us a great deal "of trouble. In one of the hamlets (Butt's Pond) "fever broke out last year, and I reported to the "Local Board on the subject. I found a great defi- "ciency of privies, some of the filth poured into an "open ditch, some of the privies polluting the well, "and in the cottages too little bedroom accommoda- "tion, and some with no ventilation.

"Stalbridge gave a good deal of trouble, but Lord "Westminster has built a great many new cottages "there.

"Manston was a place to which a great many "labourers had to go from here; but Lord Westmin- "ster has built three double sets of new cottages, and "so improved and altered others as to double the "accommodation.

"The labourers here are like the Irish, too depen- "dent upon the potato crop. Most of them have a "bit of land, and if their potatoes fail great destitution "follows."

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52. TABLE showing the extent of the EMPLOYMENT of WOMEN in 23 PARISHES in DORSETSHIRE.

WHITECHURCH.—*Mr. H. Fookes* says—"We have "some difficulty in getting the women to go. In "other villages round many more go. In some cases "I know farms where 10 or 14 women are employed."

Mr. Fowler says—"If I was going to thresh with "my steam engine I should go to my carter's wife, "and tell her I want her for a day or two. We "consider that they are liable for that sort of work. "I don't much like women for it, because I have "known three or four accidents about here from it."

STOURPAINE. — *Rev. R. R. Watts.*—"Not very "regularly. All such employment tends to make "them coarse in manners and language."

MILTON ABBAS. — *Rev. R. Roberts.* — "Twelve "women and girls work here. In winter they work "in the barns, go with threshing machines, and "'hack' turnips. I never saw them put to any work "to which I should object, except on the ground of "exposure to weather. One of the worst results of "field work for them is, that it often leads to indecent "low talk, which is especially hurtful to the girls."

PIMPERNE.—Hardly at all.

HILTON.—*Mr. Garland* "employs two all the year. "In the winter they 'draw reeds.' They can spread "manure as well as men." The wives of the regular labourers work.

GUNVILLE.—Fourteen or 15 girls and women work here. It is "quite a class that go." Some go with the threshing machines, some cut corn.

TARRANT HINTON.—"Women work a great deal. "Some would work five days out of six all the year. "Some of them are very skilful reapers."

CHARLTON AND SPETTISBURY. — *Rev. H. B. Vizard* and *Mr. Bastard.*—"Few except at harvest. "Some five or six go from Charlton."

[The next six parishes are in the neighbourhood of Dorchester, where it is a common condition of hiring that the wife shall go out to work, or in her absence a daughter.—E. S.]

MAIDEN NEWTON. — The wives of the yearly labourers, or their daughters, go to work a great deal.

BRADFORD PEVERELL.—Same. "Women go on "machines." They work a great deal in the barns in winter.

PIDDLEHINTON.—*Rev. T. H. Roper.* — Same. "They go couching, spudding thistles, and weeding."

STINSFORD.—"About 11 women go. The only way "to get them is by having it made a condition of "hiring the husband. They get 6*d.* a day (or, if "they have no grist, 8*d.*)."

CERNE ABBAS.—"Work on every farm, and during "a great part of the year."

BROADMAYNE.—"All the grown up women work."

[The six next parishes are from the Heath districts.—E. S.]

WOODLANDS.— *Rev. J. M. Truman.*—"Fifteen "are employed, three of whom are unmarried. The "employment has a very injurious effect on their "morals, and renders them utterly unfit for domestic "duties."

ST. GILES'.—*Mr. T. J. Turnbull.*—"Few work "here, except at harvest. Some go to threshing "machines, some spread manure, but it is not general. "Men are kept back by working in company with "women."

EAST STOKE.—"Some farmers will not employ a "man unless his wife will work. They go upon "threshing machines."

WINFRITH.—"A great deal."

CORFE CASTLE.—"Not many regularly. Twenty "girls between 13 and 18, 30 married and 10 "unmarried women, work."

[From the Clay Districts.]

HINTON ST. MARY.—*Rev. C. I. Nicholl* and *Mr. R. R. Harvey.*—"Women and girls hardly work at "all here, because of the gloving. Girls can do this "almost as soon as they can hold a needle, and are "fit for nothing else when they take to it."

MARNHULL.—"Gloving absorbs all; but they work "a great deal on the allotments."

STOUR PROVOST.—"About 12 girls from 13 to 18 "and 16 older women work here." "It does not "interfere with their morals or training."

Dorsetshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

g.

53. TABLE showing the extent of the EMPLOYMENT of YOUNG GIRLS in the fields in 16 parishes in DORSET.

WHITECHURCH.—*Mr. Fookes.*—"We never employ "girls."

SOURPAINE.—*Rev. R. Watts.*—"Not regularly."

PIMPERNE.—*Rev. W. Bury.*—"Not at all."

HILTON.—"They tent pigs after harvest." One leads a cart. There was too much "gloving."

TARRANT HINTON.—"Very seldom go."

CHARLTON AND SPETTISBURY.—"Few, except at "harvest."

STURMINSTER MARSHALL.—"Only potatoing and "gleaning."

FORDINGTON.—"Under 16 or 17 rarely employed. "Occasionally in the spring they are hired for weed-"ing."

BRADFORD PEVERELL.—"Under 15 go very little. "Sometimes one will go to tent birds."

PIDDLEHINTON.—"Girls rarely go under 14. Some, "however, go to pig-keeping after harvest, or to bird-"keeping."

PIDDLETRENTHIDE.—"Girls taken from school for "pig or bird minding about 8 or 9 years of age. "But few of them go unless their fathers live on "the farms."

CERNE ABBAS.—"Sometimes employed after har-"vest, but as a rule do not work."

BROADMAYNE.—"Go to bird-minding a little."

CRANBORNE.—"Few go before 16."

EAST STOKE.—"Do not go, except to gleaning, "&c."

WINFRITH.—"A few go pig-keeping after harvest."

[In the Vale hardly any girls work; they are almost all employed in gloving. Of the result of this Mr. James Buckman, of Bradford Abbas, says, "The "girls are fit for nothing; they cannot do plain sew-"ing, and are ignorant of domestic duties." To the question of the number growing up with insufficient education (in a population of 585) he answers "Fifty."—E.S.]

54. TABLE showing the age at which Boys and Girls leave School in Parishes in Dorset.

——	Boys.	Girls.
Whitechurch - (Certificated master and mistress.)	10, maximum -	14 or 15. In some cases a little knitting done.
Milborne St. Andrew. (Mistress.)	10, maximum -	Rather later.
Durweston - (Mistress.)	9 or 10. Irregular from 8.	13.
Milton Abbas -	9. Work begins at 7 or 8 for many of them.	——
Stourpaine - - (Certificated mistress.)	- - -	10 or 11 sometimes, on account of the knitting and gloving.
Pimperne - - (Certificated master and mistress.)	"Very unusual to keep them after 10."	12 or 13. A little gloving.
Hilton - - (Certificated master and mistress.)	10 or 11, maximum	Some girls leave before 10. "Gloving" common.
Langton - - Tarrant Gunville -	No schools.	
Spettisbury and Charlton. (Free school.)	Average, 9. Some begin work at 6 or 7.	About 11.
Sturminster Marshall.	8, maximum. In November only six in school were over 7.	——
Maiden Newton -	The poorest frequently send their boys to work under 8, and sometimes under 7.—(*Mr. Brown.*)	——
Bradford Peverell -	Average of last 14 is 9.	——
Charminster - Stratton - -	No schools.	
Piddlehinton -	"Out of 76 only three sons of agricultural labourers are over 8, and nine over 6."	13. "A little irregular the last year or two."
Piddletown - -	9, maximum.	——
Stinsford - -	8 or 9. They are more wanted in winter than in summer.	——
Piddletrenthide -	"Some between 6 and 7; most between 8 and 9. I have none over 9. Now and then the younger ones come back in the winter. Scarcely any of them stay the whole year."	10 or 11; will sometimes begin at 8 or 9.
Cerne Abbas -	Hardly any stay after 9; many leave at 8.	11 or 12.
Broadmayne -	8 or 9 - -	12 or 13.
Woodlands -	9, maximum -	12 or 13 (?).
Wareham - -	8 to 9. Occasional field work at 7 or 8.	9 or 10.
Wool - -	About 9 - -	12 or 13.
St. Giles' - -	8 - -	12.
Winfrith - -	8 or 9.	——
Swanage - -	8 or 9. Irregular at 6.	——
Herston - -	8. Irregular at 6 -	10.
Hinton St. Mary -	9, maximum -	Very early (gloving).
Marnhull - -	8, maximum -	10, maximum (gloving).
Holwell - -	7, maximum -	10 (gloving).

55. *Miss Young*, mistress of the night school at Cranborne, gave me a list of those attending her school, from which it appeared that (of the children of agricultural labourers)—

Three had never attended a day school.
Four had left a day school at 8 years of age.
Ten at 9.
Four at 10.
Five at 11.
Two at 12.

Among those boys at work who were stated by Miss Young *not* to be attending her night-school—

Two had never attended a day school.
Two left it at 7 years of age.
One at 8.
Five at 9.

NIGHT SCHOOLS.

56. Night schools existed in winter only, and with more or less regularity, in 33 parishes out of 46.

Mr. James Buckman, of Bradford Abbas, says of them, "During the winter when they have been in "operation, the children leave the day school at an "earlier age. This is one of the evils attending "them. The chief obstacles are the absence of any "desire on the part of some of the young people to "obtain instruction, and the difficulty of being pre-"sent in time for the commencement of school "(7 p.m.), though they profess to leave off work at "6." Mr. Andrews, night school teacher at St.Giles', had tried going to four villages round, one night a week to each. He failed, because of the places being too small, so that very few attended. His objection to the system, however, was that it was only once a

week for each lad, who forgot as much as he learnt. Boys were not worked at home in the interval.

57. MEMORANDUM by Lord Sidney G. Osborne, of children born and educated in Durweston, the object being to show how far their education has enabled them to go into the world.

In this memorandum the names have been carefully taken from parish register and other sources of children who have been in the Durweston schools, *i.e.*, in the day school of Lord Portman, and the Sunday and night schools held at the rectory; the period embraced being about 24 years.

In the census of 1861, the population, 364; the acreage, 1,763 (Post Office Directory).

As the rule, with scarce any exception, the children of the labourers all have schooling in the day school; a large proportion have gone through the Sunday school. The night school has existed 16 years.

It appears that out of 187 children thus traced, 129 are accounted for as having left the parish, 58 only remaining. Of the 129 who have left the parish, emigrated (males and females) 24, with four whole families; females married out of parish, 32.

There is an adult school for girls, to prepare them for service after leaving the day school; this has doubtless been the means of getting a great many of them out into the world; and will account in some measure for the large proportion (32) who have married and left the parish. But I ascribe the few marriages which take place in the parish a great deal to the difficulty of young people getting a home when they marry on the spot.

Those who went to Australia were all of them sent by the Emigration Commissioners, who gave me a ship to fill, I picking out only thoroughly respectable families from this and other parishes; they have all done well, and some have sent home money to take their relatives out to them.

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58. TABLE showing the condition of the cottages and gardens in 37 parishes in Dorset.

WHITCHURCH.

Population - 554.

Mr. H. Fookes.—"Mrs. Mitchell's are very good; "Mr. Compton's older, but very comfortable. Rents "of the former, 1*s.* a week. Some others are let "from 4*l.* to 5*l.* All have allotments and small "gardens."

STOURPAINE.

Population - 658.

Rev. R. R. Watts.—"Very bad. Many families "have not more than two bedrooms; some not more "than one (*see* ante. No. 13). Many of them are let at "high rents, and have no garden or outlet." An open parish.

MILTON ABBAS.

Population - 1,014.

Rev. R. Roberts.—"23 cottages have been built by "Baron Hambro', eight of them being substitutes for "others pulled down, or otherwise used. Few now "have more than one family in them. Most of them "are built of 'ceobb' (mud), and are more weather-"proof than some of the brick ones. All have good "gardens, and allotments (if they like). Rent, "3*l.* 9*s.* to 4*l.* There is great difficulty in getting "them to keep their drains, pigsties, &c. in order."

PIMPERNE.

Population - 495.

Rev. W. Bury.—"Almost all the cottages have "been replaced by new ones by Lord Portman. All "have small gardens and allotments. Rent, 1*s.* a "week."

HILTON.

Population - 833.

Rev. H. Snow.—"Very few cottages have one bed-"room only, nearly one-half of them have three."

TARRANT GUNVILLE.

Population - 441.

Rev. J. Watts.—"Not many with one bedroom; a "good many new ones; most have gardens and allot-"ments. Rents, 14*d.* a week."

TARRANT HINTON.

Population - 258.

Rev. C. D. Saunders and *Mr. G. Hill.*—"Were "wretched 25 years ago. Are now good; only one "bad one, a freehold. As a rule they have two bed-"rooms. All have gardens and allotments. Rents, "1*s.* and 2*s.*"

CHARLTON.

Population - 553.

Rev. H. B. Vizard and *T. H. Bastard, Esq.*—"Some very good ones have been built by T. H. "Bastard, Esq.; but a good many hovels have been "run up by speculators, and let at 5*l.* and 6*l.*, with "no gardens; one has neither privy nor back door. "Most of them have gardens. There are 33 allot-"ments."

SPETTISBURY.

Population - 668.

"Very bad. A few have one, no ordinary cottages "have three bedrooms. They are generally let with "the farms, and are in terrible repair. The gardens "are very small. There are not privies to every "cottage. There should be better inspection."

STURMINSTER MARSHALL.

Population - 850.

Rev. C. K. Paul.—"Bad. Belong to three owners. "Some with one room above and one below; others "with room and stairhead above. Sanitary arrange-"ments bad. All have not privies. The farmyards "are allowed to drain into the street. A good many "have no gardens. No allotments. Rents, 1*s.* 6*d.* to "2*s.* a week."

MAIDEN NEWTON.

Population - 844.

Mr. W. Partridge.—"No bad cottages."

"Some 20 men walk a long distance from here to "work; some go 2½ miles."

FORDINGTON.

Population - 3,258.

"Shameful, as I saw for myself. No gardens or "allotments, and hardly any rents under 2*s.* 6*d.* a "week."—(*See* in detail, Evid. 61 post.)—E. S.

BRADFORD PEVERELL.

Population - 361.

Rev. H. B. Williams, Mr. J. Symes, and *Mr. J. A. Smith.*—"Sufficient. Several pulled down lately and "rebuilt. On the whole fair. None containing a "family have one bedroom. All have gardens. No "less rents than 5*l.* a year. Pigs not allowed."

STRATTON.

Population - 351.

"Very bad."

CHARMINSTER.

Population - 1,020.

"None let for less than 5*l.*"

PIDDLEHINTON.

Population - 414.

Rev. T. H. Roper.—"Above the average. A fair "number have three bedrooms, and the rest have two. "Most of them have small gardens. There are seven

Dorsetshire.
Mr. Stanhope.
g.

" acres of allotments. Rents average 1*s.* 6*d.* a " week."

STINSFORD.

Population - 357.

" Fair. Half have three, almost all the rest three " bedrooms."

PIDDLETOWN.

Population - 1,241.

" Mr. Brymer's new cottages excellent. Some are " let at 3*s.* a week."

PIDDLETRENTHIDE.

Population - 793.

" Moderate. Nearly all have gardens. Rents, 4*l.* " to 5*l.* There are allotments."

CERNE ABBAS.

Population - 1,185.

Rev. A. H. Bull, Mr. Beach. — " Very poor ; " most of them are thatched. There is scarcely one " with three bedrooms; most have two, but the " separation is often very indifferent indeed. Rooms " in most cases very low, hardly six feet, and *the* " *windows are very often not made to open.* They " were generally lifeholds now run out. Rent varies " from 4*l.* to 5*l.* The Board of Guardians appoints " the clergyman and guardians in each parish to see " after nuisances. Mr. Beach considers the necessity " for the appointment of a paid inspector imperative. " Mr. Bull (in discharge of this work) having been " round to the cottages, says, that the sanitary arrange- " ments are very bad, though improving. In some " cases he found only one privy to five or six cottages. " Even now there is not one privy to each cottage. " The drains are very bad ; the water supply good. " Nearly all have gardens, and there are 120 allot- " ments of from 10 to 40 perches."

BROADMAYNE.

Population - 506.

Rev. W. Urquhart.—" Very few here have three " bedrooms. Some have one, and a family in them. " These belong to small speculators. Not all have " gardens. They have one privy to each cottage. " Six in place have one only."

[From the Heath District.]

WOODLANDS.

Population - 495.

Rev. J. M. Truman. —" The greater number " of the cottages are held by copy of Court Roll " or on leases for 99 years determinable on lives ; " others are built on the waste, for which a nominal " rent is paid. The accommodation in them is in " many cases very insufficient. They have not all " got privies. The *other* cottages belong to Lord " Shaftesbury, are generally in good condition, and " sufficiently commodious. All of them have gardens " and (if required) allotments."

ST. GILES'.

Population - 436.

" Belong to Lord Shaftesbury and are excel- " lent. All have large gardens and allotments. " Rents, 1*s.* They have the opportunity of buying " milk at a low rate."—E.S.

BERE REGIS.

[See post No. 60.]

CRANBORNE.

Population - 2,656.

Rev. I. H. Carnegie.—" In Cranborne proper " they are improving. Lord Salisbury has built " and is building. There remain some very bad " ones, many of which belong to small owners. One " row of this sort, four in number, was built for old " people, but contain families. They have one bed- " room only. Garden deficient, but there are large " allotments. Rents, about 4*l.*"

These were very bad here. Some were life-holds not fallen in. Privies are deficient. One row of houses in " the alley " had no back doors. They were said to be bad also at Verwood, a part of the parish.—E. S.

WOOL.

Population - 590.

Rev. F. Newington. — " Very poor. They " generally have two bedrooms. Gardens very small. " There are allotments."

EAST STOKE.

Population - 594.

Rev. W. V. Hennah, Mr. Geo. Foot.—" Those " let on lives are very bad. Many have one bedroom " only. They are mostly mud and thatch. Hardly " one has three bedrooms. Most occupiers have the " right of cutting ' turves.' Rent 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* with " a garden."

Privies deficient. In one two-bedroomed house were a mother, three daughters, two sons, with the wife and child of one of them.—E. S.

WINFRITH.

Population - 1,020.

Rev. Geo. Phillips, Mr. Damen. — " Miser- " able. Most of them belong to one owner, some few " being still out on lease. Almost all are wretched. " As a rule they have one bedroom and a small " landing place at the stairhead. In some cases the " flooring is so bad that the water stands in it in rainy " weather. The greater number have no privies. " They all have gardens."

CORFE CASTLE.

Population - 1,900.

Rev. Eldon S. Bankes. — " Cottages in parts " very bad, but improving. The worst are run up on " life leases. I have one family of eight living in an " outhouse built for a calf, and one cottage on the " heath (divided into three) contained 33 souls at the " last census.

" On the heath they are built of mud, which is the " warmest material. In the other parts they are of " stone varying in size ; fire-places wanted in bed- " rooms ; drainage good. One village in the parish " has Moule's earth closets in most satisfactory work- " ing. Gardens and allotments good. Rent, 3*l.* " to 4*l.*

[The following parishes are in the clay districts.]

STOURTON CAUNDLE.

Population - 395.

[Belongs mostly to Sir H. Hoare. The cottages very bad, but described as " thinned out to what they " used to be." A good many one bedroom only. Four in one row had one. Sometimes " they put " another bed on the landing." One house had two families in it. No allotments.—E. S.]

HOLWELL.

Population - 495.

Rev. H. H. Wood. — " A few very bad cot- " tages built on the waste. Others let on leases of " lives are bad. Mr. Digby has built four good ones " with three bedrooms. Most have gardens. No " allotments. Rents 1*s.* to 2*s.* Inspection of nui- " sances done by guardian of each parish."

HINTON ST. MARY.

Population - 342.

Rev. C. I. Nicholl. — "Small tumble-down "places as a rule. Most belong to one landowner, "though a few miserable ones are the property of "small tradesmen. Not many have one bedroom, "but I do not know one good one. Most have gar- "den and allotments. Rents 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*"

MARNHULL.

Population - 1,444.

Mr. Hussey. — "Improved very much of "late, though there are still some very poor ones. "Those let on lives are in bad repair and very bad. "Most have gardens. I let 40 allotments in quarter "acre plots, in which I allow ploughing. Rents "(with tiny garden) 4*l.*"

Mr. S. Andrews.—"Allotments one quarter to half "a mile off, and not useful to all."

HASELBURY BRYAN.

Population - 753.

Rev. R. Burdon. — "The cottages, which are "very poor, have in many cases been run up by "the people themselves upon the waste and then "mortgaged. A great many have one bedroom and "one room under it. Most of them have mud "walls. The floors are generally of mud, which "makes them very damp. Few can be rented under "4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.* without a garden. I give allotments "and all but one or two families have one."

STALBRIDGE.

Population - 1,929.

Mr. A. Broun.—"Lord Westminster has built "32 cottages now within the last seven years. "Scarcely any have been pulled down. They all let "at from 4*l.* to 7*l.* including quarter acre of garden. "I only know of 9 or 10 cottages being let with the "farms."

STOUR PROVOST.

Population - 889.

Rev. R. Barrett. — "The accommodation is "improving. Some few hundred acres belong to "Lord Westminster, who is building good cottages. "Many of them are let on lives by King's College; "the poor hire them from the lifeholder.

"On the ground floor there is usually one room, "11 feet × 11; a small room about half that size "behind. *Often the window does not open.* Many "have no drainage. A privy and cesspool in the "garden; if there is drainage, it goes into the cess- "pool near. Above, there is generally one bedroom, "sometimes two. The houses are mostly thatched.

"Many of the families sleep in one bedroom. The "water supply is very badly, and there are few "pumps. Most cottages have a small garden."

BRADFORD ABBAS.

Population - 585.

Mr. Buckman. — "Sufficient. Usually one "room downstairs and scarcely two rooms up, say "one room and a closet not closed from it. Ven- "tilation through cracks, as few windows will open "from the rust of hinges, &c. Drainage very "imperfect. Ownership mostly in the landowner, "and rent low. Gardens and allotments ample."

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59. [For the following return I am indebted to the kindness of Captain Amyatt Brown, Chief Constable of Dorset.]

RETURN showing the number of three-bedroomed, two-bedroomed, and one-bedroomed cottages, and also the number of one-bedroomed cottages containing a family of three or more children in the unions of Wimborne and Cerne.

Name.	Three-bedroomed cottages.	Two-bedroomed cottages.	One-bedroomed cottages.	Cottages with one bedroom, containing three or more children.
WIMBORNE UNION.				
Cranborne	40	221	59	22
Edmondsham	6	19	5	2
St. Giles'	26	15	2	—
Handley	7	80	16	9
Pentridge	7	14	4	1
West Woodyates	2	1	—	—
Gussage All Saints	9	35	7	4
Gussage St. Michael	2	34	8	2
Long Crichell	6	11	1	—
Moor Crichell	1	22	—	—
Horton	6	48	7	—
Woodlands	9	37	—	—
Chalbury	4	14	6	1
Corfe Mullen	4	24	6	2
Hampreston	3	49	5	5
Sturminster Marshall	6	65	12	6
West Parley	4	11	1	1
Hinton Martell	8	21	—	—
Hinton Parva	1	7	—	—
Shapwick	8	33	10	4
Witchampton	11	22	2	1
Wimborne	32	104	25	10
	202	897	176	70
CERNE UNION.				
Minterne	12	21	3	—
Buckland	13	62	26	9
Plush	5	14	3	1
Upcerne	—	11	—	—
Nether Cerne	11	3	1	
Cerne Abbas	5	41	13	3
Godmanstone	4	12	4	2
Chiselborne	4	29	11	6
Melbury Bubb	5	8	3	1
Hermitage	3	7	3	1
Hillfield	3	10	5	1
Batcombe	1	11	11	5
Wootton Glanville	11	11	10	1
Alton	4	20	4	—
Piddletrenthide	11	53	5	1
Pulham	3	28	11	4
Mappowder	4	19	9	4
Cattistock	4	24	7	3
Frome St. Quintin	2	9	1	—
Sydling St. Nicholas	5	56	6	1
	118	461	138	43
Grand total	320	1,358	314	113

[Result.—16 per cent. of the cottages have one bedroom only; in $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. there is a family of more than 3 children in the one-bedroomed cottages.]

60. [The following specimens of cottages at Bere Regis were described to me, and some of them seen by me.

Cottage with two bedrooms, hardly any garden; rent 5*l.* The second bedroom was only a landing at the staircase head; the grandmother slept there. In the other room slept mother and four children, including one son of 14. Empty since my visit.

Another, let at 5*l.* a year, had one bedroom only, and contained (till quite recently) a man and wife, four sons that go to work, two small sisters, and one old enough to work, and one small boy.

Woodbury hill, a hamlet, contained many bad cottages. Water was not to be got on the hill. As to privies, "some have made them themselves, and I "think each house has one now."

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In one house without any windows there lived all through last winter a family with earnings estimated at 19*s.* a week. They were living there October 1868. They had previously lived in a house with one bedroom, and hardly a roof to it. They consisted of a man and wife, a boy (19), and a daughter with two illegitimate children.

In one building without any window at all, or any opening, but the door, there lived last winter a father and mother, a boy of 10 and a smaller boy, and a girl about 9 years old.—E. S.]

61. [The following cottages were among those on the Duchy of Cornwall estate at Fordington. The worst of all, "the Barracks," were not occupied by agricultural labourers.

(1.) Attached to a farm, contained two carters, the wife of one, a girl and two boys. You could hardly stand upright in the two bedrooms.

(2.) Four "model" cottages, let at 10*l.* 10*s.* a year each. Three of them contained two families.

(3.) Attached to a farm, containing man, wife, and five children. One bedroom, same size as lower room (about 14 × 8). Rent 2*s.* The back of this cottage and of the next opened into a farmyard, which slanted down towards them. No garden.

(4.) Of the same size but rather worse than the last, containing man, wife, five children, and a sick man. Rent 2*s.* 6*d.*

(5.) With one room above and one below, containing man, wife, and four children. Rent 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.—E. S.]

62. *The Right Hon. Lord Portman*, Bryanstone, Blandford.—"I have had great experience of the "system of letting cottages with farms, because I have "so let them on 21 years leases, and have had to "wait till the leases expired before I have had any "power to change the system. The objections "which I have found are, first, that the occupiers of "cottages have sometimes been persons whom I have "wished to get rid of, but who have been good "labourers and therefore useful to the farmer. Some-"times they have been men guilty of petty acts of "thieving; sometimes their families have included "daughters of such a character as to exercise a "demoralizing influence upon the whole place; and "yet the answer of the farmer to my expressed wishes "to get rid of them has been, that the man is too "useful to him as a skilled labourer.

"Secondly, I have found that in some cases the "farmer has oppressed the labourer by actually mak-"ing him pay him such a rent as to produce a profit "from the cottages which I have let to the tenant "with the farm, or by putting into a cottage lodgers "beyond its capacity.

"And, thirdly, I have found the farmer constantly "neglect to look after the cottage, not only by omission "of whitewashing, but by neglect of simple cleaning.

"On the other hand, it is certainly very important "to the tenant to have certain cottages under his "control, especially for his foreman, shepherd, carter, "or other labourer most important to him.

"For these reasons the plan which I adopt is to give "generally four cottages to the tenant as a part of "his farm at 1*s.* a year rent. In all the other cottages "the rent is paid to me, although the tenant nomi-"nates. The lease under which I let them to the "tenant farmer contains clauses enabling me at any "time to inspect the state and condition of the cot-"tages, requiring the tenant not to allow more than "—— persons above the age of 12 years at any one "time to inhabit the cottage, and in the event of any "person who shall be considered by me to be an im-"proper person occupying the cottage, the tenant is to "discharge him forthwith on my giving him notice.

"The cost of a cottage depends so entirely upon "the cost of carriage, and its situation, that no esti-"mates apply equally to two places. On the lias we "only have to open a hole and build a cottage with the "clay. A cottage may be built in one place for 100*l.*, "and two miles off it will cost 140*l.* Some cottages "I build of 'ceobb' or mud, the chalk on which I "build making an excellent substance for a wall. "This is one-third cheaper than brick, and if I were to "begin building again, I should build many more of "mud; but it requires a skilful builder. It corre-"sponds to the new 'concrete' plan, and I am not "sure that cottages of this material are not the most "comfortable.

"Iron does not answer; it is very cheap, but is "affected by heat and cold.

"Wood is more expensive than mud. And brick "and flint, which is the ordinary material now used, "is the most expensive of all.

"When I build in a village, I generally put from "four to six cottages together, but never anywhere "else, because of quarrels. Some time ago we tried "a common oven for several cottages, but it did not "work. Now I have an arrangement of a hearth, so "that each family can bake separately.

"The scarcity of fuel has led in most villages to "the practice of 'wooding,' which consists in pick-"ing up dead branches in the woods, but which "offered great temptations to stealing wood. We "broke through this system by collecting heaps of "fuel and selling it to the poor in winter, and now "we have coal clubs. At Pimperne there is a piece "of ground where the poor have the right of cutting "gorse; at Durweston a man goes round with fag-"gots, which he sells at 1*d.* each, the cost price.

"The allotment gardens we give to the labourers are "mostly a quarter of an acre, and that is enough. "Very often they don't take it at all. Our charge is "always 4*d.* a 'lug' (rod), including tithe and rates.

"We used always to resist the use of the plough, "but we find that difficult to do where a man is in "such regular hard work as not to have time to do "justice to his allotment, and then we allow him to "get a 'jobbing' man to plough it for him. At least "we wink at his doing it."

63. The following extract is from an address delivered to the "Blandford Farmers' Club," by the Rev. Lord S. Godolphin Osborne, and published by request of the Club.

"I am clearly of opinion that the landlord should hold all the cottages in his own hands, under his own direct control. I consider all sub-letting to be a great evil. It is, as I have said, a clear duty of the landlord to find a certain number of dwellings conveniently situated for the chief farm tenants. This affords to the tenants liberty to put such servants into them, and it may, perhaps, be said that these are likely to be some of the most respectable and orderly of their race.

"I grant it, but as I hold the landlord to be in duty answerable for the supervision of the whole economy of his estate, and especially as regards the sustaining order and decency amongst the poorest and most numerous class upon it, as he has to see that all the repairs to the dwellings are done, and that his own provision for the moral conduct of the labouring class is not abused. I consider he can only effectually do so by holding all his cottages in his own hands; but of course I assume that in the case of the cottages set apart for the chief farm servants, he would always listen to any fair application from the employer wishing to change any of the occupants.

"I can quite understand the argument of the tenant farmer, that it is most important to him to have his shepherd, his stableman, and a few others, so under his command that he can dismiss them at his will, and, therefore, that he ought to have the power to give the same notice to quit the cottage that he gives to quit the service. I must, however, state my conviction that it is a lesser evil to make this contingency a matter of arrangement between the landlord and the tenant, both foreseeing the necessity of some understanding in the matter, than to leave the cottages to be sub-let by the tenants, giving them all the power over their occupants."

64. Extracts from a paper on "Agricultural Labourers' Cottages," read by Mr. J. G. Homer (president), before the Dorchester Farmers' Club, on November 28, 1868.

"We will now consider whether it is an advantage for men to hire their cottages, or to have them rent-free, found by the employers. Take first the man that hires his cottage, and depends for his work at the best market, and make a calculation of his earnings. The first six months from Lady-day to Michaelmas I calculate (if a good workman) 12*s.* per week; from Michaelmas to Lady-day, 9*s.*; making an average of 10*s.* 6*d.* per week for the year. He will have to pay at least 2*s.* per week for house rent, fuel, and rates, leaving 8*s.* 6*d.* per week for his maintenance. This, I believe, to be up to the general average of wages for out-door labourers, as there will be several weeks lost by bad weather and other things, and not always certain of getting work. Take another instance of a man renting his house. This man may hire himself for a year as a general labourer at 10*s.* per week; 20*s* and his liquor extra for harvest. This man will have to pay his rent and rates, and also to buy fuel, which will leave him barely with 9*s.* per week. This man, however, I think better off than the man always depending on the labour market, as he has his regular pay and loses no time from bad weather. The two cases that I have brought before you will not apply generally to all men renting their cottages, as there are some who from want of skill and perseverance cannot earn the wages first described, and others will not hire themselves by the year; consequently during the winter they are often out of work, and poaching and petty thieving are resorted to. We will now take the case of the yearly servant, who is provided with his house on the farm. He is hired for a year at 8*s.* per week common work, to have piecework, such as hedging, draining, mowing, reaping, and turnip-hoeing, which will add from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week more to his wages (this, however, must depend on the man, as some will earn much more at piecework than others); to have his grist—from two to four bushels of wheat per month, according to his working family—at 5*s.* per bushel, cottage, garden, and rates free; fuel, such as furze or wood faggots, for cutting, and generally coals given to some extent; from 20 to 30 lug of potato land, the ground prepared for planting without pay; and liquor found him for the year. This, I calculate, is equal to 12*s.* or 13*s.* per week, besides all the comforts arising from taking his meals in his house, and being always near his work. In many cases gristing is not allowed, and 1*s.* per week more is given in wages; but the men in general prefer the former, as they have their wheat at (on an average) 1*d.* per lb., and their bread is much better for family purposes. These men, I consider, are 2*s.* per week better off than men renting their cottages and depending on the labour market. We will now look at the disadvantages that both the occupier of land and the labourers are under in too many cases from want of cottage accommodation to secure certain labour for the whole year. We all know that good farming cannot be carried on without sufficient manual labour, and certain labour cannot be secured without cottages for the men to live in attached to the farm or in the parish. We will take, for instance, a farm requiring ten cottages, and it has only five; the consequence is you must fill those houses with large working families if possible, who, in many cases, are crowded together, regardless of common decency. It also causes constant change, because as the young men grow up they leave their father to look out for themselves, or get married. The consequence is you lose a good young man for want of a cottage to put him in, and the father is obliged to leave, too, as his family is not large enough; so a constant change is going on yearly, which is a great disadvantage to both parties."

65. Evidence as to the amount of land let in allotments:— Dorsetshire. Mr. Stanhope. g.

(A.) Union of Wareham.

Parish.	Population (1861).	Acreage of Allotment Ground.	Price per Perch.	This would be a Rent per Acre of
			d.	£ *s.*
Bloxworth	364	4	—	—
Bere Regis	1,189	16	—	—
Affpuddle	455	8	—	—
Winfrith	1,020	8	—	—
Corfe Castle	1,900	7	—	—
Kingston	63	—	—	—
Worth	350	5¼	3	2 0
Langton	174	9	6	4 0
		11	3	2 0
Swanage	2,004	—	—	—
Studland	595	—	—	—
Wareham	3,076	—	—	—
East Stoke	594	4	4	2 13
Wool	590	10	4	2 13
		2½	9	6 0
East Lulworth	453	4	6	4 0
West Lulworth	446	—	—	—
Tyneham	272	—	(Good gardens.)	—
Steeple	262	—	(Good gardens.)	—
Kimmeridge	185	4	2	1 6
Total	—	96¾	—	—

(B.) Sturminster Union.

Parish.	Name of Person letting.	Amount of Allotments.	Price per Perch.	This amounts to a Rent per Acre of
		A. R. P.	*d.*	£ *s.*
Belchalwell	Lord Rivers	1 0 0	5	3 5
Caundle Stourton.	None.			
Child Okeford.	E. Clay Seymer, Esq.	5 12 5	3	2 0
	Rev. R. C. Price	3 13 6	4	2 13
	Churchwardens, &c.	5 2 13	2	1 6
Fifehead Magdalen.	Sir I. Guest, Bart.	3 1 0	4	2 13
Fifehead Neville.	None.			
Hammoon	Rector, glebe land.	4 2 0	4½	3 0
Hanford	None.			
Haselbury Bryan.	Rector, glebe land.	10 2 0	3	2 0
Hinton, St. Mary.	None.			
Ibberton				
Lydlinch				
Manston	Marquis of Westminster.	5 0 38	4	2 13
Marnhull	Marquis of Westminster.	7 2 32	6	4 0
	John Hussey, Esq.	10 0 0	6	4 0
	Churchwardens	3 2 0	4	2 13
Okeford Fitzpaine	Rector	3 0 36	4½	3 0
	Lord Rivers	6 1 23	4½	3 0
Okeford Shilling.	None.			
Stalbridge	Marquis of Westminster.	52 3 6	6	4 0
Stock Gayland.	None.			
Stoke Wake	Mr. Dibden	3 3 24	4 (without manure.)	2 13
	Mr. Summers	4 0 0	1*s.* (plough'd and manured.)	8 0

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Parish.	Name of Person letting.	Amount of Allotments. A. R. P.	Price per Perch. d.	This amounts to a Rent per Acre of £ s.
Sturminster	Churchwardens	14 2 1	1½	1 0
	Vicar of Sturminster.	15 3 9	2¾	1 16
	Mrs. A. Dashwood.	5 1 27	5 (good land.)	3 5
	Churchwardens	2 0 0	—	—
	Lord Rivers -	45 0 0	3d., 4d., and 6d.	From 2 0 to 3 5
Woolland -	None.			
	Total -	219 1 20		

(C.) Dorchester Union.

——	A. R. P.	——	A. R. P.
Tincleton -	6 0 0	Brought forward	
Puddlehinton -	6 2 0	Frome Vanchurch	1 2 0
Dewlish - -	6 0 0	Little Bredy -	4 1 0
Puddletown -	7 3 0	Long Bredy -	4 0 0
Tolpuddle -	6 2 20	Maiden Newton -	12 0 0
Stafford - -	3 3 18	Wint, St. Martin	11 0 0
Frampton -	5 0 0		
		Total -	74 1 38
Carried forward			

In the remaining 25 parishes there are no allotments.

(D.) Union of Blandford.

Parish.	Population (1861).	Amount of Allotment Land. Acres.
Almer - - -	155	8
Anderson - - -	62	—
Blandford Forum - -	3,900	30
,, St. Mary - -	409	3
Bryanston - - -	206	4
Charlton Marshall - -	553	4
Durweston - - -	364	33
Hilton - - -	833	22
Iwerne Courtney - -	620	35
Langton - - -	174	—
Milborne St. Andrew - -	327	6
,, Stileham - -	288	8
Milton Abbas - - -	1,014	14
Pimperne - - -	495	25
Steepleton Preston - -	59	—
Stourpaine - - -	658	30
Spettisbury - - -	688	—
Tarrant Crawford - -	67	4
,, Gunville - -	441	—
,, Hinton - -	258	4
,, Keyneston - -	309	12
,, Launceston - -	107	—
,, Monkton - -	243	4
,, Rawston - -	53	—
,, Rushton - -	173	6
Turnworth - - -	150	4
Winterborne Clenson -	106	2
,, Houghton -	284	10
,, Kingston -	589	17
,, Strickland -	444	17
,, Whitchurch -	554	10
,, Zelston - -	199	5
,, Thomson -	39	—
Total - -	—	317

(E.) Unions of Bridport and Beaminster.

In Bridport Union there are allotments in 13 out of 19 parishes, comprising 91 acres, let at an average rent of 6*l.* 6*s.* an acre. In Beaminster Union there are allotments in 12 out of 26 parishes, comprising 155 acres, let at an average rent of 4*l.* 14*s.* an acre.

(T.) On the Earl of Shaftesbury's Estate.

Parish.	No. of Gardens.	Acreage.	Rent per Acre. £ s.
St. Giles' - -	110	60 of these ½ acre each. 50 of these ¼ acre each.	1 4
Cranborne -	16	8 of these ½ acre each. 8 of these ¼ acre each.	1 4
Pentridge - -	36	18 of these ½ acre each. 18 of these ¼ acre each.	1 4
Rockborne (Hants). -	18	10 of these ¼ acre each. 8 of these 20 perches each.	2 0 (Best quality.)
Gussage - -	30	¼ acre each -	1 4
Horton - -	13	4 of these ¼ acre each. 9 of these ½ acre each.	0 10
Woodlands -	61	15 of these ¼ acre each. 46 of these ½ acre each.	1 4
Chalbury - -	24	17 of these ¼ acre each. 7 of these ½ acre each.	1 4
Hinton Martell -	88	71 of these ¼ acre each. 17 of these ½ acre each.	1 4
Total -	396		

Mem.—A few more occupied by persons not strictly of the agricultural labourer class.

[By this table it appears that 165 allotments are half an acre in size, 203 are quarter of an acre, and 8 are one-eighth of an acre.]

66. Cerne Abbas allotments. Extract of letter, dated January 23, 1869, from the Rev. A. H. Bull, vicar :—

"This scheme began in 1844 ; the allotments are distributed as follows :—

		Perches.	A.	R.	P.
10	portions of	40 -	2	2	0
14	,,	30 -	2	2	20
44	,,	20 -	5	2	0
57	between 10 and 20 -		4	3	20 nearly
125	allotments in area of		15	2	0

"Thus you see we have none bigger than a quarter of an acre ; and an old friend of much experience and wisdom in these matters once told me that he thought one-eighth of an acre or 20 perches was (generally) as much as a labourer could fairly cultivate consistently with the due attention to his master's work.

"The rent is at the rate of 48*s.* an acre, including rates, &c. The system appears to me to work well, promoting healthy occupation, good emulation, and sobriety of life."

[The evidence which follows (from numbers 67 to 72) is with reference to the amount of wages paid in this county.—E.S.]

67. Specimens of the amount and mode of payment of wages (generally verified by reference to employers and employed). It should be observed that in all cases they are *married* men.

(*a.*) BLANDFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD.

(1.) 9*s.* ; "wet and het" (irrespective of weather). 10 or 12 "lug" (perches) of potato ground (worth 12*s.*) Cottage and good garden at 1*s.* a week. (Total ordinary wages, 9*s.* 3*d.* a week). Piecework at grass and corn harvest,—estimated at from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a

week all the year. In addition to this some hops and malt given at that time for brewing.

(2.) 9*s.*; 6*d.* extra per week given for the wash, the family not being allowed to keep a pig. Furze carried for them (worth 15*s.*). (Total ordinary wages, 9*s.* 9*d.* a week). Piecework at grass and corn harvest, and cider then given.

(3.) 10*s.*; no other extras. Piecework at grass and corn harvest, and at turnip hoeing. Cider given at harvest only.

(4.) Carter and three sons near Blandford,—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Father's total earnings (estimated by employer) -	30	0	0
Son aged 24 (?) - -	24	2	10
Son aged 22 (?) - -	23	2	6
Son aged 16 (?) - -	11	14	2
	88	19	6
Add cottage rent free -	2	12	0
	£91	11	6

Average weekly payment to each of four persons doing man's work, 8*s.* 9½*d.*

(β.) DORCHESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD.

(1.) 8*s.*, "wet and het." House and garden rent free (worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week?). 20 lug of potato ground (worth 1*l.*). A ton of coals at Christmas (worth 1*l.*). (Total ordinary wages, 10*s.* 3*d.* a week). 1*l.* extra at harvest, in lieu of any piecework, and 1*l.* 10*s.* given for beer money. Half a bushel of "grist" corn every week at 5*s.* a bushel.

(2.) 10*s.* "Grist" when employer has it. "Tut" (piecework) at harvest only. (Rent 2*s.* 7*d.*, and rates and taxes.)

[The two following cases illustrate the difference in wages between two men working for the same employer.]

(3.) 8*s.* Cottage and garden rent free (worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week). 12 "lug" of potato ground (worth 12*s.*). Some furze found in summer, and coal in winter (worth 2*l.*?). 1*l.* extra for harvest. Four days "mowing," and ale then given. Half a bushel of grist a week at 5*s.* a bushel (in consequence of which his wife was obliged to go out when required at 6*d.* a day instead of 8*d.*).

(3*a.*) 9*s.* 15 "lug" of potato ground (worth 15*s.*). Fuel in winter (arrangement only begun in 1868, and value unknown). "Tut" work at corn harvest only. Half a bushel of "grist" per week at 5*s.* a bushel. (His rent was 1*s.* 6*d.* "I'd rather rent my own house," he said, "because my wife can go out or not as she likes.")

(γ.) STURMINSTER NEWTON NEIGHBOURHOOD.

(1.) 9*s.* No extras unless paid for, except cider in summer and "grist" if wished. (House rent 1*s.* 3*d.* a week, with no garden or allotment.)

(2.) 9*s.* Three pints of ale a day. Cottage and large garden at 5*l.* a year.

(δ.) FROM A NOTORIOUSLY LOW-WAGE VILLAGE, WINFRITH.

(1.) 7*s.* a week. House and 30 perch of garden rent free (worth 1*s.* 6*d.*). Two loads of turf and some furze every year (say 28*s.*). (Total ordinary wages a little over 9*s.* a week). Does a good deal of "tut" work; has "malt and hops" given at harvest. Wages paid "when you like to go for them."

(2.) 8*s.* House and garden rent free (worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week). Two load of turf and some furze (worth 28*s.*). (Total ordinary wages 10*s.*) No "tut" work, but 10*s.* extra for harvest. No "grist."

(3.) 7*s.* House and garden rent free (worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week). 20 lug of potato ground (1*l.*). His turf is hauled for him, he cuts it (say 8*s.*) (Total ordinary wages 9*s.* 3*d.*). No "tut" work, but 10*s.* extra for harvest. "Grist" at market price. Wages paid once a month.

(ε.) IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CRANBORNE.

[The five men following lived in the cottages of Lord Shaftesbury, who also provided allotments. Their hours of work were one hour shorter than usual, being from 7 (having breakfasted first) till 5 all the year. Their rents were 1*s.* a week only.—E.S.]

(1.) 10*s.*, "wet and het." 12 "lug" of potato ground (worth 12*s.*). Total of ordinary wages 10*s.* 3*d.* Piecework at hay and corn harvest, at the rate of 4*s.* a day (including beer), added per week 2*s.*

(2.) 10*s.*, "wet and het." His fuel carried for him (worth ?) Piecework at hay and corn harvest. No additions.

(3.) Same as (1), but does less piecework.

(4.) 9*s.*, "wet and het." No additions. Piecework, and beer at hay and corn harvest only.

(5.) 9*s.*, "wet and het." No additions except fuel sometimes carried for him. Piecework and beer at hay and corn harvest. Estimated to be worth per week 2*s.*

(θ.) The following are specimens of the wages paid to two carters and two shepherds, as estimated by their employers only:—

(1.) Carter for six years near Cerne.

	s.	*d.*
Wages per week - - -	9	0
Cottage and garden (worth per week) -	1	6
20 lug potato ground 1*l.*; furze found 1*l*; 1*s.* for every journey to divide between self and mate (say 15*s.*). Total per week - - -	1	0
(Grist only rarely).		
	11	6

(1*a.*) Carter near Blandford.

		s.	*d.*
Wages per week - - -		10	0
Fuel valued at -	£2 12 0		
Ale valued at -	£2 0 0		
"Grist" valued at	£2 12 0		
Journey money -	£1 6 0		
	£8 10 0=per week	3	3
		13	3

(2.) Shepherd (near Wimborne) 10*s.* a

		s.	*d.*
week - - - - -		10	0
Allowance for house rent - -	£3 10 0		
Value of potato land - -	£1 0 0		
Cartage of fuel valued at -	£2 0 0		
	£6 10 0=per week	2	6
Also extra after harvest -	£0 17 0		
Beer given of the value of -	£2 0 0		
Grist given and valued at -	£1 6 8		
	£4 3 8 (say)	1	6
		14	0

	s.	*d.*
(2*a.*) Shepherd (near Blandford), per week	10	0
Cottage and large garden (at per week) - - - - -	1	0
2*l.* at lambing, 1*l.* at harvest, and 1*l.* extra in beer, &c., equal to per week - - - -	1	6
	12	6

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68. Labour Expenses on a farm of 500 acres arable, 120 pasture, and 40 down (total 660) during 1868.

		Regular weekly Wages.	Extra Payments in Money.	Total extra Money.	Extra Payments in Kind, as valued by Employer.							Total extra in Kind.	Total for the whole Year.	Average weekly Wages, including Payments in Kind and Piece-work.
					Beer.	House and Garden.	Potato Ground	1 Ton Coal.	100 wood Faggots.	100 Furze Faggots.	Profit on Wheat sold at 5s. per Bushel.			
		s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s.	£	s.	£ s. d.	£	s.	Bush. £ s.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.
	1st carter	9 0	Journeys, 1l. 1s.; harvest, 1l.; extras, 2l.	4 1 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(42) 4 4	14 5 8	41 14 8	16 0
	2nd carter	9 0	Journeys, 1l.; harvest, 1l.	2 0 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(28) 2 16	12 17 8	38 5 8	14 8
	3rd carter	9 0	Journeys, 1l.; harvest, 1l.	2 0 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(21) 2 2	12 3 8	37 11 8	14 5
	4th carter	8 0	Journeys, 10s.; harvest, 1l.	1 10 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(52) 5 4	15 5 8	37 11 8	14 5
	1st shepherd	9 0	Lambing, 2l.; harvest, 1l.	3 0 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(20) 2 0	12 1 8	38 9 8	14 9
	2nd shepherd	11 0	Lambing, 1l.; harvest, 1l.	2 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	32 12 0	12 6
	Cowman	10 0	Harvest, 1l.	1 0 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	1	5	(38) 3 16	13 17 8	40 17 8	15 8
Ordinary Labourers.	(1)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.; piece-work, 1l. 6s.	2 6 0	2 0	5	10	1 6 8	—	5	(45) 4 10	13 11 8	39 5 8	15 1
	(2)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.; piece-work, 1l. 19s.	2 19 0	2 0	5	—	—	—	—	—	7 0 0	33 7 0	12 10
	(3)	10 0	Piece-work, 3l. 7s.	3 7 0	3 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	3 0 0	32 7 0	12 5
	(4)	10 0	Piece-work, 3l. 4s.	3 4 0	3 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	3 0 0	32 4 0	12 4½
	(5)	10 0	Piece-work, 3l. 2s.	3 2 0	3 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	3 0 0	32 2 0	12 4
	(6)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.	1 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	(44) 4 8	6 8 0	30 16 0	11 10
	(7)	10 0	Harvest, 1l.; piece-work, 1l.	2 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	30 0 0	11 6
	(8)	10 0	Harvest, 1l.; piece-work, 15s.	1 15 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	29 15 0	11 5
	(9)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.; piece-work, 1l. 8s.	2 8 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	27 16 0	10 8
	(10)	9 6	Harvest, 1l.	1 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	27 14 0	10 8
	(11)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.	1 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	26 8 0	10 1½
	(12)	9 0	Harvest, 1l.	1 0 0	2 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 0 0	26 8 0	10 1½
Boys.	Plough-boy (18).	7 6	Harvest, 15s.	0 15 0	1 10	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 10 0	21 15 0	—
	Plough-boy (14).	4 6	Harvest, 10s.	0 10 0	1 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 0 0	13 4 0	—
	Plough-boy (14).	4 6	Harvest, 10s.	0 10 0	1 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 0 0	13 4 0	—
	Plough-boy (13).	4 6	Harvest, 10s.	0 10 0	1 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 0 0	13 4 0	—
	Carter-boy (12).	3 0	Harvest, 7s.; journeys, 10s. 6d.	0 17 6	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	9 8 6	—
	Carter-boy (12).	3 0	Harvest, 7s.; journeys, 10s.	0 17 0	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	9 8 0	—
	Carter-boy (13).	3 0	Harvest, 7s.; journeys, 10s.	0 17 0	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	9 8 0	—
	Carter-boy (11).	3 0	Harvest, 7s.; journeys, 5s.	0 12 0	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	9 3 0	—
	Shepherd-boy.	3 0	Harvest, 7s.	0 7 0	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	8 18 0	—
	Cow-boy	3 0	Harvest, 7s.	0 7 0	0 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 15 0	8 18 0	—
4 extra men		—	Harvest, 15l.	—	5 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20 0 0	—
11 women		—	Harvest, 12l.	—	4 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16 0 0	—
			Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	787 16 2	—

[*Note by Edward Stanhope.*—In the case of *ordinary labourers* the *average* weekly wage in money is nearly 9*s.* 6*d.*; the average piece-work, or payments in lieu of it, amounts to 2*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* a year, or nearly 10*d.* a week; the average value of beer (as estimated) is 2*l.* 5*s.*, or 10*d.* a week. Only 3 of the 12 have any other addition.

Waggoners average in money 8*s.* 9*d.* a week, with an estimated addition of 9*d.* a week for beer, and 5*s.* 6*d.* for other payments in kind.

Shepherds average in money 10*s.* a week; in beer, 9*d.*; and in other payments in kind, 2*s.* 11*d.*

Seven and a half per cent. of the whole labour account is paid in beer.

A young man of 18 earns 7*s.* 9½*d.* a week, everything included, except beer (estimated at 7*d.* a week).

The above table is due to the kindness of J. C. Mansel, Esq., who speaks of it as a "fair specimen," but thinks that cottages should be estimated only at 4*l.* a year.]

69. The following shows the mode of payment of some employers in the Heath district :—

(*a*). *A. B.*, labourer.

(His wages are 7*s.* a week, a house and garden, 20 lug of potato ground. No piecework, but 10*s.* extra at harvest.)

"We cut the turf and master pulls it. We men "have coal. Master gives 'gristing,' but only at the "market price. Sometimes we have a cheese. Wages "are paid every month, on a Monday. Then a "reckoning is made, and we get the rest of it, if "there's any to come to us.

"We keep a pig; but I'm obliged to look after that "to pay a little bill. It's not 1 in 20 times that we "get anything to eat off it, because I've got a little "family, and we pay our shoe bill when the pig is "killed.

"Six till five are our hours. At harvest we work

" longer, but we get cider or ale for it. So we do " when we do a job after hours."

(*b.*) Another man in the same village says — " Mr. —— pays wages when you like to go for them. " I go every five or six week. We get 'gristing' at " 5*s.* a bushel. We get barley for the pig. Some- " times we buy skim milk. When we go for our wages " an account is made up, and we get what is owing " to us."

70. Evidence of relieving officers as to the extent to which the agricultural labourers depend upon the rates.

Mr. J. Hallett, R. O. at Bere.—" Every labourer " that is ill in my district comes for the parish doctor. " Before they have been ill a week they come for relief " in most cases."

Mr. Hunt, R. O. at Cranborne.—" In nine times out " of ten men come for the parish doctor if a child is " ill. If a man is ill two or three days, he sends for " relief. Of course men do not come from Crichell or " St. Giles'."

Mr. J. C. Turner, late R. O. at Blandford.— " Taking the mass of labourers, they cannot, I believe, " stand a week's illness in the family. They cannot " afford to put by anything for a wet day."

Mr. Wallis, R. O. at Dorchester.—" They gene- " rally can't stand a week's illness."

[The following extracts are from the relief book at the Blandford union for two parishes (Michaelmas quarter, 1868). Relief was given to—

(1.) Wages 10*s.* Children ill.
(2.) Wages 9*s.* Funeral expenses of child.
(3.) Shepherd. Funeral expenses.
(4.) Wages 9*s.* Illness of child.
(5.) Wages 10*s.* Wife ill.
(6.) Wages 9*s.* No reason given. Relief in meat.
(7.) Wages 9*s.* Wife ill. Meat.
(8.) Wages 10*s.* Wife ill. Meat.
(9.) Wages 9*s.* No reason. Meat.]

71. Evidence of a grocer and draper.—" I am " doubtful whether harvest is as profitable a time to " the labourer as it is represented to be. This year " it only lasted a fortnight, and what with the extra " wear of boots and clothes, and with the extra food " and drink they get then, I doubt if they are much " better off after it. I always find they pay their bill " better in the spring than they do after harvest.

" As to the 'grist' corn, I know it is sometimes a " loss to them. Some of the farmers give such wheat " that the bread shown to me is of a dark colour. " Sometimes they say it is a gain. But I don't see " that a labourer who has the grist pays my bill better " than a man who has not.

" The great difficulty with them is the want of " providence to save up in order to buy an expensive " article, such as blankets, and the clothing club has " been a great help to them.

" The plan of giving credit to the poor, which I " tried in consequence of competition, has failed. It " led to a running account in which there was always " a balance unpaid, unless recourse was had to the " county court. It led to extravagance, the wife " having the book ordered things according to the " wants rather than the means of the family."

[Another grocer says—" The fruitful cause of " getting into excessive debt appears to me to be the " system of paying wages monthly instead of weekly; " the remedy, regular employment at equalized wages " throughout the year, with extra at hay and corn " harvest. I have seen teetotallers drinking pepper- " mint water."]

72. Extract from an article on the Dorsetshire labourer, which appeared in the " Labour Circular " of February 1868.

The facts related in this article are principally collected from a *particular district* (near Blandford), but still they may be taken as giving a pretty accurate description of the condition of the labourer throughout the entire county. In many localities, indeed, his position is much worse than that given here, localities where overcrowding, ignorance, filth, poverty, and drunkenness abound.

We shall endeavour to be as definite as possible, and will therefore commence by describing the wages given on some 13 farms which we have visited in the collection of information. Farmers number 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, give 9*s.* per week, and eight to ten "lug" (pole) of potato ground in the field; number 6, 9*s.* per week and no ground. These farmers are bound by a clause in their lease not to give their labourers grist, the landowner thinking the labourer would thereby be paid more in money wages, which is not the case. Farmer number 7 gives 9*s.* per week, eight perch of ground, and two bushels of tailing, or light wheat, per month, at 5*s.* per bushel, let the market price be what it may. Farmer number 8 allows 9*s.*, the same amount of tailing at 5*s.* per bushel, and eight perch of ground. Teetotallers get 1*s.* per week extra, and in harvest, money instead of beer. Farmer 9 gives 8*s.* per week, four bushels of tailing wheat per month at 5*s.* per bushel, twelve perch of land to men, and eight perch to boys, and house rent free. Number 10 gives 9*s.*, ten perch of land, and from two to three bushels of tailing per month at the usual 5*s.* price. Single men on this and the previous farm have 10*s.* a week, and no grist. Number 11, same wages as number 10, but he sells his men flour instead of wheat. Number 12 gives 9*s.* per week to both single and married men, seven "lug" (perch) of ground to each man, and two bushels of tailing at 5*s.* to married men; and number 13 gives 10*s.* per week to married and single men, no grist, but a liberal allowance of potato ground, ploughed and manured, and fagots at less than half price. On this farm men's wages are not lowered when they get old, and after they are unable to work any longer, they are more or less pensioned and provided for.

On all these farms, and, we believe, all over Dorsetshire, carters and shepherds have from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week extra, and house rent free. Some farmers, we know, give 10*s.* a week, and allow two bushels of tailing per month, at 5*s.* per bushel. It will be observed that wages range between 8*s.* and 10*s.*, the difference between these sums being generally made up by a difference in the amount of extras in land, tailing, housing, &c., allowed with them; the higher wages of 9*s.* and 10*s.* are frequently given without any additions.

In order that our readers may have as accurate an idea as possible of the value of the Dorsetshire labourer's remuneration, we will attempt to express, as nearly as we can, the worth of these various extras in money. To take the tailing first: a bushel of very good tailing, after the miller has taken 7 lbs. toll for grinding—and a pound will be wasted in grinding—he will bring back to the labourer 40 lbs. of seconds flour, and sixpennyworth of bran, which will be together worth about 7*s.* Now, the labourer pays 5*s.* for it in the first instance, and, therefore, on the whole transaction, only gets 2*s.* profit. But should the tailing be light, it will not produce so much flour by, perhaps, 10 lbs., and the labourer will not get 3*d.* by the transaction.

It might be thought that the men would be much benefited when wheat is high in price, by being able to get it at the fixed rate of 5*s.* per bushel; but in very many cases this is not so, for it often happens, when corn is high, the farmer sends wheat which otherwise would have become tailing to market among his other corn,—in other words, the tailing is composed of lighter stuff. One farmer we know supplies his men with 40 lb. of flour instead of the wheat. From this the labourer would get 1*s.* 6*d.* profit; but he would prefer it to the tailing, because he is sure to have the full weight. We would remark we are inclined to the belief that this tailing, and even some of the other extras, are considered more as a favour than part of the labourer's remuneration, because the quantity allowed is frequently regulated according to the number of a man's family.

We now come to the potato ground. Of this some

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get 15 or 20 lug; but, generally speaking, 12 lug for a man and 8 for a woman or boy. The value of this land is 6*d.* per lug; if manured and ploughed, which it is in a few cases, it is worth 1*s.* per lug. The ground will produce from half a bag to a bag of potatoes per pole. The farmer will haul manure to the land free of expense—but he will not give the manure—and will also carry home the labourer's crop at digging time. Suppose the labourer had 12 lug of land at 6*d.* per lug, this would be 6*s.*, which, with 5*s.* for carrying manure and potatoes, would be 11*s.* But it is very doubtful whether this land and carriage can be regarded as part of his regular day's wages. The labourer says it is an allowance for extra work, early and late, during the haymaking season, and for which he is not otherwise paid. As to the worth of the cottage when the labourer has it free, the rent paid for an ordinary cottage is about 1*s.* 6*d.*; the new flint and tiled cottages are worth about 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, but are rented at 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

We will next consider the earnings of the labourer by piecework during the spring and summer time. Much is often said about the extra wages labourers earn in hay and harvest time, balancing them against their low winter incomes; but it should be carefully borne in mind that a summer day's work is almost twice as long and twice as exhaustive as a winter day's work. We remember once a farmer describing to us in glowing terms how well his men were paid. Not long after we met one of his labourers—one of the most intelligent among them—and we congratulated him upon his good circumstances, reckoning up to him the whole of his winter and summer wages, and dividing the total by 52, which, as the farmer said, was the way to get at his weekly income. "Stop, stop," said the man, "you are not reckoning "fairly. Do you call that a day's work when I rise "and am at work by daybreak, and work as long as I "can see during the longer summer days—often eight "or nine hours longer than a day's work is at other "times of the year? Besides, you make no allowance "for my paying the woman for tying and hiling (that "is, putting the corn in heaps) the wheat; you make "no allowance for ale, costing me several pounds "during the summer; you make no allowance for "hindering time in wet weather, or for purchase and "wear and tear of tools. There is a difference between "wages and earnings. If you take my wages as paid "to me during the winter season, and multiply them "by 52, that will be my wages; all money over and "above that are my earnings." What our friend meant was this, that if he earned twice as much wages in summer as in winter, it was for twice as much work and outlay on his part. But, putting aside all other considerations but the extra money cost to him of this extra work in summer, and looking simply at his earnings after this cost is met, we have yet staring us in the face one significant fact—which applies to all low-paid farm labourers—that the labourer's winter income is too little to meet his winter wants, and he is obliged to mortgage, so to speak, his summer wages. Many think the additional earnings of the labourer in harvest are so much for the good, to put by. Alas, they are too often already bespoke. The difference between what the labourer is paid, and what he requires for his support in winter, is frequently only met by the surplus paid him in summer, or, in other words, he has actually to pay the cost of much of his winter subsistence out of his summer earnings.

The average earnings at turnip hoeing is about 18*s.* per week, the labourer having to find beer. A man in a day will mow two acres of barley or oats, at 2*s.* 10*d.* per acre, finding his own ale; and he could mow two acres of wheat per day, at 6*s.* to 6*s.* 6*d.* per acre, finding his own ale, and paying 3*s.* to 3*s.* 3*d.* to a woman for tying and "hiling." A man in a day will "hew" from a half to a whole acres of wheat, at 9*s.* per acre, paying for his own beer, and to a woman 1*s.* 6*d.* per acre for tying and "hiling." For mowing clover grass he gets 2*s.* 10*d.* per acre, providing his own ale. Of this he can cut about two acres per diem. For mowing meadow grass he has 3*s.* 3*d.* per acre, without beer. For hedging, 6*d.* to 8*d.* per lug (pole). At this he can earn 2*s.* a day. A man will often not earn so much as he could at piecework, for fear the farmer should lower the price per acre. Sheep-shearers get from 15*s.* to 20*s.* per hundred for shearing. A good shearer will shear from 40 to 50 sheep in a day. They, however, find their own ale. Labourers who work by the day during the summer have 1*l.* gratuity after harvest. Those who cut wheat have 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, should their services be required to help in the corn after it is cut. Men not employed regularly on the farm, but who engage as day labourers for the harvest month, get 3*l.* for the month.

It is very seldom labourers get cottages rent-free, except carters and shepherds; and beer is not, as a rule, allowed. Women are employed on farms, but generally not more than two or three on one farm. They generally get 8*d.* a day, going to work at 8 o'clock in the morning. We do not know whether there are any children employed as young as 8 years of age, but there are some at 10 or 11 years. Labourers work from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening, from Lady Day to Michaelmas Day, and from 7 to 5 o'clock the rest part of the year. There is a little employment for the girls, but not sufficient; it is sewing and knitting gloves. They can knit five or six pairs a week, earning 5*d.* per pair. They are, however, obliged to take out this amount in goods. At glove-sewing 12 pairs and 2*s.* 8*d.* a week are made.

We will try and picture the way in which these people live. A man generally takes his money once a fortnight, spends 6*d.* in beer, and the rest goes to pay his debts. He may have a shilling put aside for the "tally" man, but this is all. And his debts are not principally incurred through drink. Many only spend 6*d.* a fortnight in beer. In fact, 48 hours after the labourer has taken his wages he has seldom a shilling left. He generally smokes from one to two ounces of tobacco weekly. He purchases a pig of the farmer, and pays a shilling or so per week till it is paid for; and he gets his barley with which he fats it in the same way. His butter, too, he often buys of the farmer, to whom, consequently, he is often in debt, and seldom has much money to take. This destroys his independence, and helps to prevent him from migrating to other localities and to better masters. With his small potatoes and his tub of pig-wash he keeps his pig till Christmas, and then kills it, and sells half of it to pay the shop bill. He looks to his summer earnings to clear off his debts with the shop-keeper and shoemaker. He pays to a coal and clothes club about 8*d.* to 1*s.* per month, which is added to by about the same amount (in many places only one-third) by the lord of the manor and others. This gives about 4 cwt. or 6 cwt. of coal in the winter, and some clothes at Christmas. He has for his breakfast bread and Dorset cheese, called by him "choke-dog," and a cup of coffee; for dinner a rasher of bacon and vegetables, and coffee again; and for supper probably a rasher of bacon and fried potatoes.

We will take one or two examples of how these men live. First, a man and wife and four children, with wages at 11*s.* per week. Suppose this family have three meals a day, this 6*s.* 10*d.* will not leave $\frac{3}{4}d.$ for each person to be spent over each meal.

	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*
Rent	1	0	Wages	11	0
Clothes	1	6	Food	6	10
Soap, soda, and blue	0	2			
School	0	3			
Candles	0	3			
Club	0	3			
Fuel	0	9			
	4	2		4	2

We will give a case known to ourselves—a labourer, with a large family, who is considered particularly

well off. He has a wife and seven children, and a lodger in the house, living at the same table, 10 people in all. Labourer's wages are 10*s.*; No. 1 boy, 6*s.*; No. 2 ditto, 5*s.*; No. 3 ditto, 4*s.*, wages per week. Lodger pays 5*s.* Extras from potato ground and other sources, 2*s.* Total income, 32*s.* Money to be spent on each meal, a fraction more than $1\frac{3}{4}d.$* A labourer does not buy butchers' meat; we do not suppose he ever tastes any, except at Christmas; but he will often buy suet, or, better still, dripping. His meat is generally salt pork, or bacon, off his own pig. We remember lately meeting a boy, 13 years of age, a bird-keeper, whose wages were 2*s.* 6*d.* a week ($4\frac{1}{4}d.$ a day!), who had in his dinner-bag bread, cheese, an onion, and salt; but he said he did not always have cheese.

[In letters to me in October, 1868, the writer of this article adds—"In consequence of some doubt "being expressed, I watched the butcher's cart on "the next Saturday, and to this class of labourers his "only sales were, to a poor man 1 lb. of suet, and to "a widow woman 1 lb. of suet on trust." "Some "have to pay more for their goods than they ought "owing to the scarcity of farthings. I hope they may "soon be as plentiful as halfpence.]

73. The following Extracts, relating to the Beer question, are from a pamphlet entitled "The "Agricultural Labourer," by J. Bailey Denton, Esq.

"At present the beershop is a great bar to the improved condition of the agricultural labourer. The influence of drink on an uneducated mind cannot be better shown than by the fact that beer or cider will go much further than its equivalent in money in inducing men to exert themselves, although the money could be taken home by the labourer for the benefit of the wife and children as well as himself, while the beer or cider, if drunk, is dissipated in selfish indulgence. The quality of the beer or cider sold in lowest wages districts is the worst.

"The liquid sold as beer in rural districts satisfies thirst at the time, and provokes it as soon as drunk. I cannot speak too strongly against the prevailing excessive use of bad beer or cider. It is the bane of the farm labourer. In those counties in the west of England where cider is used instead of beer, the impoverished condition of the agricultural labourer is even worse than where beer prevails. His inferiority in work is mainly to be attributed to the bad character of the cider, and the excessive use made of it. There is some proof of the injurious influence of excessive drinking, in the fact that in all the worst paid districts, where labour commands the lowest wages, and where those wages are all that the labour is worth, the publican and beer-seller bear a far larger proportion to the number of the agricultural labourer than is the case in those districts where the wages are higher and where the labour is more valuable. We often hear mentioned the low rate of wages in the county of Dorset, and comparisons are made with the wages ruling in other counties. When we turn to the statistics, giving the occupation of the people in the population returns of the last census, we find that whereas in Lincolnshire, which I select as the best cultivated county in England, the number of agricultural labourers is 52,871, and the number of people living by the sale of beer is 1,317, in Dorsetshire the number of agricultural labourers is 19,434, and the number of persons selling beer and cider is 582, showing a proportion in the former case of one beer-seller to 40 agricultural labourers, and in the latter, one beer-seller to 33 labourers. The proportion in Lincolnshire is much too high; but what is to be said of Dorsetshire, where the labourers, earning only two-thirds of the wages of Lincolnshire, support a larger proportion of beer and cider sellers? The figures given, moreover, do not fully represent the real state of things as regards the extent to which the beer and cider is drunk in Dorsetshire, as in that county a great deal of cider is given in lieu of money wages, whereas in Lincolnshire no such regular practice prevails either with respect to beer or cider.

"But I can illustrate this important part of the question by stating a case, within my experience, which can hardly fail to exhibit the fact that low wages and inferior work are associated with a preponderating use of beer or cider. In the year 1852 I had the control of some extensive drainage works in Dorsetshire, and at that time the agricultural money wages of the district ranged from 7*s.* to 9*s.* a week. Impressed that such pay was inconsistent with suitable labour, I imported into the work some north country labourers from Northumberland, practised in draining, to afford an example for such local men as chose to enter the trenches and dig by the piece. I guaranteed to the northern men a minimum of 18*s.* a week, although I could command the services of as many Dorsetshire labourers as I desired to employ at half that price. The result showed that I was right in bringing high priced competent men amongst low priced inferior ones, for as soon as the Dorsetshire men knew what the countrymen were getting, and saw the character of the work executed by them, they applied all their energies to imitation. At first they drank more beer, thinking that by such means they could do more work. They soon saw their error; and it was both amusing and instructive at the same time, to see how struck they were when they found that the northern men had for their dinners good meat and bread, while they were living on bread, tobacco, and miserable beer or cider. It was by very slow degrees that the Dorsetshire men realized the truth that butchers' meat was more strengthening than bad beer. Eventually, by the example afforded them, the 'technical education' given them by the Northumberland men, and by the effect of improved food, the despised Dorsetshire men were enabled to earn as much as their teachers, and it was not long before I actually removed them into the north of England, to compete with Yorkshire men in the work they had learned; and the first place in which they were engaged was Swine in Holderness, where there did not exist a public house or a beer shop in the village."

74. Extracts from the Prize lists of two Agricultural and Labourers' Friend Societies in 1868.

For working the greatest number of years in succession upon the same farm, or with the same master. Not exceeding 21 years of age.

WAREHAM AND PURBECK.

1*l.* 10*s.*, Charles Oborne, servant to Mr. S. Tucker, 14 years; second, 15*s.*, George Wilcox, servant to Mr. W. Budden, 14 years. [Both these must therefore have began regular work at 6 years of age.]

STURMINSTER NEWTON.

A coat, &c., John Hall, 13 years with Mr. E. Rossiter, Child Okeford; second, a coat, &c., Wm. Cuff, 13 years and four months with Mr. H. Fookes, Whitechurch. [Both these boys were therefore hired at 7.]

Prizes were given also to boys under 17 years of age for ploughing half an acre of land, with two horses and without a driver; to women labourers for working the greatest number of years in succession upon the same farm; and for maintaining the greatest number of legitimate children.

* As we wish to convey as exact an idea as possible of the Dorsetshire labourer's condition, we will give a description of a few more families visited by us. A., 9*s.* per week; wife and two children not earning anything; rent 1*s.* per week; no grist nor land. B., 10*s.* per week; wife and two children not earning anything; house rent free; no grist nor land. C., 10*s.* per week; wife and three children not earning anything; rent 1*s.* per week; eight lug of land, manured and ploughed. D., 9*s.* per week; wife and seven in family; one son earning 6*s.* per week, another son earning 5*s.* per week; total money wages, 20*s.*; profit from one bushel of grist per week, at 5*s.*, 2*s.*; rent, 1*s.* This family, therefore, has a little less than $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day to spend for each member's support. E., 10*s.* per week; wife and six children; son 3*s.* 6*d.* a week; total income, 13*s.* 6*d.*; no grist or other allowance; rent, 1*s.* 6*d.*; leaving only 12*s.* a week to support and clothe eight persons, a little more than $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day for each member of the family.

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g.

75. TABLE showing the comparative annual mortality for 1851-61 in various districts, sent to me by the Earl of Shaftesbury, and compiled by Dr. Farre.

Ages.	North-western Counties (Cheshire, &c.).		South-western (Dorset, &c.).		District of Wimborne (Dorset).		District of Sherborne (Dorset).	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
All ages - -	2·674	2·433	2·072	1·936	1·818	1·827	2·032	2·018
Under 5 - -	9·366	8·203	5·634	4·867	4·923	3·782	6·213	5·116
5 - -	1·054	1·005	·724	·764	·552	·552	·667	·834
10 - -	·568	·538	·438	·494	·413	·443	·463	·502
15 - -	·792	·816	·559	·677	·541	·820	·456	·760
25 - -	·923	·908	·883	·798	·753	1·110	·731	·737
35 - -	1·033	1·114	·932	·890	·815	·956	·756	1·006
45 - -	1·455	1·437	1·101	1·024	·980	1·262	·957	1·197
55 - -	2·210	1·950	1·532	1·255	1·117	1·195	1·304	1·298
65 - -	3·809	3·386	2·738	2·302	2·260	2·482	2·607	2·337
75 - -	7·803	7·101	5·854	5·301	4·886	4·894	5·714	5·263
85 and upwards -	16·338	14·878	13·747	12·937	12·308	14·338	13·402	15·487
	31·828	29·986	30·959	28·799	24·583	23·214	30·000	31·053

N.B.—The table is read thus:—To every 100 male children under 5 years of age living in the 10 years (1851–61) there were in Cheshire and Lancashire 94, in Wimborne 49, in Sherborne 62, &c.

75 (*a*). TABLE showing the comparative annual mortality in the under-mentioned districts in the years 1851–61.

Deaths annually to 100 living.

	Manchester.		Liverpool.		St. Giles' (Dorset).	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Under 5 years - -	12·38	11·07	13·74	12·65	11·69	10·01
5 and under 10 - -	1·28	1·22	1·46	1·43	1·39	1·08
10 and under 15 - -	·58	·56	·58	·60	·44	·40

Kent.

KENT.—EVIDENCE.

76. WEST KENT CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL-TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of this association was held at Tonbridge on Saturday, October 24th, at 3 p.m., to meet the Hon. Edward Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner.

In the absence of J. C. Colquhoun, Esq., the Rev. R. L. Allnutt took the chair.

There were present the Revs. T. O. Blackall, of Seal, Egerton D. Hammond, of Sundridge, &c., and a large number of the masters and mistresses of neighbouring schools.

Mr. Stanhope having previously circulated a paper of questions among the members, the following summary of answers was drawn up by a sub-committee appointed for the purpose :—

ANSWERS from 32 SCHOOLMASTERS and MANAGERS.

(1.) The average age at which children leave school altogether is 10 or 11.

(2.) The average age at which they first leave school for field work is 8.

If the average applies exclusively to agricultural villages it would be from 7 to 8.

(3.) If any system of half-time be adopted, there is a divided preponderance of opinion in favour of attendance during so many hours per week.

(4.) The unanimous opinion is that night schools are not an efficient substitute for the day school.

(1.) In the discussion which followed the feeling in favour of some system of pressure, direct or indirect, was unanimous. Absenteeism was variously explained. Mr. Serjeant (Otford) attributed it a good deal to the apathy of parents, saying that in many cases the boy is only expecting to be sent to work. Mr. Gardiner (from a town school) thought wages the governing element in the question. The Rev. E. D. Hammond said, "Neglect of parents." Mr. Withers (of Knockholt) said sometimes half the children in his school are absent, of whom (say) two-thirds work on farms. The rest are weeding or assisting their parents.

The general opinion was that children were leaving school younger than formerly. One schoolmaster, with an experience of the Dorset system of hiring whole families, and the consequent very early employment on farms, advocated a prohibition of all employment before 10, and some simple half-time system afterwards. The Rev. T. O. Blackall recommended a regular time of attendance every year (say) during the winter months. Another schoolmaster argued for a system varying according to the age of the children, and thought that children about 12 years old did not suffer from prolonged absence so much as some believe.

(2.) As regards night schools, there was a disposition on the part of the masters present to look upon them as tending to injure the day school, by causing the children to be withdrawn from it younger. It was shown that under the present Government system an interval was left between the age of their leaving

school and their being admitted to a night school. One gentleman strongly advocated the foreign system of early morning school from 6 to 8 a.m.

(3.) Industrial schools were much approved in principle, but thought impracticable on the ground of expense. Mr. Blackall and others urged also that the parents objected very strongly to it, mainly on the ground of injury to the children's clothes. But the lamentable ignorance of these subjects was admitted. The theoretical teaching now given in many schools did not effect much.

The meeting then separated.

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77. A meeting of clergymen and farmers from the neighbourhood of Sevenoaks took place at Wildernesse Park on Monday, Dec. 28th, to confer with the Honble. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner. There were more than 40 gentlemen present, amongst whom were the Rev. T. O. Blackall (in the chair), the Rev. C. Lane (Rural Dean), Revds. T. Sikes, R. B. Tritton, W. King, G. R. Moncrieff (H. M. Inspector of Schools for Kent), J. Polehampton, C. T. Astley, &c., Messrs. S. Turner, J. W. Whibley, Turnbull, Russell, Newington, Patching, &c.

Mr. Stanhope having opened the discussion :—

Mr. Whibley, of Sevenoaks remarked that boys were rarely employed regularly before 11 or 12 years of age, but unless they began then they seldom became skilled labourers. Work now was worse done, and more expensively, than formerly. At the same time he felt the value of education to his labourers. Four of them, who were probably the only ones who could read and write, were his best men. He objected also to accounts being settled by the master only. In his own case he obliged ignorant men to have their accounts looked into by educated comrades.

Mr. Turnbull strongly urged the advantage of education to the labourer, but that after all the best and truest education was upon the farm, provided two things were regarded, viz., proper supervision and better home training.

Rev. Egerton D. Hammond, of Sundridge, remarked on the superficial nature of the education now given, which might in some cases justify the complaint of "too much education" on the part of farmers. One common complaint was the ornamental needle-work taught in schools. He asserted (and in this was supported by the Government Inspector) that in no schools in this neighbourhood was anything but useful sewing taught. The real reason of the difficulty felt by farmers was, that everybody nowadays is trying to push upwards.

The difficulty of teaching children owing to defect in attendance is shown by his school register; out of 414 times when the school has been open, no child has attended more than 202.

Thinks that parents can and do afford to pay for schooling. Believes that no plan of half time would suit farmers; but thinks that the best practicable mode would be the requirement of so many days attendance in the year, so long as the date of inspection was fixed according to the requirements of field work.

Mr. S. Turner of Kemsing, thought that the labourer could ill afford to send his children to school in the winter, because his earnings were then many shillings a week less; and in his opinion the boys could be better spared in summer than in winter. (This opinion was much controverted.—E. S.)

Mr. Newington, a practical farmer for 40 years, complained of the want of education. The very business of a carter boy makes him a dull fellow. He is not fit to learn after his day's work. The only remedy was, he thought, education on alternate days.

The Rev. G. R. Moncrieff explained that he first began inspecting schools in Yorkshire, just as the Factory Act had been established, and yet all traces of the fierce struggle against the half-time system were gradually dying out almost at once. The effect was the rescue of education without any real interference with labour, as he thought. From thence he went to the mining districts, and while there the age at which boys might be employed was raised from 10 to 12. The remarkable result was that no inconvenience appeared to be caused.

Believes parents *can* afford to send their children, because where they are more than usually willing they do so; and even though the parents are worse off in the winter, he found from his experience that the children are there at that time, and are absent in summer.

The really practical plan was to fix some minimum time (and let the employers of labour do that), during which boys can really be spared from the labour of the farm from 10 up to 12 or 13 (it might be doubtful which). Would it be too much to say 200 attendances? At present education ceases for any effective purpose at 9, or even at 8 years of age, and he believed that nothing but compulsion will ever set it right.

The Chairman (in summing up) agreed cordially with the last speaker that the voluntary system had failed, advocated some tentative plan, such as compulsory attendance during the three winter months, which he thought would interfere very little with farm work.

The employment of women was then discussed. Few girls were stated to be employed in the fields, except with their parents, and then a very large number are required for the cultivation of hops and fruit.

The general feeeling appeared to be that interference was unnecessary, though a strong opinion was expressed by one employer against "ladder-tying" (women climbing ladders to tie the hops). Two gentlemen from Scotland condemned the employment of a woman at all, the one as preventing her from bringing up her family properly, the other as also hardening herself; but the latter added that, as carried on in this neighbourhood, he was not prepared to say that it was injurious at all. Two employers went so far as to say that the neatest cottages were those occupied by women who went to field work.

[For the above reports I am myself responsible.—E. S.]

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78. East Kent Chamber of Agriculture.

Meeting at Canterbury September 5, 1868, the Hon. Geo. Milles, M.P., President, in the chair, and about 60 members being present.

The chairman introduced Mr. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, who explained the object of the inquiry.

Mr. C. J. Plumptre moved,—

"That no restriction be placed on the age at which "children shall first go to work, but that some means "be taken to secure their attendance at school during "a part of every year up to 12 years of age."

He referred to the farm servants and the difficulty of dealing with them. He therefore said you must deal with them while young. They ought to learn the three R's. But how soon can they learn it? In 3½ or four complete years of schooling they can learn to know all they want. But boys begin to work at 7 or 8, and at 13 or so they are taken into the stable. Then you cannot deal with them, night schools, in which he took a great interest, being not sufficient. Can you not, therefore divide the years between work and school up to the time at which they are taken into the stable? You cannot fix regular times for school or for work, but divide the year generally; say five months at school and seven at work.

Mr. R. Lake, Milton Chapel, seconded the resolution, and said, "that the mates are under the master, and he is responsible for them. Thought that agriculture don't want much help; the landowners are most interested in the question, and, looking back the last 15 years, the strides have been very great in this matter. Almost all parishes have now schools. Government interference is not new, and has done good very often, as in the case of the new Poor Laws, but is not applicable in this case.

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Mr. Dowker wished to see education improved. This ought not to be done by legislative interference, although schoolmasters ought to be provided for the schools by Government; hitherto they have been too dear. Proposed a resolution to the effect "That this "meeting recognizes the importance of improved "attendance, but does not approve of interference." (Subsequently withdrawn.)

If there is to be interference, let it be by not letting them go to work, say till 9 years of age: children kept at school up to 8 or 9 can learn quite enough.

Lord Fitzwalter said that the resolution did not necessarily include legislative interference. Did not like to pledge himself to any particular interference, but allowed that some alteration is necessary. Thought that the three R's would be sufficient.

The Mayor (*Mr. Austen*) considered the country schools have carried the education too far, but approved some compulsory measure to control the poor in educating their children.

Mr. Nethersole thought that no compulsory rates would answer.

The resolution was carried.

Mr. F. Neame, of Macknade, moved, "That this "meeting is of opinion that there should be no "Government interference as to the compulsory edu- "cation of the poor in agricultural districts."

Thought if they do their duty no compulsion is required.

Mr. Nethersole seconds it. Carried almost unanimously, there being two dissentients.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Stanhope closed the discussion.

79. Extract from Mr. Moncreiff's General Report on Kent. (*Report of Committee of Council on Education*, 1868, p. 203.)

Confining myself strictly to what is within my official knowledge, the state of those children who do more or less attend inspected schools, I have for years held the same language, that all our teaching was powerless for effective good so long as nothing was done to compel the attendance of children up to a reasonable age.

* * * *

Our main hindrance here is not absolute neglect, but the encroachments of juvenile employment. For the greater part of my own district the most interesting question is, the extension of the principle (not the details) of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour.

I trust it may not be long before a measure is passed to regulate such work as brick-making, and to place some restriction on the less tangible occupations of fruit-picking, hop-picking, and other miscellaneous harvests, as well as the desultory employments of watering-places. To most of these, I fear, the half day principle would prove inapplicable, on the ground that every child capable of the work is wanted at the same time. Yet I should be glad to see the question fully considered, having from my old Yorkshire experience more faith in half time than in any other expedient. If this may not be, it would not be difficult to devise a scheme for rendering steady attendance at school during the winter the condition of employment in summer.

The very abundance of work in summer might thus be made to help to secure a minimum of regular schooling. The minimum should be set high, not less than 200 half days in the year, so as to restrict the time of work to the months when it is really necessary. There should also be a minimum age, below which a child should not be employed at all. One at least of the above-named modes of employment—brick-making—would require separate consideration, and possibly stronger restrictions.

"Wanted at home" is the most puzzling of excuses. I should be content to leave it in the meantime to the indirect effect of such enactments as I have been considering.

For such a district as mine I do not think it would be necessary to take seriously into account the possible case of there being no school within reach. If the penalty for infringing the law is laid on the employer, the employers of labour in a parish will find means to maintain a school. A school to satisfy the Act should be under inspection, and fairly well reported of.

80. Extract from the Report to the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education in 1868, by the Rev. B. F. Smith, Diocesan Inspector, and Vicar of Rusthall.

The extension of the half-time system to workshops by the Act of last year will probably affect some parishes in the diocese, and oblige the schools to adapt their arrangements to meet these new requirements. In view of this, and of the possible extension of some modified Factory Act to other industries, it has occurred to me that an alternative might be offered in lieu of the present requirement of half-time schooling, which might stimulate education while it was less burdensome to employers and parents. I propose that any child on presenting a certificate of having passed the fourth standard, should become free of all restrictions. By a regular and well-taught scholar this might be done at the age of 11. A premium would thus be held out to parents to keep their children steadily to school in early life, and to get them on with their learning, in order that they might be free from all restrictions on their labour two years earlier (at 11 instead of 13 years of age) than though they were dunces, and consequently be in greater demand, and able to earn better wages. You might thus lead as well as drive, and the former might prove the most effectual method of securing a minimum of education. At all events, by offering this alternative, the education of the country would be no loser, and, if we are to believe the accounts given of the attainments of half-time children in mills, it might be a great gainer; and in many industries it might soon become the custom to employ none but certificated children.

WEST KENT.

(A.) THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MAIDSTONE.

81. *Charles Whitehead, Esq.*, landowner, occupier, and magistrate, East Farleigh, Maidstone.—In this hop growing and fruit growing district a great amount of work is available for women during nearly the whole of the year, of a character more suited to them than that of many other districts; hence it will be found that a large proportion of women, quite 70 per cent. of the able-bodied, are employed in agriculture.

The pay of women's work in the Maidstone district is better than that which usually holds in other places. A deal of it is done by the piece.

The "gang" system is almost unknown; the writer has known a fruit buyer occasionally to bring a lot of women from a distance to pick fruit as a gang; and has known and heard of bean planting or "dibbling" being undertaken by a stranger, who has imported a "gang" of women and girls for the purpose; but these practices are luckily most rare.

In the hop picking, which is quite an exceptional time, a time in which everything is upset, everything else forsaken, when every man, woman, and child goes to the hop ground, shutting up each home, and when swarms of immigrants flock to every farm, the "gang" system undoubtedly holds to a large extent, but only as regards the immigrants.

The labour of both women, girls, men, and boys is squeezed out of them to the utmost limit by men who hire them beforehand and bring them to the scene of action; paying all expenses, feeding them

miserably, giving them, perhaps, a trifling sum at the finish.*

The work done by and available for women and girls during the various months of the year may be categorized as follows:—

——	Sort of Work.	Earnings per diem.
		s. d. s. d.
January -	Rag-cutting, done by piece, from	1 2 to 1 6
	Pole shaving, &c. done by piece, from - - - - -	1 2 „ 1 6
	Pole butting (for dibbing), from	2 6 „ 1 6
February -	Same as the preceding month; dibbing beans by day - -	1 0 „ 1 2
March -	Same as preceding month - -	1 2 „ 1 4
	Couching, and in some early seasons helping men (on their own account) to carry poles on and dress hops (or cut them)	1 0 „ 1 2 1 4 „ 1 8
April -	Same as preceding month generally.	
	Thistle spudding in wheat generally, by day.	1 0 „ 1 2
May -	Same as preceding.	
	Hop-tying, done always by piece	1 10 „ 2 2
June -	Hop-tying as above - - -	1 10 „ 2 2
	Thinning mangolds (day) -	1 0 „ 1 2
	Early fruit, day or piece - -	1 4 „ 2 6
July -	Picking cherries, gooseberries, currants, &c. by day or piece	1 4 „ 2 0 1 2 „ 1 8
	Hay-making by day, sometimes with beer.	1 0 „ 1 2
August -	Picking later fruits and early apples by day or piece.	1 4 „ 2 0
	Harvesting on their husbands' accounts, or friends' accounts. *Not employed by farmer actually.* Estimated value.	2 0 „ 2 6
September	Harvesting, as above - -	2 0 „ 2 6
	Hop-picking, at so much per bushel, or at so many bushel to 1s., depending upon crop, &c.	1 6 „ 4 6 or even in rare cases 5 6
October -	Hop-picking as above (average of this is one month's duration)	1 6 „ 4 6
	Picking up potatoes at per day, &c., acorns, &c.	1 0 „ 1 2
November	Couching after sowing wheats, &c., pulling marigolds and turnips (*the worst and almost only unfit work done by women.*) Day work.	1 0 „ 1 2
December	As the preceding - - -	1 0 „ 1 2
	Occasionally cutting dead fruit for their husbands, say.	1 0 „ 1 4
	Rag cutting, (piece) - - -	1 2 „ 1 6
	Pole shaving (piece) - -	1 2 „ 1 4

The above category comprises the usual routine of work done by women in this part.

Most of the work is easy, and suited to females. The ladder climbing for cherries and apples is dangerous and inappropriate; its remuneration is higher usually, as is shown by the list. The carrying on of heavy poles is not suited for women; but that is done by their husbands' or fathers' wishes, and not by the employers'.

The mangold and turnip pulling should be dispensed with as far as women are concerned. It is a wet, dirty, nasty job.

There are other things done by women, such as sack mending, hop pocket making (done at home), mending "pokes" and bin cloths, which are nice jobs, and are paid at from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* per day.

* The remaining evidence as to the hop-pickers is collected together and will be found at the end of the other evidence from Kent. I would call especial attention to it.—E. S.

The hours of work for women are from 8 a.m. in the morning to 4 p.m., 5 p.m., or 6 p.m. in the evening, according to the season, with an hour for dinner. So that they have time in the morning to tidy their homes, &c. &c. before going to work.

They generally take Saturday for home work and for marketing.

It is very unusual to see a girl under 15 in the fields, except in *hopping*, when the whole family, baby and all, goes forth.

The usual day wage of a woman is from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* per day, and 2*d.* per day less for girls under 19 or 20.

Women's earnings are here a great help to a working family, especially in summer; hop picking is looked forward to to pay off old debts and rents, and the woman here is the chief contributor.

The winter work is not so abundant nor so much sought for as the summer work, and is chiefly done by the elder women.

As a rule women's work in Kent is not inconsistent with health, morality, nor with the general well-being and social state of the agricultural labouring community.

Boys.

Boys are rarely employed here, as a broad rule, until 11 years of age. And they are not essential to the farmer at that age even. It is often at the wish of the parents that they are kept to work then, at rook minding, &c.

After 12 or 13, in some periods of the year, they are necessary, as for leading horses, looking after sheep, &c. &c.

No boy should be taken to work, properly speaking, until he is 12 or 13 years old. It is impossible for him to read, write, or cypher, even fairly, so as to be able, at least, to apply his knowledge to any practical use, until he is 12, and only at that age in rare cases.

He may, for what advantage he is to the farmer, stay at school until he is 12 or 13, and then his education should be carried on by night schools, as regularly kept going by Government as day schools are.

No half-time system of education, whether it be half-yearly, or half daily, or of alternate weeks, can work. Half the time would be taken up in getting out of old habits and in getting into new, in forgetting and learning *de novo* to wield the pen and to hold the spade.

It takes a long time to settle down to a fresh mode of life, and a half-time system of education would undoubtedly make the lads unfit to get their daily bread, and at the same time practically unable to benefit by their slipshod educational acquirements.

Night schools, to supplement day schools to carry on their work are the only means by which rustic lads can be educationally improved, consistently with their first grand object in life, viz., to get their living.

Cottages.

Cottages in this part are bad generally and insufficient in number.

Their accommodation is generally miserable, especially as to bedrooms; it frequently happening that boys and girls sleep in the same room, lads and lasses also; fathers and mothers and big children also, in very many cases, occupying the same rooms.

They may not be worse than in other counties, but they are emphatically bad.

No decency can be observed in this kind of bedroom arrangement, and it is difficult to see how chastity and virtue can be inculcated under such circumstances.

The sitting rooms are deficient in comfort; too often stone or brick floored, draughty, cold, wretched places, from which the father and grown up sons are only too glad to escape to the warm public house near.

The sanitary arrangements are horrible; and, in

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short, the cottages of the working man are so curiously contrived as to sap the foundation of morality, religion, and health.

In many instances, working men have to walk miles before they begin their daily wage paid work.

There are not enough houses in most villages, consequently the workmen must live in towns or far from their employment.

The old Poor Law was an obstacle to building cottages, but that excuse is gone now.

It is intended to introduce a Cottage Building Company here, to buy land in villages deficient in cottages and to sell them to tenant farmers or to working men (to be paid by instalments) themselves.

82. Extract of Letter from the Rev. W. J. Edwards, Incumbent of St. Peter's District, Maidstone, dated August 10, 1868.

"There are four steps in the culture of hops, in which women and children (girls) are more or less employed; besides others in which they are not employed. These four steps are, dressing, poling, tying, and picking.

1. "Dressing." This is done in the early part of the year, while the land is yet wet from the snow and rain of the past winter; it consists of moving the earth from each hill, so as to uncover the top of the root, and then entirely cutting off all the stems of last year's growth, and, lastly, drawing the earth back so as to "heal" or cover the root or hill again.

This is hard work both for girls and women, as the earth is heavy, and they are liable to get their feet wet, except in very dry seasons.

2. "Poling." The hop grower contracts with the labourer to "pole" so many acres, at so much per acre, and then the labourer employs his own wife and children in "laying out" the poles, so as to be ready for him to put into the holes which he has made or "pitched" with an instrument called a pitcher. Sometimes the women pitch the holes.

3. "Tying" the young hops to the poles with pieces of rush or sedge is tolerably easy and light work for women; but it requires some care, and therefore children are not so much employed. But all these interfere more or less with their attendance at school for all the spring of the year.

4. "Picking" the hops is regarded as a general holiday by all classes.

83. The Earl of Romney, Mote House, Maidstone.

The state of opinion with regard to supply of cottages seems to me unsatisfactory. Many consider it only in a charitable point of view and blame any one who asks rent for a cottage on the same principle as for any other property, viz., fair return for the cost of building it. The effect of this is that people are deterred from building cottages. I believe this arises from the transition state of paying wages to agricultural labourers; formerly they were for the most part servants living in the farmhouses, afterwards they were put into cottages built near the farmhouses, for which they paid no rent and had additional wages in lieu of board. As population increased, and land, better cultivated, employed more labour, and the large proprietors not receiving remunerative rent for the cottages avoided building, then carpenters and small tradesmen built them on parts of manors or small parcels of land and were much abused for charging what were called high (but were really fairly remunerative) rents, and to this day it is often said "How can a man with a family pay such a rent?" Now in these days a labourer may, as a rule, obtain sufficient wages to enable him to supply himself with what is necessary, be it house or other want, and if he cannot in a very short time the employer will be obliged to pay him enough. And it is a much sounder system that he should receive fair remuneration for his labour and pay fair rent for his cottage than be underpaid for his labour in consideration of his being under rented.

I do not see the necessity of giving the tenant farmer control over cottages. I like to have the final appeal in myself, and in two cases within my experience I have found the advantage of being able to protect a labourer. Practically I give the tenant the absolute nomination; even if the cottage is under his control, he could not get rid of his man under a week's notice, and I give my agent full authority to act when I am absent in dismissing the occupiers, when necessary.

Although the earnings of the labourer are very high at some seasons from the quantity of piece-work, I do not think that the high wages have added to his independence. He is quite ready to live very well most of the year, and apply for relief for a week or two, if he is out of employment. I should like to see Boards of Guardians exercise their power of making loans to be repaid by instalments; in some instances our Board has been induced to do so, but they have been easily turned from their purpose of enforcing its repayment.

84. The following is from a lady living in the neighbourhood of Maidstone.

For several years I have assisted in a night school held in this parish. We have made great efforts to obtain the attendance of the farm lads, called in this county "waggoner's mates." They hire themselves out from year to year, and are an extremely ignorant class. Many, if not all, have been to school, but have forgotten nearly all they learnt. One lad came to the night school at 17 years old, knowing very little more than his alphabet, though his parents declared that he left the day school at 11 "a good scholar." This entire forgetfulness of the knowledge acquired during a rather desultory school life is not surprising when it is considered that a boy of 12 who becomes a "mate" has usually no opportunity of keeping up his learning. He works from 6 a.m. to 8 or 9 p.m., and is entirely under the control of the waggoner, almost invariably an utterly ignorant man. Very few farmers will interfere to make it possible for the mate to go to a night school, or even to see that he is allowed time to attend a place of worship on Sundays. Often the hours for feeding the horses are so arranged that it is quite impossible for the lads to get away to either school or church. Under these circumstances they soon degenerate into mere "louts," and even when, as sometimes happens, they leave farm service after two or three years of it for some other occupation which affords greater leisure, they have generally become so be-dulled that they have lost all desire to improve themselves. On the other hand, if they remain as "mates" till they are old enough to take the place of waggoner (which is most frequently the case), they have not even this tardy chance of regaining the little learning they once possessed. I know seven men in one hamlet who cannot read, all of whom have had the opportunity in their childhood of attending school.

What is required is a certain amount of attendance at day schools till 12 years of age, after that a night school. Assistance to multiply night schools, rather than to make them very good, would be most valuable. Several small evening schools, even though taught by inferior teachers, would be far more useful in a large parish than one central one, held by a certificated master. How can a boy or man walk two or three miles to school after his day's work? Even if they were willing, it would be unreasonable to expect the farmer to spare the mate not only for the hour and a half's schooling but also during the time his walk to and fro would take.

Big lads and grown men much prefer voluntary teachers, (and any, whether paid or not, who will consult their feelings a little,) to highly trained masters, who are too apt to treat them like children, and put them through a strict routine, which they dislike very much.

I think *all* night schools should be assisted on the "payment for results" principle. There is often a difficulty in providing school materials for them, and

young men are set to learn reading from the childish books proper only for the day school, because there are no funds to furnish suitable adult reading-books.

The rule in the Revised Code, by which no grant is given for night scholars above 21 years old, is a direct discouragement to the education of those who most need it.

There are 58 "mates" now in this parish (pop. 2,300), between the ages of 12 and 17. In this, and the neighbouring eight villages, I have calculated that there are as many as 300.

The most certain way of improving the condition of this class, would be to make attendance at the night school compulsory, if possible up to a certain age. I believe nothing else would make the farmers exert themselves to arrange that the boys employed in horse and cattle-feeding should be spared to attend. I know it has been objected that evening schools are not so universally established, nor so regularly maintained as day schools, but I think this would soon be remedied. Suppose that an Act was passed that no boy who had reached the age of 14 could be employed on a farm, without having passed a certain examination (say the 3rd Standard in the Revised Code). If this was thoroughly made known, it would at once become the interest of the masters, the parents, and the lads, that they should be qualified to pass this examination. If there were no regular night schools near enough for the boys on remote farms to attend, the farmer, under pressure of necessity, would look out for some young man who had received a good education, to act as schoolmaster on the winter evenings. Thus humble evening schools would soon be set up all over the country. I believe this would be quite practicable, and that, by such rough means, a more ignorant class would be effectually reached than under the present system. Of course, such a plan would require some years' notice before it could be put into practice.

During the last year, children have been taken away from school to work much earlier than usual. The young ones do not generally go to work before haymaking, but this year they began several months sooner. It is attributed to the high price of provisions. One curious proof of the small things that will make the working people keep their children away from school is that when they are accidentally prevented from going on Monday or Tuesday, the parents will often keep them at home the whole week, saying that it is not worth while to pay the schooling money for three or four days.

It is an almost invariable rule here that when a farmer lets a cottage to a labourer, his wife is to do the hop-tying. I have known some turned away because they would not.

Field work is certainly bad for the women, it roughens them, causes them to neglect their home and children, and is of very little profit in the end. There is the greatest difference in the character and appearance of those children whose mothers stay at home, compared with those whose mothers are constantly engaged in field work. Moreover, in the latter case, the education of the elder girls must suffer.

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85. Extract from Letters from the Rev. T. O. Blackall, Vicar of Seal, near Sevenoaks, dated October 5th and 7th, 1868.

1. Ample provision is made in this parish for the education of the children of the poor.

2. Notwithstanding this a considerable portion of the poor population is still growing up without elementary knowledge, and without moral training.

3. And this is owing to the following three causes:—

A. The indifference of the parents.

B. The early employment of children in such pursuits as agricultural labour, cow minding, fruit gathering, and going of errands, &c.

This employment begins in some cases as early as 8 years old, and in the majority of cases (of boys) is not postponed beyond 10.

The effect of this employment of the young is partially to displace adult labour, which during portions of the year remains idle.

C. The employment of females in agricultural work, such as swede-pulling, couching, and hop-pole shaving, which detains at home very young girls to take the mother's place.

4. No excessive distances are travelled to points of labour.

5. Adult labour is adequately paid, but children are employed occasionally at low rates.

6. In my opinion the best mode of obtaining for the children of the agricultural poor a fairer chance of elementary training and preparation for the duties of life, would be to require of children under 12 years of age, as a condition of employment, either a certificate of so many hours' attendance at school, or a certificate of school proficiency. And to enforce the above by penalties, not upon the parent or the child, but the employer.

The difficulty of bringing compulsion to bear might be met by requiring schoolmasters to furnish two tables to persons appointed to receive them, (1) containing a list of all children between the ages of 8 and 12 of the agricultural class in the school district, who have been absent during the months of November and December, without special employment; (2) a list of all children of the same age and class, who have been absent at the same period owing to employment, specifying the name and residence of employer.

A summons to be taken out by the local policeman, either against parent or employer, according to the cause of default, and the magistrate to be empowered to inflict a fine on the second offence. Over 12 and up to 14 I would require during the same months 50 nights or 100 hours attendance at a night school.

86. *Mr. J. T. Hatch*, land agent and large occupier, at Lenham.—I see nothing objectionable in the mode of employing women here. We could not do without them in hop districts, and I do not think such field work as they do here leads to ill-kept houses or neglect of household duties. I do not like, however, to see women fruit-gathering on ladders, nor working with threshing machines. It is hardly decent for them, and such work appears to me to roughen them. But it is not usual to see them so employed in this district. Girls are very little employed directly by the farmers, except at a little thistle spudding. They go with their mothers to hopping and hop-tying.

I find very young boys useless, even for rook keeping. It is not often worth while to employ them at all till they are able to earn, say, 4*s.* a week. They would not be wanted regularly before 12 years of age or upwards. I don't like pressure of any sort in the matter of schooling. Nothing will do any real good till they get to see the advantage which is gained by education.

An able-bodied man of average skill and his family will earn 50*l.* a year at the least. But they are not really independent. The poor law has a tendency to pauperize them most unnecessarily. The least illness, the confinement of the wife, or anything of the sort, sends many of them to the "parish" for relief, and I believe if out-door relief was given as lavishly and with as little inquiry in the metropolis as it is in rural districts, the fabric of the existing Poor Law would break down in three months. Labour is fairly distributed in this parish and neighbourhood. The population is decreasing, and, therefore, the cottage accommodation is becoming more sufficient. But, as a rule, the landlords are set against improving cottage accommodation, and very little change for the better is taking place. Cottages are often allowed to go into such a state of decay as to be uninhabitable, and, becoming so, are then put in order for a new occupant.

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This part of Kent used to abound in heaths or commons, and many hovels have been run up by squatters, which are very unfit to live in.

There are as yet but few cottages on the farms. I don't think the men object to it, so long as they are let alone; but they are very jealous of any interference, and don't like being patronized by too inquisitive ladies.

87. *Mr. Thomas Hayes*, farmer and guardian, Boughton, Maidstone.—We want you to understand that we are not opposed to education. Enlighten a labourer reasonably, but don't let it be only book learning. If you prevent his being employed under a certain age, you hinder his being taught to get his living. A boy that is going to be a clerk is learning how to live when he is at school, but one that is to be a farm labourer is learning what is a luxury to him. No limit should, therefore, be put to the age at which boys are employed. It all depends on a boy's growth when he is capable of doing the work. A little chap of 8, or even less, may be useful. I have a lot of from a dozen to 30 boys and girls, and a few women to pull 'kilk' (ket locks) and weed corn. I send a man with them. I could not get enough women to do it, because there is so much here for them to do. I pay them all by the day.

We think four cottages are wanted to every 100 acres here. As a rule they are let with the farm; but there are exceptions, and the exceptions are increasing. We much prefer their being let with the farms. In many places there is still a great want of cottages. The result is that many are run up by large speculators and let at a high rent. They build them in rows, which I find to be a very bad system, because one idle woman affects the whole row. Gardens are now given with all the landowners' cottages. Allotments are dying out. I think 40 rods is quite enough for a garden. We don't approve of pigs. They are almost always kept at a dead loss, unless they are near a big town, and very many fewer are kept now by the labourers.

[These opinions were indorsed by several other farmers, who heard them read over to Mr. Hayes.—E. S.]

88. Mr. Whibley, of Sevenoaks, Mr. Turner and Mr. Stoneham, of Kemsing, in a conference with the Assistant Commissioner at Sevenoaks in July 1868, agreed that moderate education is sufficient; the difficulty is forgetfulness. Mr. Whibley's two best men can read and write, and they are his only men who can. Mr. Turner says he can find half-a-dozen who could read and write well, who have forgotten it all. Mr. Turner doubts whether (especially in frosty weather) boys of 10 are not most wanted in November and December. The others say they are never wanted in winter up to 12.

89. *Rev. S. Hornibrook*, curate of St. Faith's Mission District, Maidstone, and Hon. Secretary to Maidstone Cottage Improvement Company (Limited).—A considerable number of agricultural labourers, quarrymen, and brickmakers live in Maidstone, and work in the parishes round the town. By the census of 1861 the number of agricultural labourers resident in Maidstone is returned as 153 under 20 years of age, and 569 above that age, and probably an equal number of brickmakers, quarrymen, and other such labourers now reside in the town. Many men walk 3, 4, or even 5 miles to work at Burham, Aylesford, and other places, where there are not a sufficient number of cottages, and some have to start soon after 6 a.m. The nature of hop cultivation, pottery work, and brick-making, seems to require a large amount of labour at certain times, but even in the dead season of the year much work would perhaps be found for men resident on the spot, whereas now employers care nothing for men who live in Maidstone, and are a burden to the charitable inhabitants of the town for 8 or 10 weeks of the winter, being in wretchedness themselves, and absorbing much of the assistance which ought to go to the town labourers. The accommodation for farm labourers is very bad, the rents in Maidstone being high, and the supply of small cottages limited. Many of the cottages in which they are forced to reside have no back yards or separate water-closets. Many cottages are occupied by two families, and some are let out in single rooms occupied by whole families, and charged for at the rate of 3*s.* a week furnished. Women earn a good deal by hop-tying, hop-picking, and fruiting, but the want of decent accommodation and of garden ground prevents labourers from rising above wretchedness. In the district of which I am curate the charge for schooling has had to be reduced to 1*d.* a week, and among the residuum of the population of the town with which I have principally to do, many children are kept from school in the winter for want of clothes and shoes. Four years ago a cottage improvement company was established in Maidstone. It now owns 54 cottages, has a capital of 4,200*l.*, pays 5*l.* per cent. per annum, and has a reserve fund of 200*l.* Much good has been effected, and the cottages are well kept, while other owners have also been stirred up to improvement, and in one instance a property which consists of 86 cottages has now been repaired, and partly rebuilt by the owner, who refused to sell when asked by this company to do so.

90. *Mr. Frederick Duly*, relieving officer, Maidstone.—Women find here a great deal of work in the hop gardens and orchards. The work to which I object for them is the 'fruiting,' in which they have to climb ladders to pick the fruit. Two fatal accidents occurred here last year from this cause, and it certainly appears to me to be a dangerous work for them. So much work is there for them that the institutions which seem to be most needed are schools where children can be left all day, so that the mother is free, and the eldest daughter is not so much required at home to look after younger sisters. In Canterbury, where I was relieving officer for some time, the provisions of Denison's Act, enabling guardians to send the children of those receiving out-door relief to school, was carried out and worked well. Every week the parent had to produce to me a certificate from a schoolmaster of attendance at school, and no excuse but illness was taken for non-attendance. Here, in one case, owing to the pressure of Mr. Balston, an increased relief was given for the same purpose, and the mother produces a quarterly certificate of her child having attended school. The following was our Canterbury form of certificate:—

'Canterbury Incorporation.

'The guardians of the poor being desirous of 'ensuring the regular attendance at school of the 'child named below, solicit the kind co-operation 'of the [master] of the national school by filling up 'this card weekly, notifying the daily attendance at 'school of such child.

'F. D., relieving officer.'

James White, No. 40 on Relief List.

This card is to be shown to the Relieving Officer weekly, on relief days.

Week ending.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.	Sig.
—	×	/	\	a	×	\	E. W.

The great evil we have to complain of here is drunkenness, and the club is a common plea for getting to a public-house.

91. *Mr. Day*, scripture-reader, Maidstone.—My work lies a great deal among the very poor in this town, many of whom are irregular farm labourers, driven to this occupation out of brick-making and other work. This has been a bad year, not 'a poor man's summer,' as they say, because of the drought. The difficulty, therefore, of getting them to pay 3*d.*

a week for a child's schooling is greater than before. If they once fall into arrear, then the child is kept away altogether rather than pay up what is owed. The restrictions of a regular day school have a tendency to keep them away altogether. Mothers often want their children half a day, or for an hour or two, and at some of the schools, if they become at all irregular, they are struck off the books altogether. For this reason they will often rather pay 4*d.* and 6*d.* for sending them to a dame's school. Shoes and stockings are, however, the great obstacle, and the want here is a ragged school. I have several times tried a night school, but never got more than 13 to come to it. One reason is that they want a regular 'unbending' in the evening. The family meal is a supper, which takes place just at the time when the boys would be coming to night school.

WATERINGBURY.

Population 1,370. [Acreage under hops, 370.]

92. Notes of Meeting August, 1868.

PRESENT:

Rev. H. Stevens, Vicar.
Mr. Thos White, } farmers.
Mr. E. T. Goodwin, }

Women are employed all the year in many cases and take their children, but no girls under 11 are employed and boys are not really wanted at that age, except at hop picking. Sometimes a few boys or girls of 8 or 9 are employed at weeding for a week or two, but this is the exception. Both for women and children field work is considered healthy. The women work from 8 to 6, with an hour and a half for meals; the "mates" with horses have longer hours, but, by an arrangement of staying longer one day and coming later the next, the hours of work are reduced to 12, and this being a hop country, fewer mates are wanted than in a corn growing district.

Children, both boys and girls, leave school earlier than they used, as there is a greater demand for them. The boys remain pretty well till 11, and it is thought that any compulsory restrictions beyond that age would be a serious inconvenience in farm work, and still more to poor families. Before that age, a requirement of at least 100 days' schooling in the year would not be thought unreasonable.

HUNTON.

Population, 935. [Acreage under hops, 510 out of 2,061.]

93. *Henry Bannerman, Esq.*, landowner and occupier.—This parish being almost entirely under hops and grass, few young women and children are hired directly by the farmers, but are taken by their parents to help them in their work. At hop-tying alone, a woman with children will earn 3*l.* or 4*l.*, and 'hopping' and haymaking will add a good deal to this. I have known a young girl of 16 or 17 earn 4*s.* a day at hopping, and the average would be from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. As to the men in my employment, they get so much piece-work that I calculate their wages at 19*s.* a week, taking the whole year together.

About 11 or 12 years old boys get employed with horses and are then wanted regularly; before that age a farmer does not hire them, but they are so much wanted by their parents that it would be impossible to require from them regularity of attendance at school.

YALDING.

Population 2,076; acreage under hops, 1,067 out of 5,804.

94. *Rev. E. Baines*, vicar.—Young children go with their parents to work here. Boys will begin at 7 years old, girls about 9, so we take 8 to be about the average on the whole. Their work will consist of hop tying and picking and pulling 'twitch,' in fact such work as the women do, which is all light and easy. Formerly the women did the 'poling' (sticking the poles in the ground) which was much too severe, and several cases of rupture were caused, but this is practically given up now. Their work is sometimes paid by the day and sometimes by the piece; when by the day they usually go out after breakfast and work till 6 p.m. Their general health is very good; cleanliness is the rule among them in spite of the bad cottages, and in consequence they are free from all diseases resulting from neglect of this. The shape of this parish is like a starfish, and my national school, under a certificated master and mistress, not being within reach of all, I have founded another under a trained mistress, so that with them and the schools at Collier Street and Paddock Wood (both districts carved out of this parish), no children have to go more than 1½ miles to school, except those living in a small outlying place called 'The Moors,' which contains a few cottages.

We have a night school, including 56 lads, which does good. But the only way I can judge of the knowledge of the growing population is at confirmation time, which has happened three times to me here. The greater part of them have forgotten how to read, except with considerable effort, and it is hopeless to expect them to explain words.

I tried a reading room for them, charging 1*d.* a week; at first I got 24, then it gradually declined to 2, and I gave it up. Next I tried a lending library, but some books were lost and others ill-treated, and it has not prospered. At the same time I think the labouring class are beginning to find out that if they get tired of farm work they can only get on elsewhere if they can read and write.

LINTON.

Population 613.

95. *Rev. T. G. Carter*, vicar.—The girls do not work at all except at hop-picking. They would not be trusted in the orchards. Boys get work about 10 years of age. Women will work more here than in any place that I have ever seen. Hop-tying lasts a long time, so they keep on tying till the hops are out of their reach. Then there is the fruit gathering. Picking cherries is women's work, because the trees are strong and can be climbed, but apples are picked by men. Some few work in winter at chopping manure, though they dislike it as a rule. I see less objection to women's labour as carried on here than anywhere else, as they generally work alone without any men being with them. Sometimes a man is wanted with a ladder, or to pack the fruit, but as a rule the women are almost alone. The women are, in fact, compelled by the farmer to go out. It is a healthy life and on the whole they like it, though one sometimes hears one say that one has things to do at home, which she is unable to do.

Evidence of the Labouring Class.

96. (*a.*) *Mrs. Stickins*, bailiff's wife, Loose.—Women working here can earn a great deal of money, besides assisting their husbands at 'poling;' a wife with a boy can double a man's wages, at least, by getting the poles ready for him. Mrs. D. (a neighbour) has never been at home a single day since hop-tying began, that is from April to August; she would be earning 15*d.* a day most of that time. Mothers take their children to help at about 8 years of age; such children would get about 6*d.*, never less now. But besides this, young children are sent to pick up sticks in the orchards or to keep birds off the fruit. Very young ones can pick up potatoes or pick hops, and by the time they get to 11 years old they are very useful on large farms, but we can't get regular work for them here. I have seen what we call a 'gang;' one of the farmers here has one of 20 children with a man looking after them. None of them would be more than 12; some of them are girls sometimes. They are paid by the day. When I was young I could 'tie' two or three acres of hops at 13*s.*

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an acré. Lots of women will do that. I don't see any harm in their going. Mrs. D., whom I told you about, does washing too; she will earn 3*s.* a week at that.

(*b.*) *Mrs.* ———, labourer's wife, Loose.—Women do a deal of work here. There's 'dressing' hops in March. But I'm a dunce, you know, about the months in the year. Some often go 'ladder-tying' hops that's strong, but I never could carry a ladder. There's less work this year. The drought throws people out of work because there's no weeds that grow; no children are wanted to pull up weeds. As a girl I used to go 'couching;' I am a dunce; there wasn't no school where I was; there is not half the work there used to be; we used to be always at work. I used to go 'couching' and shaving hop poles. But I took care I didn't do it longer than I could help. I went to service, I was 11 then. I've always regretted not going to school; my children all go. My husband goes with the horses so my children don't get so much work out; there is no one to take them. My boy (William) didn't go till he was 10, then he went altogether. He's no scholar; he's a bad boy, would never learn, no schooling is any good to him. He could write nicely when he left school; he can read, but he cares nothing about it, he doesn't learn a bit what it means. My boy John (13) is good enough at reckoning, but he's no scholar. My husband belonged to the club here; but they 'shared out' as they call it, and it came to an end. We wouldn't belong to the Foresters, you must be much grander to belong to those clubs. Now my husband's club is next Monday; we have two months to pay and three deaths. Its fearful.

(*c.*) *Mrs.* ———, labourer's wife, Ash.—At hop-picking we don't know here what we're to get till it's done. No more we do at cutting wheat and barley. They don't know what they're working for, and it makes a man very much hardened and dissatisfied. My husband works all the year round on one farm, so he hardly dares say anything; but the men who come to cut the corn don't like it. The farmer always tells us he will pay what others do, but we should like to know what we're to get. My husband wouldn't be in a cottage on the farm. The least offence and you must be out of the house; and then the women 's compelled to work. I go when I can myself, but I'm not fit to go this year. I don't think the money you get pays you for the work, or for the clothes, or for the beer you must have; and there's some work there's no business for a woman to do. There's winter work among the turnips no woman ought to go to. In summer we go from 7 till 6. The charity schools is no help to a woman that goes to work. The children don't go there till 9, leave at 12, leave again in the afternoon; and what are the poor little things to do if the mother's out? I must pay 3*d.* a day for these hours for the two children, besides the 1*d.* for the schooling. We want some one to take care of them all day.

(*d.*) *Mrs. Thompson*, labourer's wife, Earl Street, Maidstone.—My husband used to work at Otham, and lived there; about seven or eight years ago removed into Maidstone, and for two years we have lived in this room. My husband goes anywhere to work when he can get it. Sometimes six miles, often two and a half or three; going to and fro is worse than the work to him. We have this room and a closet for the boys, that is all we have for five children and our two selves. We pay 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, but they give us the furniture. My oldest boy is 16, and the oldest girl 15; they went with their father for a fortnight harvesting to Sittingbourn, and got 7*l.* by it. It costs us a deal more to live here. In the country we should have a garden, and perhaps a pig; now it's a very slack time before hop-picking, and in winter, because my husband can't get regular work, but the worst is the distance he has to go.

(B.) THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CRANBROOK.

97. *Mr. George Neve*, land agent and large occupier, Sissinghurst Castle, Cranbrook.—As a rule, few boys are wanted by the farmers under 12 years of age. A few younger ones would be employed a little in the summer, and in frosty weather in the winter would be useful for leading carts. But there would be some hardship in the case of orphans or large families if no work were allowed up to 12 years of age, unless power were given to Boards of Guardians to pay for the schooling of the children in any case where the family is very large. It is becoming more and more difficult to get 'mates' (boys to go with horses regularly). They don't like the long confinement. I tried for some time the plan of having a 'horsekeeper,' and then I only wanted the boys during the day, and not to look after the horses at night. But this can only be done where a large number of horses are kept, and another great difficulty in carrying it out is the opposition of the waggoners, who by this means earn less wages, and have not the same control over or the same interest in their horses. But boys ought to go young with horses, and we find that the best 'mates' are those which are 'carter-bred,' that is, the sons of waggoners who are brought up among horses. The wages here vary a little according to the hours, which differ in adjoining villages, men who work from 6·30 to 6 getting more than those who work only from 7 to 5. The latter class are increasing in number. Cottages are not yet very well distributed in this neighbourhood. A good many men have to go as far as three miles to work, but this is gradually being remedied. I have been concerned in building some with money borrowed through the Enclosure Commissioners. It is a great question whether it is worth while to go to them, as they are so strict in enforcing certain rules that it is both troublesome and expensive. Most of the new cottages have three bedrooms, and if for no other reason I should strongly urge this on the ground of its shifting the responsibility from the shoulders of a landowner, and if he enforces rules against taking in lodgers, he has done all he can. Some more efficient inspection of cottages is, however, necessary, and the only means of getting an inspector to do his duty is to appoint some one entirely unconnected with the parishes which he has to inspect. I think that a tenant should have the control of the cottages on his farm, and I believe that such a power would be very rarely abused. But some restriction should be made as to the getting rid of the occupier of a cottage. No man ought to be turned out under a month's notice, and then his garden ought to be considered, though it is not at all uncommon for the crops in a cottage garden to be paid for by the incomer. The size of garden I allow is 20 perches. It is a common condition made with a labourer in letting him a cottage that his wife and children shall work when required.

98. *Mr. Francis Allen*, schoolmaster of national school, Cranbrook.—Out of 124 boys on the books of this school, 89 belong to the labourer or agricultural class. The other 25 are the sons of mechanics, or a class just above labourers. The average number of attendances last year was 126 days nearly. Only five boys were over 12 years of age, and not one of these the son of a labourer. 35 boys over 10 years of age had to pass in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades, but few of these were of the 'labourer's class.' The children of labourers are employed in the fields for about four months in the year. From October to February, inclusive, we have nearly 12 months' work to do, as the continual breaks in attendance do away with the work done in the casual attendance. Very few boys belonging to the class of agricultural labourers stay in school after they are 10 years old; but some few come occasionally in the winter for a few months till they are 13 or 14 years old. A great many of the poorest in the town never learn to read at all, either from their parents' negligence or poverty, or because they are sent to work too early.

[That these exist in any number is doubted by the vicar, and Mr. F. Hollands, overseer, says, "a "great many children are able to read, but not able "to understand what they read; there is a dulness "of intellect among them."—E. S.]

Evening schools do not prosper here; only 14 out of 30 were last winter of the poorer class, and they attend very irregularly. After a few nights they seem to tire, and only a very few learn to read, write, and cipher fairly. Most of the lads between 14 and 18 read but imperfectly, and cannot write sufficiently well to write a letter to their friends.

99. *Rev. T. A. Carr*, vicar.—We have tried a plan here in substitution of an industrial school. Girls in the first class of the school get 'Saturday place,' as we call them. It is a holiday at school, and they go for the day to assist in doing the household work at some house in the town. The people here are very willing to take them, and we find it very useful.

100. *Mr. F. Hollands*, relieving officer.—Denison's Act has been made use of in this parish, but we can't apply it except to the cases of permanent relief. Where temporary relief is given, we can only keep the child while the relief is actually being paid, and I look upon this as a defect in the Act. It is hardly made use of in any other parish. At Frittenden I pay for four or five. Here I pay for more than 20 children. This is only done when the parents express a wish, but I have been anxious to encourage them in applying for this assistance. The proof of attendance required is the production of the schoolmaster's bill, though in one case I produced to the chairman of the board a table of their attendance. I don't think there is so much unwillingness on the part of parents about sending their children as carelessness, because they can get some money by it, and they think they inure their children sooner to field work. The great incentive to them would be if they could see that their children got on in worldly prosperity by it. Few would aim at education, except for this object, though this applies more to the boys than the girls.

101. *Mrs. Jenner*, labourer's wife, Cranbrook.—It is very often that women are driven out by the farmer. It is a rule when they take a cottage. I think it is quite right. Women ought to go and do women's work and help their husbands, and not stay at home. I have taken my daughters out at 6 years old to hop-tying. When I was 8 years old I tied three acres myself. They would give me a dinner every day that I should keep up. I was very quick at it. Now I can't do so much, but I and my daughters tied five acres this year. I go to ladder tying too. I go and do more than a man would, and yet they give 1*s.* instead of 2*s.* 6*d.* I work from 8 till 5. I had rather work by the piece, but they won't have it. I took my boys away from school at 9 or 10 years old. They are not much scholars. They got great boys and wouldn't go, because they didn't like it. My boy Henry went to a night school, and he got to write, and can write me a letter. The thing we want most here is a garden. Years ago we used to have one. I should be very pleased to have one now. It would make a difference of 1*s.* a week to us, I should think. I should like a quarter of an acre. I could soon manage that myself.

BENENDEN.

Population - 1,662.

102. *Mr. George Landsell*, large occupier.—In this district no fruit is grown, but a great many hops. This gives employment to a great many men and boys in summer, for whom it is difficult to find work in winter, although there is the additional job of wood cutting, to which many men go with their wives and children. Girls we never employ, though their mother will sometimes bring them, but young boys are often wanted for a few weeks in the spring. The success of hop growing has led to an increase of the crop, and, therefore, to a greater demand for labour. Nearly all the women who are inclined to go can get work almost regularly in the summer, but exceptional work only in the winter. These women would add from 6*l.* to 7*l.* a year to the husband's earnings. We keep more men than necessary in regular work, in order to be sure of them at certain seasons, and of their wives and families also. In consequence of this, all my men could average 16*s.* to 17*s.* a week all the year round.

103. *Mr. Swyer*, farm bailiff, Benenden.—Few boys here go to be 'mates' till 12 years old, unless the waggoner likes to take his own boy a little younger. It is the general thing here now for them to lodge with the waggoner, instead of in the farm house as they used to do. Such a boy would often get 10*s.* a week, whereas a boy at 16 or 17 at ordinary work on a farm will only get from 3*s.* to 7*s.* a week; and yet we can hardly get any boys to go with the horses, because they don't like the hours. The work is easier than ordinary farm work, but the boy has to be with the horses from 5 or 6 a.m. till 9 p.m. The waggoner who works with him goes to the horses at 4 a.m., and leaves at 6 p.m. Our regular men work now from 7 till 5. That's an hour less than it used to be two years ago, when they only got 2*s.* instead of 2*s.* 3*d.* a day; but they were dissatisfied with the hours because the men in Sussex had not such a long day. Another change that has taken place has been in the rate of wages. But I don't believe the poor have ever been so well off as they were 14 years ago, when wages were at 10*s.* 6*d.* a week, because flour was at 9*d.*, and meat at 4½*d.* I think it much the best plan for the cottages to be under the control of the farmer. The people are much more settled. The farmer can get the man's wife and family to help in busy times if they like, and a farmer will have sometimes to pay as much again when he is obliged to get his hops tied by others. And, in many periods of the year, a farmer will go on paying a man in winter when he does not in the least want him, in order to get his wife and family when he wants them. Only one in ten of the poor people likes the plan; they think they are not independent. Mr. Gathorne Hardy's system is that all the men pay their rent to him, but the farmer really nominates the person who is to be in them.

FRITTENDEN.

Population - 898.

104. Notes of meeting, August 14, 1868, present, the Rev. E. Moore, rector, Rev. F. C. Blyth, Mr. John Honess, farmer, and W. J. T. Hollman, schoolmaster.

Women work much less here than formerly, partly because they are so much better off than they used, for the employment of the men is now more regular. There is, however, a good deal earned by them at hop-tying and picking. Labour has become more scarce; it is especially difficult to get lads to go with horses; they don't like the long hours of work. They are expected to be there at 6·30, and to work till 8. Such boys would be 15 years old, but some boys go for a few days with horses as young as 10 years old.

Boys begin to get irregular at school at 8 or 9 years old, and between 10 and 11 they for the most part leave school altogether. The girls leave school almost as soon as the boys.

The girls, who generally go with their mothers, help in weeding, hop-tying and picking.

Boys, girls, and women are sometimes hired to pull up "kilk" (ketlocks), and a man is put to look after them; but we see no objection to this system. Before 12 years of age children are not essential to the farmer, but are very largely employed in piece work and in other ways by their parents.

A good many children are from one and a half to two and a half miles from any school; but in the case of some it is not field work but indifference which keeps them from school.

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BIDDENDEN.

Population - 898.

105. *Capt. W. H. Tylden Pattenson*, landowner and magistrate.—Employment for children may be divided into two sorts, the one which affects the parents only, the other the farmers. Boys in one way or another begin to work at 7 years old, and in the whole school there are not more than four or five boys of the labouring class over 10 years of age. We consider that they are wanted regularly at 9 or 10, but many do not like to send such boys with carts unless a man is with them. The hop gardens afford a great deal of work, and dogwood-scraping in the spring takes a great many from the school. Part of the parish is two miles from the school, indeed there are no less than six small hamlets. Women go less than they did; it is cheaper to employ men, and they begin to find that they can earn more at home. I don't call 'ladder-tying' a proper work for women, and here they never do it.

(C.) EAST KENT.

106. *Mr. John Robinson*, Wingham, Chairman of the Eastry Board of Guardians.—The market gardens in this neighbourhood afford work to a great many women. Their wages vary from 1*s.* in winter to 15*d.* or 18*d.* These high wages, which have increased a good deal of late, are a great disadvantage to them, because they are more apt to keep their girls at home instead of sending them to service. Still I should not like to see them compulsorily interfered with. A great many women and girls are employed in pea-pulling in July, and in potato-gathering. The former is the worst in its moral effect upon them, because they are all close together, and very young children are taken. Field work is ruination to a young girl. Farmers for the most part employ their labourers regularly here. About three cottages to 100 acres are wanted, and I am very much in favour of such cottages being under the farmer's control. It gives him a fair influence and hold upon them which enables him to keep them in order. But market gardeners with only 30 acres or so require a great deal of labour at certain seasons, when they will give anything to get it, and hardly any the rest of the year. This want is supplied by a certain surplus lot of labourers, who are chiefly maintained by the thrashing machines. Such men earn good wages, and don't care to work more than three or four days a week. The machines do a great deal of harm in disturbing regular men, who find it more profitable and more independent to go with them. Women never do so here, but a good many lads go to pitch sheaves or carry water. The youngest boys that are hired by the year would be about 14, but such boys would have led horses for some years before that. The waggoners get 15*s.* a week, a cottage rent free, and 3*l.* after harvest.

107. *Mr. Philip Harvey*, farmer, Eythorne.—Boys for rooking might be as young as 7 years of age, from that to 10. They would very likely be regularly employed at 11, because a farmer likes to employ them so for the sake of their families; but I never ask their age, I look only at their size and strength. I employ sometimes 20 in a gang with a spud to weed, and an old man goes with them to look after them; some of them are girls or women. The work for the girls would only last a week or two; they all get 6*d.* a day; it used to be 4*d.*, but they struck, and drove the old man out of the field with their spuds. Boys that go to 'rook' have a gun or pistol. You would expect accidents to happen, but I have employed hundreds of boys and never had one. Every farm in the neighbourhood is badly off for cottages. My neighbour has 500 acres, and not one cottage; so the men have a long distance to go, though less in this parish than in some of the others round. But a good many of my men live in cottages not under my control, but belonging to small owners; I never feel responsible for the domestic comfort of those men as I do for such as are in any cottages on my farm. In the village, too, there is often a difficulty about gardens, whereas on the farm nothing is easier than to cut up an acre and give a good garden to every one. But as to the condition of the cottages I have not much complaint to make.

108. *Bridges Plumptre, Esq.*, magistrate, Goodnestone.—Boys go to 'rooking' at about 9 or 10 years old, not often sooner. They would generally have a gun of some sort to frighten the rooks with. This leads to some bad accidents, and within 18 months two fatal ones have taken place near this, one at Ratling, in this parish, and another at Wingham. But whenever an old man past other work can be got he is put to it. This work lasts from November till the end of April, Sundays and all; and I have always thought it an instance of good feeling on the part of some labourers that they will go to 'rook' themselves so that their boys may get to the Sunday school. At about 12 years of age the work for boys is regular. Girls and women come to work at 7.30 a.m. and work till 6 p.m. Some few girls only, and those 14 or 15, come. They can get work the greater part of the year. In winter they take up mangold and top and tail turnips, though this last employment is not so common as it is now. Some of our labour comes from Ratling, 1½ miles off, and from other places, as we have not enough in Goodnestone.

109. *Wm. Hammond, Esq.*, St. Alban's, Wingham, landowner and magistrate.—Unless women go long distances to work, or are put to improper work, I see no objection to their labour. Whenever a woman has to stoop, such as in thinning or pulling turnips, it must be a little trying for her. The latter, which is chiefly done by able-bodied adults, is the hardest. But such work as they have at hay harvest, hop picking, and weeding early short wheat is not objectionable. A certain number of boys work regularly at 10 or 11 years old. They are not boarded and lodged in a farmer's house much before 14. But most shepherds have a boy, and then there is usually a boy about a farm for various work. A great advance in education has been made of late years by the class just above the labourer, but the tillers of the soil do not seem to me to have been much affected as yet. There is certainly a far better sense of decency and propriety, but not more intelligence.

110. The following notes are by a lady of great experience in the neighbourhood of Wingham:—

"My experience is mainly derived from visiting the outlying parts of five parishes in this neighbourhood, in each case at some distance from the main village. Schools are, therefore, a long way off, and, besides the actual distance, when urged to send the children to school, some have given as an excuse the increased expense caused by their having to send the children with their dinners, instead of their coming home to them. In the case of one school the children *used* not to be allowed to eat their dinners in school, so that the choice for them was between half a day's schooling (the distance being too great for the child to go over twice) and none.

One cause of the neglect of education certainly is early work. I know one boy that went to work here at 7 years old, and has worked regularly ever since, and has never been to school. But I don't see much difference even in the girls, the eldest being frequently kept at home to mind the children whilst the mother is out in the fields, &c., and I have known these families when the girls have been employed keeping cows along the hedges. The parents don't seem to see the difficulty of learning. "I sent her a whole year," one woman told me, "and she can't read," and so she thought schooling useless. The mothers say the children should go, if they had their way, so do the fathers, and yet between them the child is kept away for the least chance of a day's work.

They are apt to complain of the teaching in the national schools, and to prefer small schools, dissenting or otherwise. They don't like the children being taught by an older boy or girl, but say that where the children are fewer, each individual gets some attention. There is certainly some truth in this, as I can say from seeing the children turned out from both sorts of schools, for even an indifferent teacher, if grown up, is invested with a certain authority, which makes teaching more likely to be successful by enforcing attention. Children ought to be sent very much earlier than they are, and the rule in some national schools to take no children before 5 years old is, I think, a mistake. Mothers are very indifferent about teaching their children anything like household work, &c., the trouble of teaching them being greater and taking more time than doing the work themselves.

111. EXTRACTS from an ESSAY by the REV. EGERTON D. HAMMOND, (now of Sundridge, Kent,) addressed to the Sittingbourne Agricultural Association in 1856.

Domestic comforts for the farm servant have, by common acknowledgment, not received that attention which is requisite to maintain a tone of morality and self-respect among them. He returns home after a long day spent in the service of his master, generally fatigued, often wet since the morning. The same indifference to his comfort is *not* manifest in all farm establishments, nor yet is common attention to them by any means the rule. Here and there, but not generally, there is a fire accessible, where he may restore his frozen circulation, and do something, at least, towards drying his working apparel. When a little comfortable, he may take a candle and amuse himself, according to his taste. But what is the *rule* in this case? The foregoing remarks apply to the *exception*. Ordinarily, then, there is *no fire and no light* for the farm servant when the toil of the day is done. If there is a fire for his use he must light it himself, or if candles, he must either buy them or economize his stable allowance of five for two nights. Not unfrequently he will sacrifice his supper to go straight to bed, at which, having first deposited his *boots* to prevent them from freezing, he ensconces his person between a pair of sheets that defy all the colours of the rainbow for a hue that will match them. The stench of the chamber is intolerable in many cases, and no wonder, under the occupation of stable and labour stained men and clothes, the men varying in number from three or four to nine or ten in a room on very large farms, and sleeping most objectionably, in most cases, two in a bed.

The following table shows the ordinary hours of work for farm servants in East and West Kent:—

		Get up.	Bait.	Breakfast.	In Field.	Bait.	Dinner.	Second Yoke.	Bait.	Supper.	Bait and Lock-up.
		WEEK DAY. TWO YOKES, SUMMER.									
East Kent	Waggoner	3.30	4.30–5.30	5–6	6–10	10–12	12–1	1–6	6–8	—	—
	Mate	5							Waggoner leaves.	7.45	8–10
		ONE YOKE, WINTER.									
	Waggoner	3.30 or 4	4–5	5.30–6	6–2.30	—	2.30–3	—	3–4	—	—
	Mate	5	—						Waggoner leaves. 3–6	7.45	8–10
West Kent	Waggoner	4	4–5.30	—	6–2	—	2	—	—	—	8
	Mate	5									

The next table shows what are, on the majority of East Kent farms, the ordinary hours of occupation on the Sabbath:

	Get up.	Bait.	Breakfast.	Bait.	Bait.	Bait.	
Waggoner	5.30	6–8	At liberty two Sundays in three.				Two Sundays in three.
Mate	7	—	7.30–8	10–12	4–6	8–10	
Waggoner	5.30	6–8	8–10	10–12	4–6	—	One Sunday in three.
Mate	At liberty one Sunday in three.					8–10	

Thus the hours of divine service are wantonly selected for "baiting."

112. On Macknade farm near Faversham, containing 300 acres, the following is the amount of women and children's labour.—

At *haymaking* six women and three girls (under 18) were employed at 1*s.* and 8*d.* per day, respectively, for an average time of less than two days.

At *weeding* eleven women, eight girls, and seven boys were employed at 1*s.*, and from 8*d.* to 6*d.* per day for a period averaging 11 days.

At *cleaning corn* seven women and six girls were employed for an average time of five days.

At *pulling turnips* two women pulled 3½ acres at 2*s.* per acre.

At *sundry work on farm* nine women and six girls worked on an average seven days each.

At *hop-tying* 15 women and 8 girls worked at 1*s.* 2*d.* and 8*d.* a day, respectively, for an average time of 20 days. Besides this one of them tied two and a half acres by piece work at 13*s.* an acre.

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g.

At *shaving hop poles* two women and two girls shaved 11,400 at 1*s.* per 100.

At *cherry gathering* eight women were employed at 1*s.* 4*d.* for an average time of 13 days.

At *bird-minding*, one boy worked 111 week days and 22 Sundays at 8*d.* a day; one 55¾ and eight Sundays at 6*d.*; one 30½ and six Sundays at 8*d.*

At *hay-making* four boys worked about five days each at 6*d.* and 8*d.*

Two boys shaved 2,626 poles at 1*s.* per 100.

With *horses* five boys worked for periods varying from eight to 72 days.

180 women and girls (with 180 children under 12) earned at hop-picking an average of 2*s.* 6*d.* a day for the women.

Summary.—Total paid in one year for such labour 514*l.* 12 women, eight girls, and eight boys were employed. Highest sum earned by a woman 5*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*, average sum about 3*l.* Average sum by girls 2*l.* 7*s.* Average sum by boys 3*l.* Hop-picking and harvest not included. A boy of 10 earned only 1*s.* Three of 11 earned on average 2*l.* 15*s.* One of 12 earned 3*s.* 6*d.* One of 14 earned 10*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.*

This return includes no harvest work.

113. *Mr. F. Neame*, the occupier of the farm, in sending me the table from which the above was extracted, says, "I know there are persons who have "an impression that what a woman earns by outdoor "employment is lost by neglect of home duties; "but the neglect of home duties would be the same, "whether the employment away from home is out of "doors or in doors; and, I venture to say, that it "will be found where the woman seeks employment "when she is able to undertake it, the family is better "brought up, better provided for, and more cleanli-"ness found in the home than where the mother of "a family is unwilling to employ herself industriously "at home or to seek for work. Idleness leads to "the increase of slothful habits, work leads to the "increase of industrious habits. If a prohibition of "the employment of children under a certain age is "enacted there will be a greater necessity for the "woman to seek employment to help towards the "maintenance of her family. As regards the em-"ployment of children in agricultural work under a "certain age, I do not see the necessity of any Act "to prohibit it, for in agriculture the children will "not be of much use under 10 years of age, neither will "they be of so much use if they are kept without "work much over that age, for it is by early and good "training that the habits of industry are formed. "Between 10 and 13 or 14 is a time of life when the "children are unable to obtain a situation away from "home, a time when they are a heavy and increas-"ing expense to their parents, and a time when they "require better living than perhaps the wages of "their parents can afford, without the assistance of "some earnings from their children. If there should "be any interference on the part of the Legislature in "regard to the employment of children in this and "other counties offering similar employment, it "would be attended with great inconvenience both to "employer and labourer. Agricultural work must "be done at regular times, only varying according "to the seasons; there is always a time to do it, and "if the proper opportunity is missed it either costs "double to do, or perhaps cannot be done at all; and "by its neglect, a loss falls on the producer and con-"sumer, but more especially on the former. If hops "are not tied in due time the extra cost is very great, "if weeds are not cut they run to seed, if fruit is not "gathered in proper time it perishes, if corn is not "cut in proper time it runs out, if hops are not "picked in proper time they are blown away."

ASH.

Population - 1,582.

114. *Rev. H. S. Macharness*, vicar.—The employment of the children here in the fields does not do nearly as much harm as the employment of the women, which takes them from domestic duties and causes the girls to be kept from school. The few shillings a week they earn are very attractive, but it costs them a great deal more to get it. One-third of this parish being market garden land women and girls are very much wanted, and in some cases it is made a condition of letting cottages that the family shall go out to work.

WOODNESBOROUGH.

Population - 889.

115. *Capt. W. Gillow*, landowner and occupies 500 acres.—There is great employment here for women and children, because of the market gardens. I don't think it a good plan for women to go to anything except the very light work, such as hop-tying and picking. I never saw a family where the wife goes out much to work which appears better off by reason of it. Young girls go to the gardens, but we never employ them unless they come with their mothers. Boys will go "rook-keeping" at 6 or 7 years old sometimes. Some boys on my farm have never been to school because their fathers have got regular work for them with odd horses, &c. The rook-keeping lasts throughout the winter months. I want no "mates" on my farm, because I don't believe in the system of baiting horses. I only employ eight horses because I have steam power, and yet I find it worth while to employ a horse-keeper. His duty is to feed the horses and cut up their feed, and the waggoners and "mates" have nothing to do with it. I don't think the horses want baiting on the usual system, and I don't like the boys to be kept up till 10 o'clock. My horses are all the better under the new plan, and its other advantages are that I get rid of "mates," who are constantly running away from their engagements, and that there is no longer any temptation to the waggoners to steal corn for their horses. No boy, therefore, works on my farm after 6 o'clock. I do not approve of a labourer who lives on the farm keeping a pig. Formerly they all did it, but we consider it holds out too great a temptation to them to steal.

ASH.

Population - 2,039.

116. *Mr. Thos. Coleman, Mr. John Maylam*, farmers.—No boys, as a rule, work before 10 years of age for us. They begin with "rooking." In some cases they are entrusted with guns. This work would last from November to May. In the summer they would go weeding till harvest time. Perhaps a dozen boys to under a man would do the weeding. They would be 6*d.* boys. Sometimes women go in this way, but girls very rarely. In this parish there are many market gardens, in which the regular work is done by women and grown up girls, working by the day. The existence of these gardens implies sufficiency of labour at hand, but it makes employment rather irregular. The disinclination of lads to be hired by the year is very much increasing, as they prefer the independence of daily hiring.

117. *F. T. Curteis, Esq.*, large occupier, Elmstone Court.—Labour for boys I call precarious till they are 12 years of age; but before that age they can get a great deal of employment. At rook-keeping a boy can begin at 7 years old. This work would last all through the winter and early spring, and besides that they have a little pig-keeping, and help at harvest. On the whole they could get certain work nearly seven months in the year. Girls go in the spring dropping potatoes, and in October they pick them up. The common plan is for a farmer to sell them on the ground, and the buyer hires women and children to follow the machine which ploughs them out of the ground. It is a very bad school for girls. Besides this they get gleaning and hop-picking. In all they would get steady work about three months in the year. For my part I do not see why young children should not go to school nine months in the

year, so far as employers are concerned. In addition to the work mentioned, women will also spud thistles, cut beans, and sometimes peas, and in winter they go with their families to cut up turnips for the sheep. This is nasty, wet, and disagreeable work. A good man earns 15*s.* a week here; but the piece work, which is considerable, adds 2*s.* a week all the year to his wages. On my farm, which is large for this district, men are never unemployed; but many of the farmers, who hold only 30 or 40 acres, cannot employ men regularly. Still I see very few men out of work.

BRABOURNE.

Population - 743.

118. Notes of meeting, August 26, 1868.

PRESENT:

Rev. JAMES BROTHERS, vicar.
Capt. J. KIRKPATRICK.
Mr. O. ANDREWS, Mr. F. PELLATT } farmers.
Mr. F. WORRELL, cert. schoolmaster.

Boys go to rook-keeping at 7 or 8 years of age. They would be 12 before they are regularly employed, but they would go also to other occupations from four to five months in the year. Mr. Worrell says that from 8 years old for the next two years he can with great difficulty keep them enough at school to satisfy the Government requirements, but after 10 he seldom gets them at all at school. As a rule the girls stay at school rather later than the boys. If they were to attend 250 half days through the year up to 11 years of age, they could pass children up to Standard V., whether they made attendance irregularly or not.

If boys were kept away from agriculture up to 12 years of age, and required to go to school six months in the year, it would not interfere with the requirements of farm labour, if the particular months in which they are to attend are left free.

It is agreed that some parents in this parish do not send their children to school, and that some pressure is required in their case before they will do so.

Distance from school is no obstacle to attendance in Brabourne. From Monk's Horton, where there is no school, the children have to go two miles in some cases to school. Women are very unwilling to do work here, even if it be easy. A few girls go with their mothers to do light work.

SELLINGE.

Population - 560.

119. Notes of meeting, August 26, 1868.

Rev. JAMES BELLAMY, vicar.
Mr. FRED. ANDREWS, farmer and late guardian.

Women go spudding thistles, harvesting, tying and picking hops, and getting up turnips, which altogether would last probably three or four months in the year. A few used to go with thrashing machines, but have now given it up.

Mr. Andrews never employs a boy for bird-keeping. Some however do so in the parish. He thinks young boys are not much employed here, except at "grate" work with their families, until they get big enough to be about a farm. Boys are fit to lead a horse at 12 years of age.

Nearly half the parish is under grass.

There is a night school for girls as well as boys; the former are only taken if some one will take charge of them and bring them.

The school is mixed, with a mistress; boys over 10 are not expected to attend. Mr. Andrews considers education low among farm lads, many of whom can hardly read. He thinks the standard higher here, however, than in surrounding parishes. The vicar says that, judging by his confirmation classes, the state of education is fair.

SMEETH.

Population - 486.

120. Extracts from returns sent in by the Rev. C. H. Robertson, vicar of Smeeth.

The employment of women in the fields is most detrimental in every way to themselves and their families; women continually employed in the fields become entirely demoralized, and attend less and less to any home duties; the husband has no comfort in his home, and resorts to the public-house. None should be employed in winter at all, and proper care should be taken as to their promiscuous mixing with men in the same work; but it is difficult to say what Government can enforce. For harvest and hopping, female work seems necessary, but seldom at other times. A farmer takes a woman to save wages when he might have a man.

I consider that boys are stunted in growth by over work; they should not be employed under 12, unless at the very lightest work. The hours of work should be restricted to a certain number, according to whether the work is light or heavy; the quality of the work to be settled by a committee of independent farmers.

I am convinced that the present poor law would operate more beneficially, and in the end economically, if there was established in central points in every county a labour agency office, to give work of some useful kind under Government. No able-bodied pauper should get relief, but instead a *ticket for employment.* The wages to be a trifle below that of private employers, and private employers to be at liberty to get when needed any number of hands from the Government office. The present poor law is being daily more abused by numbers of idle persons who will not work so long as they can get kept by the poor law. The work proposed should be of public utility, and act as a saving in county and highway rates.

STOUTING.

Population - 213.

121. *Mr. J. B. Andrews,* farmer.—Women are reluctant to work here, because they are so well off. They won't go to stone-picking; they never take up turnips or thin them. Any one family will take turnips by the acre to 'top and tail.' We have about enough labour in the parish, except at special seasons.

The "mates" are mostly boarded with the waggoners.

122. *J. Bacon, Esq.,* agent to Sir E. Dering, Bart., Pluckley.—Women are employed in thistle spudding three or four weeks in the year at 1*s.* a day, and at other times get a good deal of work in the hop gardens. This is all piece-work. Girls are never employed though they often go with their mothers to work. Boys under 12 are very little use to a farmer, and under that age their fathers can't get them regular work. I should like to see all children under that age get a half year's schooling, and I don't see what there is to prevent their going all the winter. There would be a little "crowkeeping" up to Christmas, but I think an old man would do the work better. We often put the boys to it by way of giving them something to do. A great many cottages in East Kent are quite uninhabitable. Sir Edward Dering's are all in good order. He charges only 1*s.* 6*d.* for a cottage with a good garden, which is much lower than the rent of most of them. We generally give 30 rods of garden which is quite sufficient. Some of the cottages in worst order are those built upon the farms, and I think that very likely this is due to their having been under the control of the farmer. When they are so let the tenants ought to repair, and ought to be bound to do it properly. But I think it better for the landlord to keep them in hand, and the majority of cottages are so let about here, though practically the nomination is in the hands of the tenant farmer.

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The following relates to Romney Marsh.

123. *Mr. W. D. Walker*, large occupier at Honeychild, New Romney.—The marsh being to a very great extent under grass very little labour is required in some parts. One man can do the work on two or three hundred acres of land; and at "shearing" time, when men are wanted, they go about in "sets" to the different farms to do the work. The result of this is that between Lydd and Rye there is not a cottage within a mile of another cottage, and the difficulties of schooling for such children must be very great. Here we are deficient in cottages, for we require much more labour, and many of my men come two miles from New Romney. At harvest we are very dependent on "foreigners," who sleep in the "lodges" and places, earn good wages, and drink it all up on Saturday nights. I have lately built four cottages here with two bedrooms and a large attic. They take lodgers. Even half a dozen can sleep in the attic. Our regular men earn 15*s.* a week, and have piece-work enough to add probably 2*s.* a week to their wages. Ploughing is piece-work, so is sheepshearing. Women and girls go to single turnips, and sometimes, though rarely, women go to threshing machines to hand the sheaves on to the machine; but as a rule I should say that they are not very willing to work. Boys will go at 10 years old or younger to keep rooks. I don't trust the young ones with a gun. Very often such boys work all the year, but that is generally because their fathers are our constant labourers, and as a rule we don't want them regularly before 12, at which age boys are fit to go with horses.

124. *Mr. Ricks*, national schoolmaster, New Romney.—"Lambing" and "wool gathering" begins in April and lasts through the summer. But the latter affects us very little now, because few families go at all, or if they do, go only in the evening. The children of "lookers" (shepherds), are those who are most taken away. These are a higher class than the ordinary agricultural labourers, and keep a horse and cow, and they can have their children later at school. But the great difficulty of school attendance in the marsh is distance from school. Some come three miles and over, and that can be done in summer, but it would be dangerous to send children alone in the winter because of the deep ditches only crossed by a slippery plank. At some times, therefore, we have only infants at the school, if we exclude the children of tradesmen. We have one boy of 13 who lives so far off that he could not have been expected to come to school at all before he was 8 or 9 years old. Some of them might be reached by dames' schools where there are a few cottages together; some could not. Midley, for instance, is almost all pasture, has only seven cottages, not all with families, and these would be three miles from school. The school at Brenzet was for five or six parishes round, all very small. The girls get off very young into small places. The oldest girl here is 11 years of age. We have several boys older.

[The difficulty of distance was also mentioned as a very great one by the vicar of New Romney. Of his class for confirmation, however, he said "there were 65 "of them who were very boorish when they first came, "but afterwards I found only two or three who "couldn't read. I did not test their writing." On the other hand, the Rev. C. Cobb, of Dymchurch, says of his night school, "We frequently have young men "there who don't know their letters."]

The two following relate to the Isle of Thanet.

St. Nicholas at Wade.

Population - 670.

125. *The Rev. H. Bennett*, vicar. — Spudding thistles, picking stones, cutting mangold, and crow keeping occupy many young boys. The first two descriptions of work are done by girls also. They often do them in a lot under the direction of an old man. The irregularity caused by this has been in fact the cause that the education of the children is at a low ebb in this parish; but also the children are taken away earlier than formerly, and we rarely keep a boy after 9 years of age. We have a mistress' school with 74 on the books; if all came who ought, I should have 100. There is also a small dame's school at Sarr. As a class, the girls are much better educated than the boys. Women will cut beans at harvest, pick stones, or cut mangolds, but they are not much employed. They are unwilling to go because their husbands are well off. In some cases they are only got to go by gleaning being forbidden unless they do so. The less women are employed the better for their husbands.

St. Laurence.

126. *John Kennet, Esq.*, farmer.—Wages for ordinary labourers are 15*s.*, and they probably earn at piecework in cutting sanfoin and corn as much as 7*l.* or 8*l.* The hours of work are usually from 6 to 5. There are very few cottages in the district between this and Minster, and very often men walk two miles or more to work. Farms requiring three or four cottages have only one. More are wanted than formerly, because we have adopted the plan of having married waggoners on our farms. The cottages are usually let with the farms, and here it is to my mind especially necessary, because of the many openings to other sorts of work which the men have. Young boys are employed only occasionally. They could rarely be employed before 12 or 13, and few boys are competent to lead horses before that age. It is essential that boys should begin early to work, and as it is, all the sharpest boys are being taken for other employments, so we have to be content with the residue. Potatoes are largely grown here, and children are employed at setting and picking up. Sometimes they are ploughed up, and a lot of children with a man collect them. Sometimes a man hoes them up and takes the children to help. It is not uncommon for a farm of 200 or 300 acres to have 40 acres of potatoes.

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127. Summary of Returns not extracted in previous evidence.

All but two deprecate any interference with the labour of *women*. In that case the return comes from a parish where hardly any are employed. "Young persons are often the worse for it, as well in "morals as also in forgetfulness of their schooling; "and it renders them unfit and unwilling for "domestic service, not to say duties; yet the work "on the farms could otherwise hardly be carried out," (hop-growing parish. — E. S.) "and the women's "earnings are needed by the family."—(Rev. C. Lane, rural dean.)

One advocates prohibition of female labour on Saturdays after 12, to prevent Sunday work, and also of winter work, which "they would be better off "without."

As to *boys*, two advocate the alternate day system up to 12 or 13; but with a doubt as to its being practicable. In three other cases it is suggested that labour should be prohibited before 9 or 10 respectively. One employer, and guardian of his parish, writes:—"I never knew one hurt from worke; on the other "Hand many grow into Lazy bad habbits through "the parent allowing them to prowel the streets" (sic).

One clergyman says, "I think the boys engaged "with horses do suffer, for they are engaged from "5 a.m. to 10 p.m., partly in the stables. It is known "as the 'Joskin' system. After being once engaged "the boys seem to become dull, slouching, sensual "louts. I think the system bad for employers and "employed. Boys with horses ought not to work "more than 12 hours."

In only three cases is a return made of boys neither at school nor work. These contain 4,012 inhabitants. 10 boys and 12 girls from 8 to 10; 12 boys and 8 girls from 10 to 13 are included in this class.

In one parish 40 per cent. of the young population are said to be without sufficient education. In another, "Most of them could not pass the third standard,

" many not the second." In another, " Probably " 1 in 20 cannot read or write, and 1 in 12 cannot " write."

One employer says, " I have not a well-educated " labourer, male or female. They may some of them " be able to read after a fashion, but I should say " that there is not one that can write well enough for " a stranger unused to them to read off at first " sight."

128. Further Evidence as to the effect of field work on school attendance.

Knockholt.—The attendance during seven months in the year is very fluctuating. There is no real effort made to send children. If they can earn a few pence during the week they are kept at home. They are kept at home here for strawberry and gooseberry picking, hop-tying, haymaking (earning 6*d.* or 7*d.* a day), gleaning, hop-picking (from 1*s.* a day upwards), blackberry picking (this year they could easily pick half a sieve a day, which is worth 1*s.*), acorn collecting (this year they could easily pick up one bushel a day).

Shoreham.—" To judge of the effects of educa- " tion I have reviewed the lists of children educated " here, and I find the majority of them filling situa- " tions of respectability, and many of them of trust " and confidence. Four are clerks, five foremen in " warehouses, three nursery governesses, four in " business, three foremen in carpenters' shops. But " the children of farm labourers stay at school a less " time than formerly, owing to their receiving a " better education at an earlier age. The influence " of the railway, too, has caused the population to " become more migratory, and the attendance is less " good.

" No child has been withdrawn from school for " permanent farm labour who could not read " previously."—[*Mr. A. White*].

Linton.—Leave at 9 at earliest, because teaching and clothing paid for.

Boughton Monchelsea.—Nine or 10, except sometimes in winter afterwards.

Marden.—Many boys stay away from March to the end of hop-picking ; 36 have been absent for work the whole or the greater part of the last five months.

2	were	13	years old.
4	„	12	„
6	„	11	„
8	„	10	„
6	„	9	„
6	„	8	„
3	„	7	„
1	was	6	„ [*Mr. W. Bowers.*]

Staplehurst.—[At the endowed church school only four boys of 32 of the poor class present (July 31).

Henry Packman, age 8½, the son of Mr. Reeve's bailiff, had just come to school, having never been before, and not knowing the alphabet. He said he had four brothers, of whom none had been to school. —E.S.]

Wateringbury.—Boys remain pretty well till 11.

Hawkhurst.—Boys leave at 12, and in some instances get little schooling after 10. Girls at 13. Eight boys and four girls over 10, and six boys and seven girls under 10 come two miles to school. Some few cottages are two and a half miles from any school. In summer almost all the boys 10 years of age work ; some are taken away younger to tend birds, but only for a time.

Sandhurst.—" At a confirmation last year I found " some who were good scholars once had almost lost " what they had learnt ; some still read well me- " chanically, but had forgotten the meaning. The " boys are worse than the girls."—[*Rev. J. Ridout.*]

Benenden.—" The children of labourers leave as " soon as they can earn anything."

Cranbrook.—" Some parts of the parish are three " miles off, and two school churches are wanted " " [and see ante].

Biddenden.—" Boys wanted regularly at 9 or 10. " They begin work at 7. There are not more than " four or five boys of the labouring class in the school " over 10 years of age."

Frittenden.—" Boys irregular from 8 or 9, and " between 10 and 11 they leave altogether."

Minster (Sheppey).—Boys begin field work at 7 or 8, and generally do not return till after harvest and gleaning. Girls do not work before 14 or 15, but boys leave altogether in some cases at 9, and very few are at school after 10.—[*Mr. Batchelor.*]

Wye.—Boys leave at 10, girls at 11.

Woodnesborough.—" Very few boys kept over 9 ; " boys of labourers go to work altogether at that age. " Girls leave at 10 ; they are fearfully deteriorated " by field work, to which I have known them go " at 8."

Staple.—Boys leave, on the average, at 10.

Stouting.—Boys leave about 11 ; girls at 13. Those who come furthest are the most regular.

Brabourne.—" After 10 we seldom get boys to " school at all. The girls stay rather later."—[*Mr. Worrell.*]

Great Mongeham.—Boys begin work at 9, but we can keep them on and off at school till about 11.

St. Nicholas-at-Wade.—" We rarely keep a boy " after 9 years of age."

129. Night schools exist in 13 parishes out of 43 to which my inquiry on this head extended. In seven cases they were reported as given up after trial, in four of them owing to the scattered nature of the population. Four reported want of masters as the cause. The Rev. T. B. Dickson, of East Church, says, " The only evening scholars materially benefited " are those who have been pretty well taught " previously at school. Heavy, overworked, or weary " young men, who scarcely know their alphabet, are " taught with great difficulty, because it is requisite " that the teacher or teachers should take them " singly." And one schoolmaster enumerates the following difficulties in the way of maintaining a night school :—

1. The want of good teaching power, the master being too exhausted.
2. The want of working interest on the part of the employers of labour.
3. The inaptitude of boys to learn, owing to exhaustion.
4. The want of home discipline in enforcing regular attendance.
5. The contraction of bad habits arising from such concourse of boys before and after school hours.
6. The absence of intellectual attractions.

" All these difficulties," says another return, can be " got over, except the want of teachers."

130. Evidence as to the situation and condition of cottages, gardens, &c. in 31 parishes in Kent.

LINTON.

Population - 613.

Rev. T. G. Carter.—All those built that I can remember have three bedrooms ; some of the older ones have two. All have gardens and allotments. [A very neat village.—E.S.]

BOUGHTON MONTCHELSEA.

Population - 1,190.

Rev. S. Shepherd.—In number insufficient ; as to accommodation they mostly have two bedrooms, and

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a few have three. Abundant gardens, and one field of allotments. Rents 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week. Some of the men have to work a mile and a half from their homes.

MARDEN.

Population - 2,295.

Rev. J. Deedes, and *Mr. Stephen Walker*, guardian. —Sufficient for the labour required. The average distance to work would be about a mile. They are improving, and have now mostly two bedrooms. Gardens are fair, but there are no allotments.

STAPLEHURST.

Population - 1,695.

Rev. M. T. Pearman. — A few wooden huts remain, most of which have a very large bedroom and a little one, but many new brick cottages have been built.

Gardens general ; allotments only to the tenants of the principal landowner.

HUNTON.

Population - 935.

Rev. J. R. Hall.—Good; mostly belonging to Mr. Bannerman, who has much improved them. The only bad ones belong to a lady who is non-resident. As a rule every family has a house with four rooms. All have gardens. Rents from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week.

YALDING.

Population - 2,076.

Rev. E. Baines.—Not sufficient, for part of the labour comes from adjoining parishes ; they are mostly let with farms. With some exceptions they are miserable; some are on one floor only, and that of earth ; many have one bedroom only ; some are flooded whenever the water is out. The curse of the place are the little builders, who run up a row of houses with floors below the level of the ground, so that they are always damp.

Very few have gardens, but there are a few allotments, although the ground is too valuable to give away for these purposes.

The rents are enormous. A single room lets for 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, two for 2*s.* 9*d.*, and a good cottage with four rooms for 4*s.* 6*d.* All that can, therefore, take in lodgers.

NETTLESTEAD.

Population - 575.

Rev. W. F. Cobb.—In many the bedrooms are very deficient in light, ventilation, drainage, and water supply. Rooms generally a good size. Gardens fair. They mostly belong to the landowners, and are let with the farms.

Rents of old cottages, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week ; of 14 new ones, from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 3*d.* ; and of the five last built, 2*s.* 6*d.*

LOOSE.

Population - 1,573.

Rev. S. Simpson. — Mostly fair. Some of the speculators' houses are very bad. Few gardens, and no allotments.

WATERINGBURY.

Population - 1,370.

[Meeting, August 1868.]—Insufficient, which leads to overcrowding. There are some belonging to a speculative builder, with one bedroom. As a rule the cottages are fair. We are very badly off for gardens, and such as there are, are small or a long way off, so that they are badly cultivated. The best size is thought to be one-eighth of an acre. Rents for three bedroomed cottages, 3*s.* 6*d.* Some of those on the farms are let at 2*s.*

BOXLEY.

Population - 1,470.

Mr. Smith.—Good, and with gardens, allotments being given up.

BEARSTEAD.

Population - 638.

Rents from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week, or even more.

EAST MALLING.

Population - 1,974.

Rev. W. L. Wigan.—The rooms for the most part ought to be higher and larger ; frequently there are only two bedrooms. Lodgers are less taken in than formerly. Small tradesmen hold most of the cottages. Gardens nearly sufficient.

RIDLEY.

Population - 101.

Rev. T. P. Phelps.—Belong to landowners; have two bedrooms. Two others are very bad, and have only one bedroom, with a sort of landing at the head of the stairs. Water supply and drainage bad. Rent 2*s.* a week.

WROTHAM.

Population - 3,335.

Rev. C. Lane.—The poorest have chalk walls, but generally they are of brick, and tiled. Most have two bedrooms. Rents 2*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

HAWKHURST.

Population - 2,715.

Meeting, August 11th, 1868.—Few have three bedrooms ; two is the rule. Some are crowded, and a good many lodgers are taken in. A few of the mud cottages still remain.

Two bed-roomed cottages let at 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* on the farms, and at a higher rent in the village.

SANDHURST.

Population - 1,231.

Rev. G. Ridout.—Very small, but above the average. 20 have lately been built with three rooms. A few men have still a mile or two to go to work. Gardens general.

Women describe themselves as being driven out to work by being in the cottages of their husbands' employer.

BENENDEN.

Population - 1,662.

Rev. W. J. Edge.—On the Hempstead estate are rapidly becoming models. As to the others, much supervision seems necessary. Being let with the farms, repairs and sanitary requirements are too often indefinitely postponed. Few have no gardens.

BIDDENDEN.

Population - 1,412.

Capt. Pattenson.—Cottages fair, none probably with one bedroom. Gardens decent.

FRITTENDEN.

Population - 898.

Meeting, August 1868.—Many good, and some very bad and overcrowded. On Lord Holmesdale's estate there are not half the required number, and some men have a long way to walk. Almost all have gardens averaging 20 rods, and some have allotments.

EAST CHURCH (SHEPPEY).

Population - 996.

Rev. T. B. Dickson.—Sufficient ; three to 100 acres. A number of good cottages have been built during the

last 20 years, so that large families are well accommodated. All contain two bedrooms at least, more three. They belong to the landowner, and are of brick, slated. The outbuildings are too good. Cesspools are too near; but no sanitary measures can be carried out in country places, where the guardians of the poor are themselves tenants of great landowners. They dare not, and do not. The poor are fond of building up the bedroom chimneys. It seems to me that medical men do not sufficiently insist on ventilation. Rents are 2*s.* 6*d.* Gardens general, but from the custom of changing masters frequently neither houses nor gardens are what they might be.

SELLINGE.

Population - 560.

Meeting, August 26, 1868.—Not enough to the farms, and many labourers have a long way to walk; some as far as one and a half miles or more. They always go back to dinner, if possible. Some have no wash-houses, many but one bedroom. There is a general want of bedroom accommodation. Rents 2*s.*, with or without gardens.

STOUTING.

Population - 213.

Mr. J. B. Andrews.—Some of the cottages are very small and bad, and the bedrooms reached only by a ladder. On one property here there is a great deficiency; a farm-house has been let out to labourers' families, but makes a wretched substitute. All have gardens.

BRABOURNE.

Population - 743.

Meeting, August 26, 1868.—Deficient; only a few on the farms. Bedrooms insufficient, the majority of cottages having two. Some should be attached to each farm. Capt. Kirkpatrick's are let at 1*s.* 6*d.*, but the average rent is 2*s.* a week, including generally a garden.

ELMSTEAD.

Population - 492.

Rev. G. Prideaux.—Three cottages have only one bedroom; the mass of them have two. Gardens are general.

WYE.

Population - 1,596.

Rev. T. E. Cato.—Most are in the village, and not on the farms. They are very bad; some have one bedroom, hardly one has three.

NEW ROMNEY.

Population - 1,062.

Rev. R. Smith.—Have mostly two bedrooms; many no garden. In "Hope" there is a great want, and men have a long way to go. No new ones are being built. Rents 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week.

DYMCHURCH.

Population - 618.

Rev. C. Cobb.—Have two bedrooms. Gardens are much wanted, but there are a few allotments.

SALTWOOD.

Population - 643.

Major G. Deedes.—On three out of nine farms too few, but there is no actual want in the parish. Ventilation, drainage, and water supply good. Rent from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* Gardens and (in many cases) allotments.

WHITFIELD.

Population - 220.

Mr. J. M. Fielding.—The old ones are all bad, with too few rooms. Water supply and cesspools bad. Certainly not all have gardens. The number is insufficient. Ownership various. Rent 2*s.* to 3*s.*

GREAT MONGEHAM.

Population - 340.

Rev. E. Penny.—Scarcely any with three bedrooms, or with one only. They mostly belong to speculators, who charge as much as 6*l.* for them at least. In good repair. Gardens very small, and no allotments.

WORTH.

Population - 430.

J. Henderson, Esq.—Belong to small owners, and average 2*s.* a week rent, generally including a garden. Most have two bedrooms. In number insufficient.

ST. NICHOLAS-AT-WADE.

Population - 590.

Rev. H. Bennett.—Bad, particularly in sleeping room; scarcely one has three bedrooms; some have one. No improvement has taken place for many years. They belong to several owners; there is not one privy to each cottage. Gardens of a fair size general. Rents about 2*s.*

THE HOP-PICKERS IN KENT.

131. [The following paper by the Rev. J. Y. Stratton, Ditton Rectory, Maidstone, is mainly extracted from an article written by him in the Leisure Hour.]

"By increasing the accommodation for drying and storing the hops, and obtaining a larger supply of labourers, the hop-picking season has of late years been shortened nearly one-half. It rarely exceeds three weeks, and is usually a less term, commencing about the close of the first week in September.

"To pick 50 acres of hops there are upwards of 200 people, who are divided into parties or 'companies' of eight or ten adults, besides children. The chief man of the company is the 'binman,' whose duty it is to keep the bins supplied. Each picker has a bin or half a bin, into which the hops fall as fast as they are picked off the bine. The bine is cut near the root, the pole pulled up and laid conveniently for the picker. In some districts baskets are used instead of bins. The workpeople are paid by the bushel, the agreement being to pick a certain number of bushels for a shilling. This is called 'tallying,' from the ancient and still customary use of the tally. Its recommendation is that it furnishes a simple method of keeping accounts correctly among people who can neither read nor write; but it is giving way before the educated system of booking the work, for which purpose the services of a clerk are required on the ground. The measurer, or tallyman, is the person whose duty it is to measure each picker's work, and thus regulate the pay. By this means also the quantity of hops is known before removal from the ground; and a check is thus provided, securing in some degree the property when taken from the kiln.

"The different bins' companies take up their ground in a line at first concealed by the hops, and from 200 to 300 yards in length. As the poles 'come 'down' the bins are removed from time to time, so that the people keep close to their work. Under favourable circumstances three to four acres a day will be cleared of all trace of vegetation as effectually as if swarms of locusts had been busy there. The contrast between the luxuriant growth in front of the workpeople and the devastation they leave behind them is striking. The work is usually carried on cheerfully, if not quietly; but there are frequent exceptions. The motley crowd of London Irish and towns' poor, clad in tattered habiliments, will unite and force the home pickers (usually nothing loath, excepting to save appearances) to strike for an increase of pay. The tally has been fixed at seven, and the

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cry is for six ; in plain language, they demand twopence a bushel instead of picking seven for one shilling. If agreement on the ground is not possible, they will rush *en masse* to the house of the hop-grower, and demand justice with loud cries and violent gesticulations. At such moments there is not, perhaps, the greatest possible security for person or property, and cases have occurred where the assistance of the military has been required. Generally the dispute is terminated by paying off and discharging the most turbulent and making a partial concession. In the history and practice of strikes a mob of hop-pickers furnishes singular and curious examples.

" In the early part of the month of September numbers of the poorest inhabitants of London, the borough, and great towns, principally situate on the Medway and Thames, leave their homes for the purpose of obtaining employment in the hop gardens of West Kent. Railway facilities are provided for them at reduced fares by the South-eastern Company. They are brought to Maidstone and stations between that town and Tunbridge. In addition to those who come by rail are numbers who arrive on foot ; but of these no accurate estimate can be offered. It is also customary to send to certain convenient places of meeting, waggons, which convey many to their respective lodgings or 'hopper-houses.'

" The hopper-house is generally a long, low-pitched building, divided internally into ten or a dozen compartments, each with entrance from outside. The size of the compartments—we cannot employ the term apartments—is 10, 12, or 14 feet square. They are open to the roof, nine feet high, side-walls about six. Internal division is brick, with strong lattice-work above. The building is brick, and slated or tiled. Older buildings for this purpose are often formed of shingle, or wattle and plaster, with thatched or boarded roofs. As the tenements are required principally for sleeping in, no window is needed, and fire-places are built apart for cooking purposes.

" Each compartment is allotted to a bin's company, leaving the arrangements to be settled by the party. Where there is a family, one place is sometimes assigned to them, and care is in some cases taken to have a separate lodging for young unmarried men. The bedding is straw, with which the floor is thickly littered, and upon this are laid such articles for comfort as the immigrants bring with them ; blankets, or counterpanes, or rugs of some kind. Sheets are a luxury rarely, if ever, seen. A screen made of straw twisted in a sheep-hurdle, or a similar contrivance, may be seen in some of the houses ; but there is little attempt to secure privacy, and, indeed, little use in attempting it. But the occupants do not generally trouble themselves on the subject. The use of tables and chairs is wholly foregone during their sojourn in the country. Lanterns are provided by some hop-growers, but it is customary to extemporize a candlestick and fix it on the wall, or hang it from the roof, or set it on the straw. A few pegs driven into the wall, and a stick or two fixed cornerwise at the eaves, to hang clothes on at night, complete the furniture of the hopper-house ; while a tin pan or two for cooking, and a bowl or two and tub for washing clothes, are joint property of the occupants. The latter must be placed on the ground, so that to wash one's face requires the performer to kneel.

" Of late years tents have been extensively used, and, if a trench is dug outside, and care be taken against overcrowding, and to secure a free draught through them in the daytime, they supply excellent accommodation. The want of security is the only objection against them which we have heard alleged ; and, although one may smile at the notion of lock and key for those

> 'Quorum cophinus fœnumque
> Omne supellex.'

the loss of their furniture would be a disaster to these poor people. It is customary to provide padlocks for the hopper-houses, which are secured during the time the people are at work.

" The accommodation of the hopper-house is about the same in point of comfort as that provided for vagrants in the stable of a union workhouse. But it frequently happens that they are overcrowded ; ten or twelve men, women, and children sleeping together in one place, so close that there is barely room to step between them. In such cases the heat is most offensive, and the atmosphere dangerous to health. Cleanliness, like some other virtues among the wandering poor, is but little cultivated, though one may see them washing their faces on a Sunday morning. But, where boys and girls grow up without shoes and stockings, cleanliness comes to be generally ignored. It would be a work of the most useful kind, tending directly to improve these classes in habits essential to health, if means were taken to bring them to wear some protection against the dirt of the streets, which becomes ingrained into them, and which, from habit, they regard with indifference.

" It is customary to supply fuel to each bin's company. A couple of fagots a week suffice. In addition to the cook-house fires are built on the green, around which the people sit, if the evening is fine, and sing their songs and crack their jokes ; after which they turn in for the night and settle down to sleep. Any one passing near the spot an hour later would not suppose that, in the long and low-roofed tenement hard by, more than 100 souls were gathered together ; but such is a fair specimen of the accommodation. Except as regards overcrowding, we express the belief founded on all the circumstances of the case, that little more can be done, though a few suggestions will be offered in their place of a practical kind for certain improvements.

" One or two instances will, however, first be given of other tenements which the exigency of the service creates.

" Sheep-hurdles are first fixed into the ground and fastened together. Others are placed on the top of them slantwise. Opposite to them is a similar construction. By fastening the hurdles which meet at the roof angle we have the skeleton of sides and roof. This is thatched with wheat-straw, secured by hazel sticks. Such a building may be made of any length, and is readily put up by the farm-labourer and the stack-thatcher. The divisions are made in the same manner. A hurdle stuffed with straw answers the purposes of a door. The building is an ingenious makeshift, much better than it looks ; for the ventilation is secured through the thatch, both roof and sides, while all is weather-tight and snug. But the objectionable form of it is that which has but one door, the den being about 30 feet long, and made to accommodate (?) a large party of men, women, and children. The width is six feet, and the height that of the sheep-hurdle at the sides, and in the middle barely high enough for a man to stand upright. Where the divisions are properly made, and care is taken not to overcrowd, the sheep-gate hopper-houses are by no means the worst.

" Another exceptional case, and a bad one, is the shed, thatched in a similar manner to the former. The arrangements made by a party of 28, who occupied one of these places, were described to be as follows :—There was no internal division of any kind. In one corner four young men slept ; then came the children, next the married people, and in the opposite corner were the girls. The shed was not crowded, and its occupants were tolerably well conducted ; keeping good order till towards the close of the hop-picking, when some of them took to drinking, and disturbances arose. We forbear commentary on the effects, in a moral and social point of view, on the people who found a lodging of this kind for more than a fortnight.

" There are also instances in which sheds constructed for cattle are appropriated to the hop-pickers. At the best such an arrangement is to be deprecated, and, generally, the buildings are of use for storage purposes. If, however, great care is taken to have them thoroughly well cleaned before the people come, objection is lessened. Where that care is wanting,

and the immigrants turned into them 'as if,' such was the exclamation of one of them, 'we were so many cattle,' is it strange that their conduct is little better?

"Notwithstanding all discomforts, so invigorating is the occupation of hop-picking, so healthy the change from town to country, that illnesses are rare. But still there is the risk, and, although every precaution is taken, as soon as a case is known, to remove the sufferer to the nearest union, it is not among the least blessings attendant on the close of the hop-picking to count freedom from infectious illness as one. In 1849 the fearful scourge of cholera broke out among the immigrants at East Farleigh. Forty deaths occurred, and, but for the unwearied exertions of the vicar and his family, a much larger number must have died. Those exertions will long be remembered, and no account of the efforts made on behalf of these poor people should omit mention of them.

"Our observations on the supply of food will be necessarily brief. With the notion of buying at a bargain possessed by so many of the town poor, when they come into the country, it would be matter of surprise if imposition in the sale of meat, and adulteration in other articles of food, were not practised. Where the water supply is not pure and good an undoubted and grave abuse is suffered to exist.

"It is only justice to the hop-growers to state that they are not generally insensible to the necessity of securing, so far as they can, the proper accommodation and food of their workpeople. Many efforts have been made with this object in view, and in some cases with good results. But, from the vagrant character of the uncleanly and ill-fed classes, the difficulty is great. It is increased by the utter disregard for their good shown by the objects on whom improvement is attempted. A worthy landowner, who resided occasionally in the county of Kent, shocked at the immorality permitted by the arrangements, provided and numbered separate apartments for married and unmarried people; but on visiting his hopper-houses one Sunday afternoon, he found them living, as they described it, all higgledy-piggledy. His remonstrances were derided, and nothing could be done.

"Nevertheless some steps may and should, we think, be taken, and from knowledge of the hop-growers, we state with confidence that, if a practical remedy could be devised for some evils pointed out in these pages, it would be adopted. Inquiry into the state of the accommodation proves that it is better now than in former times. When bands of Irish labourers roamed the country in quest of work, the double harvest of corn and hops in Kent was a profitable adventure to them. They slept anywhere—in barns, outhouses, and waggon-sheds, and sometimes under the hedgerow. But, as competition forced the growers to bestir themselves and adopt the best means of securing the crop, the reduction of time became an object of importance in hop-picking. More labourers were wanted while the Irish supply fell short, and at length ceased altogether. Accommodation was at first and excusably inadequate; but, now that the numbers annually required are ascertained, insufficient provision on all points is not easily justifiable.

"Much of the evil arising from overcrowding and from faulty structures would be checked if an inspector of these tenements was appointed who would certify their fitness and the number each should contain. The refusal of a certificate in cases such as have been described in this article, with the power to inflict a fine of small amount, would protect the immigrants from the evils to which they are exposed, and the hop-grower, on the other hand, would find his account in a less defiant and abandoned class of labourers. The same regulations should be applied to tents, respecting the number of inmates, and security against wind and wet above and below, and to any tenements, whether waggon-shed, barn, or sheep-gate house.

"The following regulations should be obligatory:—

(1.) That the lodgings, whatever the materials, should be weatherproof.

(2.) That a minimum space of 16 square feet should be secured to each adult, two children to count as one adult.

(3.) That such screens or divisions should be used as are necessary to protect occupants from indecent exposure.

(4.) That a sufficient number of cooking houses and of privies should be provided.

(5.) That where the hopper-house is used for other purposes at other times of the year, it should be cleaned, and the ground adjoining made free from any offensive matter.

(6.) That sufficient water should be provided.

"The inspector might also attend to the accommodation assigned to hop-pickers in the unions or provided by the police, and his attention would be directed also to the meat and other articles of food exposed for sale or sold to the hop-pickers, so that punishment might be fairly anticipated in cases of fraud. We have known diseased beef sold at 2*d.* a pound to the occupants of a hopper-house numbering upwards of 80 persons, many of whom were ill, in consequence, as they stated, of their bargain in beef.

"Regulations of such a kind as these would not be found to be of an inquisitorial character, neither would there be difficulty if they received the support and sanction of the Poor Law Board. The expense would be but trifling, and be more than compensated, independently of stronger reasons, by an improved state of accommodation and an attention to the requirements of the workpeople, which would on their part exercise its natural influence for good. We would not interfere with their sleeping arrangements; such interference, however, well meant, does more harm than good.

"As a further means of improvement, a middle-man or agent of a better class than those at present in the field is much wanted to supply the hop-pickers required. At present this is done by 'binmen,' who get their friends together and make a party which constitutes the company. The binman knows that the worse the hands are, the longer the picking will last, and here is certainly some inducement against the selection of good ones. Still we doubt not that efficient agents would be found among the binmen and persons living among these classes. They would obtain lists of names of the hop-pickers, striking off such lists, as far as possible, all persons of disorderly and turbulent character. Such a step would encourage many more poor but respectable persons to come than do now, and a great improvement might be perceptible in two or three years. That the classes from which the selection is made are among the poorest is quite evident; for persons who have a settled trade or occupation cannot, as a general rule, afford to leave it for the season. There is not much force, we think, in the objection that such agents would get the poor into their own hands; competition would check such an evil, at least, as much as it does at present among the binmen.

"A bench and a table and lantern might, we hope, be assigned to each compartment by the owner, without the danger of their being purposely broken. Much inconvenience is felt for want of articles of this kind, and a small payment exacted from the binman would cover any wanton damage they sustained.

Under these conditions a fortnight or three weeks' sojourn in a 'hopper-house,' though none of the most desirable, would be deprived of much of an objectionable character."

132. [The Society for the Employment and Improved Lodging of Hop-pickers was formed at Maidstone on October 25, 1866, in pursuance of a memorial signed by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, several of the nobility, and a large number of the gentry, clergy, and hop-planters of the county. Its objects were twofold,—

(1.) To establish a system of engaging hop-pickers by means of respectable and trustworthy agents living in the towns whence they come.

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(2.) To promote the supply of better lodgings and accommodation for them].

The following extract is from the report for 1867 :—

With respect to the lodging of hop-pickers the Committee have the satisfaction to state that an improvement has taken place. Many of the alterations already made in them are directly traceable to the influence of the Society.

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The plan of engaging for the "picking" through an agent was favourably regarded by the pickers. Great numbers applied to the agents for employment, preferring, as they commonly stated, to engage under the Society to the means hitherto adopted by them of obtaining work. There was not, however, the same ready response on the part of the hop planters to the Society's offer to engage the pickers. Many were desirous to see the experiment of engaging hop-pickers by means of the Society tried, but few were willing to run the risk of making the experiment for themselves.

In addition to the natural want of confidence in a new and untried system, was the ominous prospect of there being no hops to pick. For months appearances were so much against the chance of a crop, that it was commonly supposed that the duties of the agents would be restricted to their keeping the people at home. It was not till the middle of August that it became probable that the services of immigrant hop-pickers would be required in any considerable degree.

The difficulty arising from the fickleness of the hop proved embarrassing to the agents at the outset, inasmuch as they were under the necessity of ascertaining their resources of supply before orders to engage pickers could be received. Further, from the unusual lateness of the crop, and the fears of many of the work-people that the picking was in full progress when but one pocket of new hops had found its way to the Borough, a great number of poor persons left their homes in search of employment. Although a public notice from the Society warning none to go to the hop district on the bare chance of employment might have done good service, it was, after careful consideration, determined not to venture on such a course in our first year.

133. Extracts from the Paper of Recommendation issued by the Society in 1867.

The hopper house is a building containing 8, 10, or more rooms, each with external entrance, and providing accommodation for six or more persons in a room.

The Committee recommend that a minimum space of 16 square feet should be allowed for each adult picker, two children, exclusive of infants, to count for one adult.

A convenient size is a room 14 feet long by 12 feet wide for ten pickers, or 7 feet by 12 feet for 5; and it is recommended that at least half the number of rooms should be of the smaller size. The floor may be boarded in the space assigned to the beds. Screens of wood or iron may be also supplied 6 ft. by 4 ft. for divisions between the beds. They are preferable to screens occasionally made by the lodgers. Fasten to the wall by hook and staple.

A square of stout rough plate glass about 18 in. by 14 in. in the roof is recommended.

If a window in the wall is preferred, the same should consist of an opening protected by bars, with a shutter to close when required.

Doors with a bolt inside and padlock on the outside. If opening outwards (by which arrangement internal space is saved) to fasten by a catch to the wall.

Sliding doors may be used where the expense is not an objection.

Shelves in the corners, or cupboards, would be useful, and a few pegs for hanging clothes, &c. should be provided. Iron sockets driven into the walls for holding candles are recommended. Sconces to hang on the wall, or lanterns (which may be purchased at a cost of 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* each) may be supplied.

The binman to be responsible for injury or loss.

The cooking houses should be in the proportion of one to two bin's companies. A lean-to roof over the fire-place, covering a ground space of 7 ft. by 9 ft.

Fire-places to have iron bars for the pot-hooks.

Although conveniences are more commonly built for the lodgers than formerly, the accommodation is far from being sufficient. One for each company is recommended.

While all reasonable care should be taken for the encouragement of morality and good order among the hop-pickers, great caution is needed in dealing with the arrangements which the people prefer to make for themselves. These should not be unnecessarily disturbed.

134. Extract from Second Annual Report, in 1868.

Enquiries were set on foot in the course of the summer by the Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, into the state of the immigrant hop-pickers of Kent. In the belief that the assistance of the Commission will expedite the reform for which the Society is labouring, your committee have rendered it such help as lay in their power.

Nearly 400 pickers were supplied by the Society's agents for the season, being an increase of 60 on the number supplied last year. Considerable improvement in their efficiency is reported. In their behaviour, whether on the farm, or at the railway stations, they have been, on the whole, exemplary. The only station in the district, where the number of the Society's pickers rendered the services of an agent desirable, was at Wateringbury, at which place the advantages of such control were established by Mr. Leach, the agent, to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

With reference to the usefulness of the Society in difficulties arising with the work-people, the following instance deserves notice. An owner of hop land in Wadhurst was under the necessity of resisting demands made on strike, when about half through the picking. All the hands were discharged, and application was made to the Society for a fresh supply. An inspection of the lodgings provided for them was thereupon made, and the number of pickers required promptly sent from the agency in Westminster. The work was completed to the satisfaction of the employer.

The suggestion to issue notices in London warning persons not to leave their homes and tramp the district on the bare chance of obtaining employment in picking hops, was not adopted by the committee. A large number, however, of poor persons taking friendly counsel with the Society's agents, remained at home, either altogether or till they heard of engagements. But for this precaution, they would have found their way into the district two or three weeks before the commencement of the season, as others less fortunate did, and augmented the distress which must exist in a greater or less degree, so long as the custom of hiring pickers from the road is maintained. The evil of this custom was pointed out at the first annual meeting by one of the speakers, and has been spoken against elsewhere as a premium on vagrancy. The remedy for the main part of this evil is, for growers to adopt the rule of engaging pickers either by means of the Society's agents, or by better agents where they may be had.

A valuable check on disorderly behaviour has been secured by placarding the district with notices that orderly hop-pickers can be promptly sent by the Society to any point required. By the assistance of Mr. Knight, the out-door superintendent of the South-eastern Railway Company, to whom we must again express our acknowledgements, these notices were posted at every station frequented by the hop-pickers. The improvement in their conduct both last year and this is in a great measure to be attributed to the wholesome hint thus given to them.

The land under hops according to the excise returns in 1861, was 47,941 acres. The acreage given by the Board of Trade for the present year is 64,488, being the highest on record. No less than 41,087 acres are returned from Kent, being an increase in the county of 14,000 acres since the repeal of the hop duty. These returns are obtained, so far as possible, by the Board of Trade, from all growers, without limit as to acreage.

The hop-pickers' railway traffic is now reduced to a system, and under the local supervision of Mr. Raggett, station master of Maidstone, is greatly improved.

The following returns have been supplied by the South-eastern Railway Company :—

Hop-pickers from London by Special Trains.	*Returned by ditto.*
1865—11,090	12,000
1866—11,000	13,000
1867— 8,777	10,694
1868—14,476	17,288

No account is taken of hop-pickers who travel by ordinary trains.

On the 5th of September, when the picking was well advanced, the agents reported that upwards of 1,300 hop-pickers (out of a number of about 3,000 who had applied to the Society for employment) had remained in London and that their services were available if required. There does not therefore appear to be a probability of a deficiency in the supply of hands, which was at one time apprehended by the growers. Efficient organization for such supply, and good treatment for the people, will, it is reasonable to anticipate, obviate difficulties on this point.

[Agents were appointed in Lambeth, Bermondsey, Golden Lane, Westminster, Seven Dials, Woolwich, Deptford, and Maidstone.]

Your committee are assured that a thoroughly efficient staff of agents will, at no distant date, secure to the Society a large measure of support, with the best results not only to the immigrant hop-pickers, but to the growers themselves. The duties of the agents are anxious and laborious. They would be rendered easier if all orders for pickers (which are executed conditionally on pickers being wanted) were sent to them a month before the commencement of the season.

With reference to the lodgings, the influence exerted by the Society, both directly and indirectly, continues to produce good results. Bad lodgings are no longer assigned to the large majority of the immigrants, but are the hard lot of the minority. It is therefore still incumbent upon the Society to appeal both to the owners and occupiers of hop lands to unite together in rescuing the poor from the degradation, and the district from the reproach, caused by permitting lodgings in which morality, decency, and comfort cannot be secured.

135. On the 4th of September 1868 I visited the farm of J. Johnson Ellis, Esq., the Priory, East Farleigh. Mr. Ellis employs 1,400 to 1,500 adult hop-pickers, besides young children. The greater part are from London, and at least 1,200 had written beforehand to his bailiff, generally through the agency of the binman, who undertakes to bring down a bin's company.

The bailiff is, as it were, the commander-in-chief, having under him three masters of the hop-garden. The system is to fix the "tally," or price per bushel, for each garden before work begins. This is read over to the pickers, who are bound over for the whole picking. If any leave before the end they are paid off according to what they have earned. The tally fixed beforehand is rarely adhered to throughout; but if Mr. Ellis finds that the hops are coming down badly he anticipates complaint by altering the rate of payment. Mr. Ellis's hopper houses are mostly of brick or stone, with a roof of tiles so placed as to afford a ventilation which cannot be stopped up. They are divided into rooms, mostly 12 feet square and 9 feet high, containing from 9 to 12 persons each. In one case his house is in two stories, being intended to serve for cottages if necessary. A tin candlestick is supplied to each hut. Wood and straw are given out daily. The cooking places are very simple and excellent, being a lean-to against a stone wall, with an iron bar to swing a kettle on. Privies are provided, about one to every 30 or 35 people.

The number being this year greater than usual, Mr. Ellis has also 9 or 10 bell tents, and a very large hut of tent cloth, with walls of bine and hurdles. This is the only place where the accommodation is not very good.

A medical man attends every morning, and anything ordered by him is immediately supplied.

136. *Henry Bannerman, Esq.*, Hunton Court.—"At every leaving year my pickers are told, if they "wish to be employed next season they must apply "by writing before the 1st of August. Any who have "been disorderly or ringleaders in strikes are informed they need not apply. By adopting this "course the same hands are readily obtained year after "year, and some of the worst characters weeded out.

"Here there are five separate gangs, over each of "which there is a manager placed, with an adequate "supply of bookers or clerks. At the beginning of "the work, or very shortly afterwards, a list of rules "is read in the hearing of the assembled pickers, which "if not objected to constitutes a legal contract. In "one of the rules *the tally* agreed on is named, and it "is specified that if any person leave the work before "the picking is concluded he is liable to be paid off "at 1*s.* for 12 bushels, instead of the tally named, "which is often 5*s.* or 7*s.*

"When a strike occurs without sufficient cause, the "best way to stop it is to single out one or more of the "ringleaders, and pay them off. In the event of the "hops going off badly, owing to disease or change of "weather, the people will naturally become dissatisfied "with their earnings; under such circumstances the "best course is to lower *the tally* voluntarily at once, "before being compelled to do so.

"Several hundred home pickers are employed here, "who seldom avowedly join in a strike; but it is "surmised that they are not seldom at the bottom "of it. Their experience enables them to discern the "symptoms of an approaching change in the hops; "they foresee that they are about to go off rapidly, "and *must* be either picked or lost. It is in such an "emergency that the grower is completely at the "pickers' mercy."

137. *Mr. E. Leach*, Scripture reader, and agent to the Kent Hop-pickers' Society, 30, Bermondsey New Road, S.E.—For the last seven years I have been engaged by the vicar of Wateringbury to work as Scripture reader among the hop-pickers in his parish. The pickers who went this year to work in that parish for Mr. Arthur Fremlin and Mr. Goodwin were sent down by me from here as agent for the Society. Last year I sent some to Mr. Goodwin, and all of them who go again this year want to return to him.

In that district I have seen every sort of accommodation for the pickers. I prefer wooden huts, with small partitions, such as Mr. Goodwin has, in each of which there is a sort of raised bed. His 'wigwams of heather' do not protect them so well from exposure to the weather. Some of the new brick hopper-houses are very good, such as Mr. Fremlin has built. One woman was confined in one this year, and, as he has put up rough wooden bedsteads, was very comfortable.

He has also some tents, but in damp weather these are not so satisfactory.

Some of the pickers in this district are miserably lodged. They are given straw and hurdles, and make what shelter they can. In one such hut there were 40 persons this year.

One great difficulty in the hop gardens is that of getting good food, and even when they have it there is often a want of a shelf or a locker in which to put it. The pickers who have been hired through the Society urge to me, as their chief reason for preferring this mode of hiring, that they have not to

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leave London till they have a certainty of employment; and, secondly, that the character of their companions is very much improved. In consequence of this I find that a higher class of people are willing to go for the change of air, and would even pay a small sum to get a decent lodging there. Mr. Fremlin tried the plan of giving me a sum at the end of his picking to distribute among those who had behaved themselves well, and this, I think, will have considerable effect.

But another advantage is that they are saved from the extortions of the bin-men or gangers. In 1866 several women told me that their bin-men never gave them any account of what they earned, but paid them what he liked. Sometimes a costermonger takes them all down in his cart, feeds them, and gives them fixed wages, taking himself the rest of their profits. In other cases the bin-man expects to be treated or receive some payment for taking them down.

138. *Mr. F. Duly*, relieving officer, Maidstone.—The hop-pickers that I get in my district for relief come to this place on "spec.;" they are mostly the scum of London. I have averaged during the past week 100 a night who have come for orders. The majority that come are not accompanied by children. They describe themselves as men who can "do anything" for a living. Another class consists of the poor that come from the London unions, and they state (with what truth I don't know) that they are forwarded by the officials of those unions to come here for change of air. Some come in a terrible state, with ulcers or sick, and they go at once into an union, and are not fit to work. I don't think that any agency system that can be devised will check the evil of those people coming into the district. They don't care about hop-picking in particular; they come to pick up what they can, and follow the hop-pickers, just as followers go with an army; nor would it prevent strikes, because hop-pickers in possession of a garden would never consent to be turned out, except by force.

139. *Mr. J. T. Hatch*, land agent and occupier, Lenham.—To me setting the hop "tally" after the work is done is wrong in principle. When people make a bargain each should have the option of undertaking the job at a certain price or not. At the same time I believe the employers generally pay what is just and right.

We can't fix the "tally" before we begin, because the yield is unknown, but the fairest plan seems to me to be to fix it after a day or two's picking.

The importation of labour for hop-gardens has very largely increased, and makes the difficulty of preventing strikes greater. The only way is by having an excess of supply. There are plenty of men, but you can't get them at a minute's notice. In some cases no provision is made for their accommodation. It won't do to ask too much where they are put. To show the class that come down to us, I found at the Hollingbourn Union Workhouse that there had been 289 casuals in one week (all hoppers), of whom only two had a sum amounting to 2*d.* found upon them. The great majority had nothing, and were partly without clothing. It is right, however, to mention the migratory hoppers from London and other large towns that are engaged by the planters, *before they come* into Kent, are of a much better and less indigent class.

140. *Mr. G. Turner*, farmer and hopgrower, Kemsing.—Most of my pickers write to me beforehand, and I fill up with those on the spot. I want 110 "bins." It is very difficult to know exactly your number till the time comes, as many of those who engage do not come. After harvest this year I engaged no pickers; I don't suppose more than one or two are now working for me. Many of these men who must come for harvest, cannot go back to town between harvest and hopping, because their lodgings are given up. I fix the "tally" before they begin to pick. I find no difficulty in it, and I have often been all through my picking on the same tally. So many of my men are in the habit of coming every year that I have less difficulty in keeping them in order. I know that many growers fix the "tally" at the end of picking. This does not seem to me fair upon the pickers, as all should know beforehand what they are working for.

141. [Summary of Evidence as to the mode of hiring of hop-pickers.]

Four hundred were hired through the Society; almost all the rest by letter, generally through the binman or tallyman. Four employers say they pick them up on the road. Previous agreements are rarely entered into. By the returns from West Kent, it appears that the "tally" or price for picking was paid on the second or third day after beginning at latest, or before the commencement of each separate garden. In East Kent the price does not appear to be fixed till the work is done, when it is so fixed as to give average pickers from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. Some make it a condition that in the event of any offence being given by the pickers, they shall be paid off at a greatly reduced price.

Strikes are mainly complained of in the West. "Firmness and kindness," are the usual remedies recommended.

Mr. W. A. Fremlin, says, "No means are so "powerful as the universal engagements of pickers "through an agent, particularly the Society, and "keeping a black book to be handed to the agent "that bad characters may not be sent out another "year." Others suggestions are, "combination "among employers not to employ those that strike;' "that masters should not trust so much to their "bailiffs;" "the closing of all beer-houses during "the whole of the Sabbath;" and "an arrangement "to be made before the bench of magistrates for the "rate of payment to be made after picking."

142. Evidence as to the accommodation of the hop-pickers in the under-mentioned parishes.

BOUGHTON-ON-BLEAN.

Mr. Berry (90 immigrant pickers).—"Hopper-"houses of wood with felt roof, divided into rooms "(say 10 ft. × 12 ft., × 12 ft. high), but this the "families arrange among themselves. Out-buildings "sometimes used. A lantern, straw, and fuel "provided."

BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA.

["90 acres of hops in the parish. Half the pickers at least are lodged in old barns and lodges, and some rough houses built of loam and thatch. The only partitions are hurdles put between the beds, leaving them to twist straw in, if they like; they seldom do so."—E.S.]

BENENDEN.

(Number of foreign pickers in parish, 500.)—[In many cases straw and hurdles are given, and conical huts are built by the pickers themselves; sometimes they are lodged in outbuildings. Mr. Landsell has one wooden hopper-house with partitions; so has Mr. Harris; there are no others in the parish.—E.S.]

BRABOURNE.

Mr. Andrews (12 families).—"Six brick hopper-"houses, and six of straw; no furniture."

BRENCHLEY.

Mr. G. Hammond (50).—"Lodging in a large "barn with partitions; some brick hopper-houses; "rooms 8 ft. × 10 ft., with locks. Clean straw and lanterns."

Mr. Manwaring (200).—"Lodged in large barns, "partitioned with sheep gates, generally with straw "between them. They are very healthy. Straw and "lanterns provided."

Mr. W. Noakes (20).—"Cattle lodges made warm "with straw and cleaned. Straw, lanterns, and pails "provided." Mr. Noakes adds, "The enquiry I think "a very necessary one; inspection and report will do "much."

CHARTHAM.

[On Mr. Martin's farm, 10 wooden houses with asphalte roof, good. One privy and no cooking house. —E. S.]

CHILHAM.

Mr. J. Day (80).—"Some wooden huts with "asphalte roof in a row, others moveable. Size, "10 ft. × 10 ft., height, 10 ft., containing four adults "and children. The moveable huts preferred. Some "are put into a barn and lodges. Lanterns pro- "vided."

Mr. J. Hambrook.—"Wood, with felt roofs. Size "of rooms, 9 ft. × 10 ft., height, 11 ft. In cases of "necessity, some are lodged in barns, &c. with "partitions."

CRANBROOK.

Mr. G. Neve (150).—"Put into one large barn "with sheds on two sides. In the parish about 1,000. "There are some brick hopper-houses 10 feet square. "Sometimes with a wooden floor one foot from the "ground for a bed. Lanterns occasionally provided. "Barns and sheds often used with or without "partitions."

[At the union house there are sometimes 60 or 70 in the casual ward at the hop-picking season. They are then lodged in the stable.—E. S.]

DITTON.

Mr. P. Maitland (100).—"Brick houses with iron "or slated roof, 16 ft. square, containing from six "upwards. Where the number is large, barns are "sometimes used."

EASTLING.

Mr. B. Murton (30).—"Brick and wood houses, "10 ft. × 11 ft. Two families usually take one house. "Shelves and hooks fitted. Used as storehouses for "tackle, ashes, and guano at other times. They are "cleaned and lime washed."

EAST FARLEIGH.

[For Mr. Ellis' farm, *see* Ante, No. 135.]

Mr. Lewis (270 without children).—"Clean and "dry hopper-houses, with earthen floor (10 ft. × 12 "ft.). Each will contain six adults without children. "One set has a slate roof, with the slates overlapping "for ventilation; the other with asphalte roof and a "covered vent hole. We keep roots in them in "winter, or lime. Before hopping they are lime- "washed. Straw and fuel provided. In these I put "families. Tents and a cart shed are kept for single "men. Sometimes, if we require more than usual, "we lodge them in cattle sheds, divided by hurdles "wattled with hop bines; never in barns."

WEST FARLEIGH.

[On Mr. Jackson's farm, two tents, four hopper-houses of wood, and one of straw. Cooking house, the church yard wall.—E.S.]

FRITTENDEN.

"Many immigrant hop-pickers. Hopper-houses very uncommon."

HADLOW.

Messrs. Cox (150).—"Brick hopper-houses, 14 ft. "by 12 ft.; height to eaves, 6 ft. 9 in. Each intended "for 12 persons."

Mr. C. Leney (600 to 700).—"Some lodged in "tents; others in houses thatched or tiled. Each "tent, 10 ft. by 8 ft. Decency is a word few under- "stand the meaning of."

HORSMONDEN.

Mr. B. Buss (100).—"Brick and tile houses, with "one family in each; straw and lanterns provided. "Some are lodged in barns with partitions."

HAWKHURST.

Mr. Piper (200).—"They build their own huts on "the ground generally. But there is a brick cattle "shed, in which they make their own partitions. "They cook in a corner of the field."

HUNTON.

[On the farm of Henry Bannerman, Esq. (1,000). —Brick hopper-houses about 12 ft. square, slope of roof beginning at 6 ft. high. In one row of 16, the two outside ones were fitted up as kitchens. Each contains a bin's company, viz., eight pickers and the polepicker, besides any children they may have with them.—E.S.]

Mr. W. Mercer (100).—"Brick and tile hopper- "houses. Whitewashed before use. Some few "lodged in outbuildings with partitions."

Mr. T. D. Shafto (80).—"Brick and slate hopper- "houses, cleaned and whitewashed if necessary. "Families and single men lodge separately."

ICKHAM.

(400.)—"Generally lodged in the cow lodges and "barns; there may be temporary partitions erected. "There is one hopper-house in the parish. Perhaps "inspectors might be appointed armed with some "powers." [S. M. Hilton, Esq., High Sheriff.]

KEMSING.

Mr. Turner (110 bins).—"Has a boarded building "fitted with partitions; others live in the buildings; "divided with hurdles and straw."

Mr. Stoneham (100 pickers).—"Has two tents with "two families in each; one family in a sheep waggon, "and one cart lodge thatched with straw and "hurdles."

MILTON CHAPEL.

[*Mr. R. Lake* has 20 brick and tiled hopper-houses, back to back; clean and good; water supplied by a cart; two privies, of which he "compels the use." Good cooking place.—E.S.]

EAST MALLING.

(600.)—"In some cases odged in barns, &c. with "thatched partitions."

MEREWORTH.

Mr. T. White (540.)—"Has 40 houses of brick "and tile, 10 ft. by 12 ft., in which families and "friends of the parties arrange as they like best. In "winter stores the wooden picking frames in them. "For the remainder of his pickers has tents."

NETTLESTEAD.

Mr. A. White (400).—"Brick and tile hopper- "houses, and some of wood; a few live in tents, "others in carts or any outbuildings."

[On Mr. R. Allen's farm are six wooden houses near roadside.—E.S.]

PLAXTOL.

(800 to 1,000.)—"Some in barns with partitions "of thatched hurdles; some in tents; others in brick "hopper-houses with six or eight in each dwelling."

PLUCKLEY.

Mr. Bacon.—"Bullock lodges with boarded par- "titions, cleaned and whitewashed; some in a barn "with partitions; straw and lanterns provided."

PETHAM.

[*Mr. A. Solomon* (has 63 baskets of pickers, that is, 126 adults).—Has 15 wooden huts with asphalte roof. No windows, and very hot. Partitions of wood and straw alternately. Water supply not *convenient.*

On *Mr. Hammond's* about 100 baskets are wanted. 12 wooden hopper-houses (say 10 ft. square), in most

Kent.

Mr. Stanhope.

cases re-divided by a straw partition. Seven very low and poor hurdle huts; one largeish straw and hurdle hut; one tent hut, built by themselves. In a corner away from the rest was a gypsy cart and three straw huts built by the gypsies. Good supply of water. No privies or cooking places.—E.S.]

SANDHURST.

(110.)—"Lodged in barns and outbuildings with "partitions cleaned before occupation; others build "tents either of straw or hop-bine. No special "hopper-houses."—[*Rev. G. Ridout.*]

SELLING.

Mr. Butcher (70 to 80).—"Some in cart-sheds with "partitions; others in wooden houses 10 ft. square; "number *in each* unlimited; wooden bedsteads. To "be used in winter as implement sheds."

Mr. E. Neame (400 to 500).—"Some lodged in "brick, wood, or iron hopper-houses, 9 ft. or 10 ft. "square. Six people in the smallest. A common "bedstead in most huts. Some lodged in clean "cattle-sheds. The pickers divide them them-"selves."

SELLINGE.

"The few foreign pickers here sleep in the cart-"lodges."—[*Mr. Andrews.*]

SUNDRIDGE.

Mr. G. Whibley (20 bins, that is, about 160 pickers).—"In cart-lodges with partitions, but often "they prefer to lodge in lots of five bins, as they "come together from home. Tenants, from the un-"certainty of their tenure, cannot be expected to "build hopper-houses."

SUTTON VALANCE.

(400).—"Some in barns, &c., others in wood or "brick hopper-houses.—[*Mr. J. Paine*].

WATERINGBURY.

Mr. W. A. Fremlin (300).—"Bell tents are much "used. In one case I have used a large cart-shed "this season, divided into small compartments for four "pickers each. I have also small hopper-houses about "12 ft. square for six or eight pickers each, and some "new ones $7\frac{1}{2} \times 9$ for four pickers. The latter are "much approved for small families, and, I think, a "mistake is made in building rows of hopper-houses "of uniform size, unsuited for families varying in "number. I provide board benches with bed of "coarse cloth stuffed with straw. The houses are "sometimes used for storing machinery, but are "cleaned and whitewashed."

[*Mr. E. T. Goodwin* has 15 conical huts of wood thatched with heath (12 ft. in diameter at base), five or six inmates in each. A ventilating pipe always stopped up by inmates. Also a wooden moveable hut with six compartments (each about 8 × 4) for married couples, with a bed and seat in them. Very comfortable.—E.S.]

WROTHAM.

Mr. Carter (250).—"Frequently lodged in barns, "&c., divided by the pickers themselves. Some "timber houses with slate roofs."

Mr. S. Rutley (80).—"In lodges and outbuildings "with temporary partitions. A tenant would pay "a fair per-centage on a landlord's outlay for hopper-"houses."

Mr. W. Jull (300).—"In lodges and cart-sheds "with partitions. I am bound to keep a certain "number of acres of hops, and my landlord ought to "provide good accommodation for the pickers, on "which outlay a tenant would pay interest."

YALDING.

Mr. R. Alexander (60).—"Brick and tile houses "for six persons each, annually cleaned and white-"washed. My pickers come in sets or parties, and "in those occupy the houses. To interfere with this "would provoke needless discontent."

[On Mr. S. Waterman's farm were three good bell tents of straw. The mass of the hop-pickers lived close to a road under the lean-to round a barn; these were small and unfit.

On Mr. A. Ward's farm were eight straw and hurdle houses on three sides of a square; entrances 4 ft. high; tumble-down and bad cooking places back to back with one of the rows.

On another farm were eight wooden houses large and with cooking accommodation; other pickers were lodged in a barn, with three doors, and made up with hurdles and straw. Cattle yard outside filthy.—E.S.]

143. [Privies were not provided in 19 cases, and in 11 in very insufficient numbers; in six they were provided and stated not to be used, in six others it was not stated whether they were used or not. In only one or two cases was any attempt made to separate males from females in the use of them. The general plea was "the people hardly know how "to use them," or "they would be too dirty for "others," or "there are plenty of secluded places for "them in the woods or hop-gardens." The state of filth in the neighbourhood of some gardens is therefore very bad.

Cooking houses were more or less provided on 15 farms, and in 11 to a very insufficient extent. In 14 no provision was made, but they had to cook in the open air.—E.S.]

Cheshire.

CHESHIRE.—EVIDENCE.

144. A meeting of the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture was held at Crewe on Thursday, February 4th, at 11 a.m., to meet the Hon. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner. Sir Philip G. Egerton, Bart., M.P., took the chair, and there were upwards of 60 gentlemen present.

Mr. Stanhope, in his statement, referred to the following points as especially requiring the attention of the Chamber:—

1. Education.
2. The employment of female farm servants.
3. Cottages.

The following letter from Lord Egerton of Tatton was then read:—

(Copy.)

"Brighton, February 2, 1869.

"Sir,—I regret that my health does not allow me to attend the meeting to be held on February 11, for a conference with Mr. Stanhope. I have no doubt, however, he will receive all the information relative to his inquiry from the members present, and I could add but little to it; should he, however, wish to know my views, you are welcome to place this letter in his hands for that purpose.

"In my part of the county I should say that boys under the age of 12 are seldom employed except on very particular occasions, and I should see no objection to that limit being placed on the understanding that they might be occasionally worked for hay harvest, potato getting, *if they have a certificate of having been at school for two or three years.* There are in my part such a number of excellent schools within reach of every child, that either the parents or the children are to be blamed if they have not received proper education, and in the Altringham Union the guardians always insist on the attendance at school of all children who receive out-door relief (although it is not absolutely legal), and the relieving officers get the certificate. In many schools I should say the education goes further than necessary, as I find in my schools that scarcely one of the children of labourers return to farm work, but aspire to be clerks or mechanics ; and I do not think for 15 years one of the half-time boys I have had from the age of 12 to 14 has remained in my service as a labourer. This, however, is the natural consequence of the neighbourhood of a town like Manchester, and the desire to rise in life which one cannot find fault with. Women, except in hay and corn harvest, and sometimes potato getting, are but seldom employed in out-door labour, and then not to any excess that may be hurtful. Such, at least, is my experience in my part of the county. If I can be of any use to Mr. Stanhope in giving him any other information, I shall be happy to do so, if he will write to me here; but naturally those who are permanent residents in the county know more. I hope you will have a good meeting.

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

(Signed) "EGERTON OF TATTON."

"Mr. Rigby."

Mr. Slater, of Woodford Hall, entirely agreed in Lord Egerton's letter, and thought education very much neglected in the country. Believed it to be owing *to the neglect of parents*, and not to want of schools. Objected to any legislation upon the employment of children in farm labour, as all boys ought to work regularly at 12 years of age, and before that time at occasional labour, as it is useful for them to do. Said that the charge of a low state of morality among farm servants is true, and that it is the fault of employers, and that the remedy is in their hands.

Major Egerton Legh thought no child ought to be employed regularly before 12, and that then there would be no difficulty about education. Women are very little employed in the fields, except Irish, from the nature of the cultivation. The low state of morality among farm servants is partly due to the landlords, owing to the bad construction of the cottages in some cases ; but that great improvement is taking place in this respect. The key ought not to be given to them on Saturday night, and characters ought to be required. Improvement is taking place. As to cottages some people go too far. Every cottage should not have three bedrooms. Easy access to water is advisable.

Mr. G. W. Latham, of Sandbach, has had special opportunity of observing combined labour and education in the Reformatory, where all the boys are expected to receive education only for two and a half to three hours a day, and to work the rest. He is astonished at the progress there made, but the system does not meet the difficulty of forgetfulness. Approved the plan of a certificate of proficiency before a boy is allowed to work, and would like to see the national schools open in the evening from 5 to 7 as a rule. Thinks the morality of farm servants will never be improved until the abominable system of hiring farm servants by the year is put an end to.

Mr. J. Aston, of Brassey Green, began to write himself a little at 8, and left school altogether at 12, when he was able to milk his share of cows. Thought children may be best educated by physical labour.

Mr. Bateman, of Chorley, thought ordinary employments should be blended with mental improvement. Children are, however, kept at school too long in many cases, especially girls. Thinks early training very necessary for boys. Has education mended the population? It has increased pauperism and crime, and the charges for both, and has made the scarcity of labour greater.

Mr. Dutton, of Standhorn Hall, alluded to the difficulty of religious differences. Said that there is a lamentable want of education in many places, and of the co-operation of all classes in the object. It is not the want of schools, but a dislike to the present system of management.

Mr. Swetenham, near Congleton, considered that almost all the children do go to school more or less. No force ought to be applied, or any limit of age required, but the management of schools ought to be altered.

Mr. Bushell, of Neston, did not agree with the last speaker. Neglect of education is to a great extent due to the ignorance of the parents. Would not venture to say that 20 per cent. of the adult population are educated at all. Some change is wanted, but thought that in some cases too much is attempted to be taught with the limited time which is available. Approved the principle involved in the Factory Acts, but pointed out some difficulties. Urged in some way the necessity of the education of every child.

Mr. G. Jackson, of Tattenhall, complained of the disinclination of parents to send their children to school. A large proportion in his parish will not come, even if paid for.

Randle Wilbraham, Esq., Rode Hall, wanted no legislation as to education, but the personal co-operation of the farmers ought to be obtained.

Sir Philip Grey Egerton thought the general feeling of the meeting was that elementary education up to 12 years of age is necessary to all children ; after that field labour must be entered upon, but, if possible, in combination with some education. The great difficulty in this county was the indifference of the parents. Alluded to his half-time system at Oulton. Did not think the Factory Acts in their present details applicable to agricultural districts.

Mr. Jackson, of Tattenhall, alluded to the immorality of farm servants, which was far worse 25 years ago. At that time an effort was made in his parish, in which all the farmers signed a paper that they would never allow the key of the house to be in their servants' hands at night. Thought great good resulted from this combination, and the system could easily be altered if every one would lock the door and put the key in his pocket. Yearly hiring is a necessity of dairy farms. Character ought to be required, but the difficulty is great owing to scarcity.

Mr. T. Oulton, of Eaton, admitted the low state of morality, but thought that the great evil of the yearly hiring was the crowding of the cottages at Christmas.

Mr. Bushell said that women are a good deal employed in out-door farm work in the peninsula of Wirral. Objected very much to the system, and attributed a good deal of intemperance to the neglect of the labourers' homes. Would prohibit all out-door labour of women, at any rate where there are children. Thought that the greatest loss of decency results from the overcrowding in the cottages.

Major Egerton Legh thought that some legislation could usefully take place as to thickness of walls, as to privies, and other details of cottages.

With a vote of thanks the meeting passed on to other business.

145. A meeting of the North Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture was held at Macclesfield, on Saturday, January 16th, to confer with the Hon. E. Stanhope, assistant commissioner.

The chair was taken by the Rev. J. Thornycroft, and there were present, W. C. Brocklehurst, Esq., M.P., the mayors of Macclesfield and Congleton, &c.

Mr. Stanhope having explained the object of the inquiry, a discussion took place, of which the following is a digest:—

Cheshire.

Mr. Stanhope.

g.

It was agreed that very few (if any) women or girls were employed on the farms in out-door field work on dairy farms. Girls from 14 and upwards are hired into farm service, and in many cases without any character being required. One gentleman said that an effort had been made to grapple with this "gigantic evil" by means of prizes to servants being given by the agricultural societies, but hitherto "with "very little effect."

With respect to the education of the children some difference of opinion was expressed, Mr. Myott thinking the elementary knowledge was fair, and the chairman stating that as a rule these children read and wrote very imperfectly owing to their early withdrawal from school; Mr. Carmel declaring that education had much improved during the last 20 years, thought that the difficulty of getting good servants had increased in the same proportion.

It was represented that the attraction of the towns caused very few boys to be employed on farms. They were seldom hired (except for bird-minding and potatoe getting on arable farms) before 12 or 13. As for men, Irish labour was much depended on. These men mostly lived in the large towns, such as Northwich, &c., and would often walk long distances, one as far as six miles, to work, rather than forego the advantage of living in a town where their children could be employed in the factories.

The gentlemen present connected with the manufacturing interest strongly advocated the extension of the Factory Acts to rural districts, and the trial of the system at Tatton was alluded to. But it was admitted by the mayor of Congleton that all the factory owners object to employing half-timers if they can do without them, and that the success of the system depended on the goodness of trade. He thought all children in agricultural districts could attend school every day from 4 to 6. The agriculturists present, on the contrary, thought it very difficult, one main reason given being the regular employment of boys in farm houses, and advocated night schools.

Cottages in the district were stated to be improving, although there was still great room for it. Gardens, generally about half of an acre, seem to be common. Some of the men had land for a cow also. Allotments very rare.—[E. S.]

146. Northwich Board of Guardians.

Meeting, Friday, January 22, Lee P. Townshend, Esq., in the chair.

In answer to questions put by the Hon. E. Stanhope, assistant commissioner, who was present to confer with the guardians,—

It was agreed,—

1. That it might be an inconvenience to farmers not to be able to employ boys before 13, or even 12 years of age; for although few boys go to continuous field work before that age, there are many small jobs by which they can earn something for their parents, and which are useful to them as a training for future farm work.

2. That in the opinion of the great majority of the guardians present, the actual state of education among children of the agricultural labouring class cannot be considered satisfactory, because of the non-attendance at school of a large number of children, and that want of means is by no means the principal cause. The feeling of the meeting was against any compulsion being applied to remedy this state of things.

3. With respect to women, it was stated that some English women do engage in farm labour, but they diminish in number every year. Some go with threshing machines, which in consequence of the new construction of the machines was not considered by the guardians a dangerous occupation. For the cultivation of the potatoes, Irish men and women living in large towns are mainly employed, and will often walk three or four miles or more to their daily work.

4. A strong feeling was expressed by some of the guardians present, and especially by the chairman and R. Dutton, Esq., that inquiry was greatly needed into the condition of the families living on canal boats, and also into the employment of women in brine works at Northwich and elsewhere (post 241–242).

TARPORLEY.

Population - 2,557; acreage - 6,508.

147. Notes of Meeting January 14, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. J. H. Cooper, rector.
Rev. F. Noyes, Rev. J. Douglas, } Curates,
Mr. Thompson, Mr. Leather, } farmers, Delamere.
Mr. Hinds, Mr. Prince, Guardian, Mr. Wade, } farmers, Utkinton.
Mr. Barnes, guardian, Mr. Burgess, farmer, } Tarporley.
Mr. John Vernon, Lord Binning's agent, Willington.
Mr. T. Cawley, Mr. Tollemache's agent, Bunbury.

Tarporley contains the hamlets of Eaton (465), Iddenshall (22), Rushton (342), and Utkinton (558).

It was agreed as follows:—

Boys are not regularly employed before 12 years of age on the farms, though boys even under are employed at bird-minding for a short time, or (on the arable farms) at two months of potato getting, or (in some cases) at setting. The great employment, however, for such young children is in aid of piecework taken by their parents. An instance of a mother being employed to tip and tail turnips, and taking children even as young as 6 or 7 to help, was mentioned.

Two gentlemen at the meeting represented an exceptional sort of farming in Cheshire, one (Mr. Thompson) growing potatoes on from 80 to 120 acres every year. Very few children stay at school up to 12, the majority leave it at 11. There is a night school, but here it is found to attract sons of villagers and such like rather than of agricultural labourers.

The district was represented as well supplied with schools. 12 years appeared to be the limit up to which most of those present thought it advisable that any restrictions as to labour should go, and it was thought that between 10 and 12 three months, or even six months, could be spared for schooling without interfering with the demands of labour. [The advantage of lending libraries, with the privilege of taking books out, was remarked on.] On the dairy farms it was thought they could best be spared in the winter; on the arable this appeared doubtful, and the gentlemen present thought it best that this should be left open to suit the convenience of each district.

Boys are not taken into farmhouses until after 12 years of age.

The attendance of girls is very much affected, and they leave very much sooner, in consequence of a large sewing establishment where their mothers are employed. On the dairy farms young girls are not wanted at all; on the arable (where potatoes are cultivated) they are as much employed as boys.

In Bunbury Mr. Cawley says he hardly sees one young girl employed in the year, except in the gardens and allotments. On the forest the potatoes are usually ploughed up, and a large number of women and children are required to pick them up. They are paid at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* a row, which would take some a day to do. If, however, they take children they can sometimes earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. Mr. Thompson would like to see the young children under 10 prohibited from coming, as they are hardly fit for the work. The potatoes are "hogged" up in heaps, which are sorted in the winter, when families are again required. Potato culture would be half destroyed if restrictions upon women and children's labour were very severe.

Girls are hired into farm service about 14 or 15 years of age, though younger as nurse girls. Such

servants are very scarce and difficult to get, the wages being doubled within five years. Characters are seldom asked for. Mr. Cawley says that in his neighbourhood half the servants would not go to a place if they were asked for characters. This system could not be broken through except by the masters agreeing to take a servant without a character.

The great scarcity of labour, and the necessity of such labour to assist the farmers' wives, causes a girl who is known to be a good dairymaid to be hired independently of her character. The girls are hired every Christmas, and perhaps half of them change places every year. Written agreements are not common. They begin at 3*l.* a year.

Women are employed on the dairy farms to milk morning and evening, at which they will earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

The wages for ordinary labourers are 12*s.* a week. This would be the highest, and they drop sometimes in the winter to 11*s.*, or in exceptional cases to 10*s.* a week.

Mr. Thompson remarked on the advantage of employing men regularly, so that they may know they will not be turned off at any moment. Where men who are sometimes married are boarded in the house, they will generally get 8*s.* in addition to their meat. At corn harvest some give piecework, some give the men all their meat.

148. [No mention was made at this meeting of the Oulton School, supported by Sir P. de M. Grey Egerton, M.P.

The following modification of the half-time system was carried on at Oulton Park:—

Eight boys are employed in the summer in the gardens, each of whom is required to spend half his day at school; this is in the morning or afternoon in alternate weeks. They are paid for the half day, and earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. It was adopted in consequence of the withdrawal of boys from school at 11 or 12 years of age, and the result has been that the parents are glad to keep them there under the half-time system up to 14. A great deal seems to have depended on the willingness of the bailiff to co-operate thoroughly in the experiment; they are all now, however, under the gardener, with the exception of one in the stables.

Sir P. G. Egerton, however, says, "my school is "too small to supply more boys than I employ "myself." So that any extension of the system to the farmers would be difficult.

These boys are not found to be in attainments much behind boys attending school all their time. The schoolmaster at Oulton, however, (who was new to the work,) told me that they required special attention on his part, though he put them into classes with the other boys. They did not show any disposition, with one exception, to work privately in order to keep up with the rest.

In this excellent school the following form of complaint was sent to any parents not sending their children to the school regularly:—

"Your child, ———, has been absent from school "——— without leave, please write below the reason "of ——— absence, and return this paper by the "bearer."

This was found to have a good effect in promoting regularity. I found a similar system prevailing in one of the Shropshire schools.

The Oulton school provides education for a very wide district. Three children come with the average regularity from a distance of 2½ miles to school, one of them having began to do so at 3 years of age; another girl came three miles to the school.—E. S.]

149. In the course of a walk through the parishes of Rushton and Eaton, I gathered the following evidence from the labouring class:—

(*a.*) Wife of a labourer.—Worked on the neighbouring farm whenever wanted. Went with the men; was the only woman employed. Went to potato setting and picking, and to corn harvest and a little weeding. Gets 16*d.* a day. Goes to threshing machines, but never works on the stage, only on the stack. Would not like to work on the stage. Works from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(*b.*) General labourer.—Gets 12*s.* a week all the year. Has worked many years for the same master. Loses very little time in winter. Gets no extra money at corn harvest, but his food is given him.

(*c.*) Horseman, many years with same master.—Goes 1½ miles to work every day. Often starts at 4.30 a.m., and does not come back till 7 or 8 p.m.; in harvest would be later. Killed no pig at Christmas. Has one now. Gets 11*s.* a week and all his meat. This is more than other men would get, but thinks master gives it him because of the distance he has to go, and the good example of work he sets the others.

(*d.*) General labourer.—Goes 1½ miles every day to work. Gets 12*s.* a week. Loses a good deal of time in winter. Sometimes he is put to look after the cows, and then he has his breakfast given him, and on Sunday his dinner also. If he milks he gets his supper. Has 10 or 12 rod of potato ground on the farm, if he likes, for nothing. Has two pigs and a large garden full of damson trees. Any produce readily bought by travelling hucksters from Manchester, &c.

(*e.*) Horseman.—12*s.* a week. No extras. No piecework, but food given for a month at corn harvest.

[Some farmers appeared to give 11*s.*, others 12*s.*, to ordinary men. Instead of piecework, food given to the men during two months of the year. Others give "baggings" only, that is, bread and cheese at 11 and 4, and three pints of beer. Mr. Lea "lets out potato "land to his men at a moderate rate." Some few give the land for nothing. The Irish are paid 1*s.* less, and lodge on the farm buildings, or go backwards and forwards to the Tarporley lodging-houses.—E. S.]

WYBUNBURY.

Population - 4,985; acreage - 15,572.

Contains 19 hamlets, but three form a separate cure at Weston, and four at Doddington.

150. Notes of Meeting, January 20, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. R. Turnbull, vicar.
Mr. Thomas, } Churchwardens.
Mr. Darlington, }
Rev. J. Foliott, landowner and magistrate.
Rev. V. G. Yonge, vicar of Doddington.
Mr. Speakman, agent to Sir H. Broughton, Bart.
Mr. Salisbury, }
Mr. Parton, guardian, }
Mr. Cooper, }
Mr. Madders, }
Mr. Ellson, } Farmers.
Mr. Edwards, guardian, }
Mr. Birchall, }
Mr. Lunt, }
Dr. Bellyse, }

Two-thirds of the cultivated land is in pasture. Women are never employed, except in harvest, and even then only occasionally. Some of the wives of the ordinary labourers, two or three perhaps in a township, go to milk morning and evening. For this they are paid 2*s.* a week. Some boys are hired into the farmhouses at 12 and 13 years of age, more generally not before 14, or even later. Before this age boys are occasionally employed to mind birds. The potatoes where they are grown are mostly picked up by the Irish. The neighbourhood of Crewe causes a considerable variety of labour, and so Irish are more employed than formerly. It has also raised the wages 25 per cent. It was represented that men employed regularly at 12*s.* a week in winter, would work for 15*s.* in summer. But at piecework a great deal more is earned. Food is given in addition; in some cases, instead of piecework, all their meat is given to the labourers. But the extra hands employed in harvest

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will not work except by the piece. Very few, except single men or waggoners, will get their meat with a reduced rate of wages. Some few boys are stated to be three miles from any school (except a dame's school); many are two miles. There are nearly 2,000 people in the parish who are three miles from their parish church.

Mr. Turnbull thought that one in nine of the population (approximately) are attending some school. It was generally admitted that there were a great number of children in all the townships not sent to school who ought to be, mainly owing to the indifference of the parents, but in some cases also to the distance from any school; it was doubtful also whether there was enough school accommodation in the parish for the children who might attend.

It was agreed that restrictions upon field labour up to 13 years of age would make no difference to employers, but that to deprive the parents of the earnings which younger boys can make during a few weeks employment would be seriously felt by them, and would be a hardship in particular cases. It was stated to be the exception where men willing to take agricultural work had to walk any distance to work, but that from the anxiety to work at Crewe, they will some of them walk long distances there.

There would not be quite an average of two female domestic servants in each farm. They would not average above 12 months in a place. Character is very rarely inquired for, but many are very glad to get them with or without it, owing to the scarcity. Some of the farmers present required their servants to be in by 9 o'clock, one gentleman locking them in; but as a general rule, the door is left so as they can go in or out. In some cases a stipulation is made on their engagement that they may have a night out. Sometimes the parents will ask the employers to require them to be in in good time.

AUDLEM.

Population - 2,870; acreage - 11,571.
(Including five townships.)

151. Notes of Meeting, January 19, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. A. Atkinson, vicar.
Mr. Boote, Hankelow.
Mr. Blakeman, clerk.
Mr. Nunnerley, Buerton, } Farmers.
Mr. Gouldborme, Dodcott, }

Two-thirds of this parish is pasture land. Women are rarely employed, except to help their husbands at harvest. A few are put to all sorts of work at Combermere, but this would be chiefly in the summer. Even at haymaking few women are employed. They are employed at milking, and would in such cases be the wives of the regular labourers; for this they would earn a dish of butter per week. Some prefer the money, which would amount to 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* per week.

On an average there would be at least two female servants in every farm house, the large ones have three or four; about one servant to every 10 would be the rule. They begin to be hired at 12 or 14 years of age. Characters are not in the majority of cases inquired for. Some improvement is thought necessary in this respect. Cases were mentioned where girls go away from farm service for a few weeks to be confined, and are taken back afterwards, and not discharged.

Boys are hired from 12 or 13 years of age; they are employed younger occasionally in bird-scaring, potato-picking, especially in the case of large families. It was stated that the very slightest excuse was taken advantage of by the parents to neglect sending their children to school; that absence on Monday morning sometimes led to it during the rest of the week. The most common excuse is to mind the baby. There is an infant school at Burley Dam, in this parish; and small dames' schools for infants at two of the other townships, so that few children would be more than a mile and a half from any school.

Attendance at a school, if required, up to 12 years of age would have very little effect in this parish; it might be an interference with farm work, in some cases, to impose restrictions up to 13. Mr. Boote, who is a manufacturer under the Factory Acts, thinks that 12 would be a sufficient limit in field work. There is a night school, not well attended, owing in part to the distance which they have to come.

There was a strong feeling expressed that there were cases in which nothing but some sort of compulsion would get the children to school. Mr. Atkinson did not think that the payment of the school fees would afford much difficulty, though most of the other gentlemen present differed upon this point.

The wages of ordinary able-bodied labourers in this parish are 12*s.*, falling in winter (sometimes only) to 11*s.* If a man gets all his meat in the house, his wages would generally be 6*s.* or 7*s.* In harvest time they are generally given piecework, and paid in money. Some few farmers cut by day work and give meat.

152. [In answer to my inquiry as to the half-time system, carried on by Lord Egerton or Tatton, at Rostherne, his lordship kindly wrote to me, on February 17, a letter, of which the following is an extract.]

"I arranged the system some 15 years ago, in hopes of keeping the good boys longer at school, and as an encouragement to them and their parents. The boys like it themselves, and the parents do not object, as the boys are paid for the week's work, 3*s.* the first year, and 4*s.* subsequently; they are under a steady labourer, and are employed in every species of farm labour, attending to cattle, horses, &c.; but as I before explained hardly any remain in the situation of labourers, but go to Manchester to better themselves or become mechanics. I have requested our clergyman to inquire respecting those who have been half-timers for the last few years, and enclose his answer, which has caused some delay in my answering your letter. I do not think farmers will ever adopt the plan, both on account of the expense, and the difficulty of the necessary arrangements for two sets of boys."

ENCLOSURE.

153. Extract of Letter from Rev. A. R. Ducane.

1. They are employed on your estate in farm work from 12 to 15 years of age.

2. They are selected from those boys who are steadiest, and most forward in school work.

3. One set (half the number) work in the morning one week, the other set in the afternoon, changing with each other the next week.

4. Under the Government rules, the attendance of the half-time boys is only reckoned now as one attendance per day. Formerly their attendance at work was reckoned as an attendance at school, and being so marked in the school register, the average attendance of the whole school was much raised. Part of the grant depending on the average, it is a good deal diminished by this new arrangement.

5. During the clear years that I have been here (1863–8), 25 boys have gone through the half-time course. Of these the following is an account:—

1 draper.
2 gardeners.
1 wheelwright.
2 carpenters.
1 tailor.
1 is dead.
5 in vaults in Manchester.
3 in warehouses do.
5 in farm service (*not* for Lord Egerton).
1 works for Mr. Egerton.
1 in Tatton gardens.
1 in Tatton carpenters' yard.
1 with Tatton plumber and glazier.

25

6. The fact of so many leaving the parish as soon as they go to work has made it useless to hold a night-school, which I tried without success for two or three years.

I think the scheme would answer well for a parish a little further removed from a large manufacturing town. There is so much temptation to take them away from here, especially in the shape of the spirit vaults, which offer very high wages to those who have no ambition to raise themselves in any way. To those, on the other hand, who do care to rise, the warehouses with their steady promotions are open. But otherwise, and in fact as things are, the scheme does good, as the boys get into their work more gradually, and are kept longer under higher influences. All included in the above list are doing well and are steady.

154. Letter from G. W. Latham, Esq., Bradwall Hall, Sandbach, dated Feb. 10, 1869.

I have been thinking over the several points involved in our conversation at Crewe the other day, and give you my conclusions on them. First, the amount of instruction given at the Bradwall school will average about 700 hours a year; the big boys considerably less, the little boys rather more. I find as long as that is given regularly boys will progress as fast as they do in a National school. When, however, it becomes intermittent, as in the case of a horse-boy, or a cow-boy, who has no opportunity of learning in a class, but must take odd times to learn, I find it is not satisfactory, but, I fancy, it is rather that the irregularity gives an excuse for idleness than anything absolutely prohibitive in the quantity. Applying this to general instruction I come to the conclusion that if we were to enact that before employment in 1869 a boy should produce a certificate he had attended school for 400 hours before 10 years of age, in 1868, and for 200 hours in each year between 10–14, we should ensure some amount of knowledge. If he choose he might instead of a certificate submit to an examination by the nearest National and certificated master, a certain grade being fixed for each age.

2nd. As to the payment of wages partly in food, I find on enquiry there are two classes of labourers with whom this is done. One, carters to farmers, who are also brick makers, hay dealers, or market gardeners, and who thereby have very irregular hours of coming home; and the other men who are getting worn out, in which case the food is given as a sort of relief to the employer. I take it, that in the first case the food, being prepared often specially, costs more than the wages to the employer; in the latter it costs less, as the man does not care to grumble at it, and knows if he leaves he will find a difficulty in getting employment.

3rd. As to our present systems of hiring. You know that, as a rule, certain servants in Cheshire, carters, cow-men, boys, dairy-maids, and vessel-cleaners, are hired by the year of 51 weeks, the Christmas week being a holiday. Those hired are generally the unmarried men who live in the farm-houses. The arguments in favour of the system are first on the side of the employers, who assert that all servants would leave as cheesemaking and harvest time approached and better wages will be got; secondly, on the side of the servants, whose advocates say, their employers would dismiss them in October, after cheesemaking and harvest were finished. Of course the result of a general termination of hiring at a stated time is that little if any enquiry into character is made, no reason for leaving is asked, and that, practically, a woman without a character is taken as readily as another, the only point ever asked being, in the superior class of women servants, Can she make cheese? As for men and boys, I believe, no question is ever asked if they look likely. The evil of this system strikes me to be enormous. In the first place, it is a bond for a year between two persons whose tempers may be most incompatible, and as such becomes servitude for the time. In the second place, there is no incentive to any well-doing; character becomes valueless, and as long as the year can be scraped through somehow, master does not care to attach servant to him, nor servant to please his master. Again, the annual holiday is a source of enormous moral evil. Not only are the cottages crammed when half a dozen sons and daughters come home all at once, but in every town there are dancing parties on every evening during the time, and fairs are held nominally for the purpose of selling clothes to the servants who have got their wages, but practically for drinking and flirting. I believe that I may say that in two cases out of three of bastardy which I hear the corroborative evidence will speak of the complainant sitting on the respondent's knee in a dancing room at Christmas, or to his having followed her home at Christmas when she left the place. The year's hiring too prevents a master giving any warning to his servant. He cannot say, If you do not take more pains; if you are out in the evening; if you come home drunk, I will dismiss you. As long as a case for the interference of the magistrates does not exist the two must go on for the year. As to the arguments on the other side, my answer is that, granted the number of farmers and of necessary labourers is now in proportion, there would always be servants to be hired, and, on the other hand, of employment to be got. Employers would soon find out that to keep a good servant they must play no tricks of dismissal in October; and labourers would find that no one would hire a servant who has left his or her place at a critical time. At the very worst I can only imagine the creation of a class of clever and unscrupulous servants who would trust to their talent to pick up odd jobs. In all employments there must be times of extra work and diminished work, and I do not see why the relation between farmer and labourer should be different than between squire and butler, or tradesman and shopman. I take it that the demand for a character will arise if a new system were started, for there would never be a general change, and, therefore, reasons for the changes might be asked and verified.

I am after all disposed to believe that to promote the education of the labourer we must look more to the improvement of the middle-class schools than to any legislation. I hope to see a scheme by which the funds of such schools, instead of being given in the shape of salaries, will be allotted to scholarships gained in a competitive examination of pupils in the National schools. Thus the poor man's child would have a chance of rising if he showed talent and industry, and it would be a great encouragement to sacrifice a child's profitable labour if a parent could hope to see him rising in the world. At present, I take it, the best scholar in a country National School is as hopeless of rising above his class as the worst. Nor would this be the only gain from middle-class education being improved; I am disposed to believe that of all classes the middle classes are the worst educated; they have been instructed in certain elements of knowledge, but in such a way as to lay no foundation for any self-improvement on their part. If the master rises the labourer must rise also.

155. Lee P. Townshend, Esq., Chairman of the Quarter Sessions and the Northwich Board of Guardians.

The farms in general in this district are small, and would certainly not average anything like 100 acres. The occupiers are therefore little raised above the rank of day labourers. Meat is not habitually eaten by them, but the cheese which they make themselves forms their chief diet. The usual rule in my neighbourhood is that the labourers board at the same table with their masters, who pay them in addition 7*s.* or 8*s.* in money. This is cheaper for the master, but I doubt if it is better for the labourer's family.

The families of these farmers work themselves at the cheesemaking, and many of them in consequence employ very little hired labour regularly. They trust for occasional labour to the great number of Irish living in the towns, such as Knutsford and

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Northwich. Some of the Irish, however, work all the year upon a farm, and lodge in the buildings. A room for Irishmen is now sometimes added to a farm-house.

We are surrounded by the manufacturing districts, and we cultivate a large number of early potatoes for sale there. The labour connected with this crop, the setting and the taking up is mainly done by these Irish and their families, working from the large towns and going backwards and forwards. Sometimes they are employed by the occupier, in other cases the crop is sold on the ground, and the buyer hires the Irish to take it up.

With this exception, we have no women or children employed in agriculture.

156. [For the following notes on the food, &c. of the labouring class I am indebted to a lady who has paid great attention to the subject.]

Most of the farmers have meat and potatoes for dinner daily; potatoes and bacon for supper. A large quantity of potatoes are boiled for dinner, and those left are cut up into slices, fried, and put for supper into a large dish of bacon.

In some of the smaller farmhouses the girls have their dinner after the master and mistress; in all others the farm girls and lads sit in the same kitchen with their master and mistress, but at a long dresser table at the side for their meals. For breakfast they have hot whey poured into a basin of bread, as much cheese as they like, and "stand-up pies" of fruit. For supper, potatoes, bacon, and cheese.

Hardly any labourers eat meat at home, though some few can afford a little occasionally on Sunday. Potatoes with butter-milk, if they can get it, is the ordinary food. Sometimes a little bacon as a luxury; when a labourer's wife takes his dinner to him, it is then either hot potatoes in a covered basin, or else gruel thickened with a little treacle or sugar.

157. Richard Dutton, Esq., Stanthorn Hall, vice-chairman of Northwich Board of Guardians, farms 176 acres.

Girls are rarely employed in the fields, though in the neighbourhood of Middlewich a good many young boys and girls are taken to frighten birds off the gardens. A great many women go to work in these gardens. Such women as do work on the farms are mainly Irish, who help in setting and getting up potatoes, and sometimes, though rarely, in threshing. Boys begin to work about 10 or 11 years of age, though they will watch birds and do occasional work earlier.

In the Northwich Union we pay for the schooling of children of parents receiving out-door relief under Denison's Act, and try to put pressure on the parents to send them. Many, however, are completely indifferent. The money is paid to the schoolmaster when he produces his bill. I find a great number of boys who are not educated at all. A good many come into my employment who cannot read to any useful extent; the parents, however, often send them to the Sunday school. I have two men who can't read or write; they have been brought up within a mile of a school.

Almost all our able-bodied men are attracted away by the higher wages of the salt works, and we are reduced to the old men and the Irish.

I pay 12*s.* in summer, and 11*s.* in winter. They lose no wet days, and other farmers, who deduct lost time, pay 11*s.* all the year. Some give, however, 8*s.* and their food, or 10*s.* and their dinner. I give no food. The Irish get the same wages, and they drink very large quantities of buttermilk.

Piecework at harvest chiefly; machinery has diminished this very much. We should then give beer. Wages are paid monthly, or sometimes fortnightly. I should like to do away with the beer system altogether, as some have done, but I find it very difficult, because the men do not like the idea. You will find the amount of money payment varies in almost every farm house, according to the character of the establishment, and the amount of work expected. Some send their men to milk before and after their ordinary day's work.

Female servants are not hired at statute fairs as they used to be. The morality and tone is very low indeed. This is partly owing to the bad arrangement of sleeping accommodation in most farm houses, still more to the state of the cottages. Few have more than two bedrooms, and the parents have no objection to letting a married man or a daughter continue to live at home. The cottage accommodation is decidedly insufficient, and but few are being built in the purely agricultural townships. For this reason farmers employ a great many Irish, who do not mind where they sleep.

158. *Samuel Beckett, Esq.*, agent to the Marquis of Westminster, Eccleston, Chester.

In this neighbourhood the farms vary in size from 50 to 400 acres. The latter, however, would be considered a large-sized farm. A farm on which 70 cows are kept would require probably 8 or 10 milkers, of whom four would be women, *i.e.*, indoor servants.

Dairymaids, and indeed all sorts of in-door labour, are very scarce indeed. It was for this reason that "cheese factories" were suggested, where farmers could send their produce to be made into cheeses, but they have not hitherto been established.

Lads from 15 to 25 are hired in the same way, and would get at first 3*l.* or 4*l.* a year, beside their board and lodging.

Very few, if any, boys are employed under 13 years of age. I hardly know an instance on Lord Westminster's estate. They are then taken for "driving plough" and other light work, and work regularly. Up to that age there is no reason why boys and girls should not go to school regularly.

Lord Westminster has built a very large number of cottages, and on this account is able to command a sufficient supply of labour for himself and his tenants. He charges, as a rule, 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*, including about one-eighth of an acre of garden. We find larger gardens occupy too much of a man's time. The cottages are never let with the farms. In accepting a cottage tenant I should say, "Your cottage adjoins "Mr. ——'s farm; you ought to work for him, and if "you cannot agree with him, and are to blame, you "will have to leave it." They are let on a quarterly agreement, determinable at a month's notice. A tenant would also be allowed in some cases to nominate the occupiers of the cottages adjoining his farm.

On this estate labourers are encouraged to keep a cow. In every township we have a "ley" field for them to pasture their cows on in summer, and another for them to cut hay from. For these advantages they would pay 5*l.* a year, which many of them are ready to do. In only two townships are any allotments let.

159. At Chester, on Dec. 5, 1868, the following practical farmers,

Mr. Thomas Finchitt, of Rushton;
Mr. Thomas Parker, of Aldford;
Mr. John Jones, of Daddleston;
Mr. Joseph Aston, of Brassey Green;

met by appointment at the Grosvenor Hotel to confer with the Hon. E. Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner.

It was agreed as follows:—

On the average from two-thirds to three-fourths of the land is in pasture, in spite of the increase of arable land owing to the cattle plague. Boys are not regularly employed (in the parishes with which these gentlemen are connected) before 12 or 13 years of age. Before that they might do a little bird-minding or horse-leading for a few weeks in the year.

There would, therefore, be no objection on the part of the employers to boys being kept at school till 12 years of age. In some places there are allotments, which the lads assist in cultivating; or there may be exceptional cases, in which to fix 13 as the age might be a hardship.

Girls are never employed in the fields. Women only on some farms. Mr. Jones and Mr. Finchitt say

some are employed to weed, spud thistles, &c. A good many help in milking, for which they get about 2*s.* a week; but they are less willing to come than formerly. Girls enter domestic service at 13 years, but are not employed at cheese-making before 17 or 18.

The money wages are 12*s.* Mr. Jones (who is near iron works) thinks that "piecework and privileges" would add from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week all the year. The others would not fix it nearly so high, as there is less piecework in this grass country; 1*l.* is sometimes given in lieu of piecework at harvest. Potato ground (about 10 or 12 rods)is sometimes given, sometimes let to regular labourers. Mr. F. gives as much as they want, and takes half the produce.

Gardens general, from 8 to 15 rods; they all have fruit trees in them. In Mr. Aston's neighbourhood the cottages are very bad, rarely with more than one bedroom. So says Mr. Finchitt. Mr. Parker has 31 or 40 cottages, none with less than two bedrooms. Mr. Jones lives on Lord Westminster's estate, where they are, with few exceptions, very good indeed.

160. [To these notes Mr. James Pickering, of Whitby, adds—

A farm of 300 acres would require from 10 to 12 milkers in summer. Of these three or more might be women, wives of the labourers. There would be 70 to 80 cows. These women would get 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week, besides some buttermilk, curds and whey, &c.

Almost all the labourers have fruit trees in their gardens. I have known 20*l.* cleared by this in one case, and often as much as 10*l.*

In Whitby few labourers keep a cow; my carter has two. They may all keep pigs.

We employ a great many Irish, some of whom stop all the winter, lodging in the out-buildings. They get 10*s.* to 11*s.* a week, and are allowed buttermilk.

I never employ a woman on the farm in out-door work.

Mr. Ralphs, of Saighton, adds, that two of his labourers keep cows; they all might do so.—E.S.]

161. The following extract from a letter from Mr. T. Rigby, of Over, Secretary to the Chamber of Agriculture, appeared in the "Crewe Guardian," dated February 11, 1869:—

"How far it was a good plan to pay wages partly "in food?" was the question which escaped being definitely answered, and taken in connexion with Mr. Stanhope's remarks on cottages must be regarded as referring to labourers receiving weekly wages and not to hired servants. Two things may have conduced to this mode of payment: the distance at which the labourer may live from his work, and the easier, and perhaps cheaper, mode of payment to the employer. But it can never be a good thing to separate the husband and father from his family at meal times in a moral light; to do so must tend to destroy union of effort on the part of man and wife to provide for the wants of their family, and deprive the children of the cottage to a large extent of paternal love and admonition. Nature has given more power of authority over children to man than woman, and those who know the character and natural tendencies of children to disobedience and ofttimes to defiance of the mother's commands, must know that it is ever to their injury to be deprived of the admonitory and even despotic word or order of the father. Much of the obstinacy of some servants, lads especially, arises from this deprivation in their early life. The arrangement, too, strikes a hard blow at the filial affection and love which is desired in all our homes. Instead of being the husband—or house-band, as the word implies,—uniting all in one common desire for the welfare and happiness of each other, he is little more than a lodger in his own cottage, and rarely sees his children except on Sunday and for a short time in the evening on his return from work. These results must be objectionable, and it would be better, therefore, to place the labourer in such a situation that he could be the centre and head of his own domestic circle. On the question of expense the idea is constantly gaining ground that it is as economical, at least, and more satisfactory to pay full wages in money, and allow the labourer to provide his own board.

This remark leads into the other part of the question, relating to cottages, which, it is thought, conduces largely to a great social evil. Some plain and truthful remarks were made respecting the number of rooms which every cottage ought to contain, and may lead to some gradual improvement in this matter, but little was said of their being contiguous to the farm homestead, and yet it is most desirable they should be so situated, both in order to allow the labouring man to live with his family as much as possible, and to enable him to give his labour to his employer without the exhaustion and the detraction of strength that must attend a long walk to and from the farm and his cottage; and it is very desirable that they should be so situated to enable the farmer to compete with the manufacturer in securing and retaining good workmen in his employ. There is really very little difference between the pay of the farm labourer in Cheshire and that of the unskilled town labourer, such as carters and porters, when the difference of rent and living between town and country is considered; but there is more and better house accommodation generally obtained in the town, and it would be both for the landlords' and tenants' interest to have cottages on or very near every farm, in proportion to its size and situation, and in order to retain sufficient labour for its cultivation. Our best young men are driven into towns when they marry, for want of houses in the country, and farmers are left with a make-shift class, that, as a rule, are not good servants. Another matter which would have an important bearing upon the condition of the farm labourer would be to arrange that he should have a good-sized garden, where the soil is suitable, and from two to five acres of land, to enable him to keep a cow; an occupation of this size need not withdraw his time or attention from his own farm labour to any extent, as his wife and children would be able to manage the whole with such labour as he could give in the evenings, and a very few days at harvest time, while the industrial training with which it would furnish them would be of much value in their preparation for future duties.

162. Extract of letter from Mr. T. Cawley, agent to Mr. Tollemache, M.P., Priestland, near Tarporley, dated February 9, 1869.

In the parish of Bunbury Mr. Tollemache has allotted 87 half acres to the poor, in Acton 49, in Baddiley 12. In general they are well managed, and where the occupier is a farm labourer his master does his team work. He frequently gets an hour or two in an evening to plant potatoes, &c., and his family do the rest of the work required. The profits on these plots are large. The labourer has a quarter of an acre of wheat, giving straw for his pig, and quarter of an acre of potatoes, at a rent of 15*s.* to 1*l.* I never heard a farmer express his disapprobation of them. Near Peckforton a large field is appropriated for the grazing of 20 cottagers' cows from May till Christmas, with which the labourers are much pleased.

163. Extract from a letter received by me from a clergyman after one of the parish meetings (December 1868).

I had hoped for a few words with yourself before you left yesterday; for there were one or two *points* on which I know farmers to be very "*sore*" all over England, and if you had come out a "don," &c. one or more here yesterday were fully prepared to "give "you (as if 'Government') a bit of their minds;" one broad-backed fellow was to have been "leader."

* * * *

The point is this,—to write in the words of two of the farmers who mentioned it,—and you passed it:—

1. "*The Government is doing too much*" (*i.e.*, in education).
2. Another said, "All we want is *reading, writing,*

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" *and arithmetic,* and that's *equal* and fair *for* " *all trades, &c.*"

Now this was Mr. Lowe's dogma when he was Vice-President, and Lowe was *quite right.* " Strictly limit " to primary elementary education." If you go beyond " *the three R.'s* " then you *favour* some at the expense of others.

Now can't you quietly in your report bring forward this right principle for farmers all over your district, if not beyond,—*no favouritism by Government in educational taxes.*

You'll see the just ground of agriculturists if you will mature your judgments on this *simple fact.*

Farmers pay for and carry on *technical education* in their own trade.

We have not a child who does not go to school somewhere.

The Government school inspectors can't or won't understand that *agricultural is technical education.*

In our 1868 Government inspectors' report our school is reported adversely on account of the non-advancement of scholars in " *the higher subjects, &c.*" " My Lords " therefore threaten to reduce the grant if this be not rectified, as they think rectified.

I shan't quarrel with my farmer to please " my " Lords," because farmers agree with Mr. Lowe in holding that taxes—*Parliamentary alms*—ought not to be for more than the three R.'s, *i.e.*, quite primary scholarship.

The children " between 10 and 13 " have never missed attendance in school for book-work, except boys for *technical education* and girls industrial at home.

The farmer parents themselves educate them, the boys in agriculture, the girls in housework and nursing. The cottagers also. And in taxing for the higher subjects no doubt the Government is favouring *now agricultural trades,* commercial, &c., and drawing cottagers' children from agriculture in after life.

There is strong truth in what one farmer, speaking for all here, said, " No one ever makes a real farmer " or a real labourer who don't begin as a *little* " boy."

This is not enmity to popular education, as school inspectors interpret it. It is beginning " *technical* " education " in childhood; and if you were to examine my boys in geography, history, &c., &c. (" the higher branches ") you would " pluck " them; but see them use a pitchfork, bed up a cart-horse, drive up the cows, harness pony, &c., you'd give them a first prize.

164. The system of *hiring female farm servants* has been already alluded to.

(*a.*) *Rev. Chancellor Thurlow,* Malpas, says of them, " I formerly visited every farmhouse in the parish for the purpose of assisting the association to ameliorate their condition. Meetings were held, but they have led to no permanent result. The system of leaving the outer door open on Saturday nights was then almost universal, but now an improvement has taken place. Individual effort would not succeed in checking the practice, because small farmers are obliged to conform to what is almost a custom of the county."

(*b.*) *Mr. Brassey,* farmer, Malpas.—The worst thing you have to deal with is the hiring without character, and also that in nine out of ten farm houses, while the outer door is locked and bolted every other night, it is left open on Saturday night for any one to go out or come in. The reason is the difficulty of getting dairymaids without it, and I believe they will hire for less money where it is allowed.

(*c.*) At Wrenbury character is very little studied. Few farmers make any inquiry about it at all. In some cases the custom is, that one night in the week is given to them to do what they like. (Meeting, December 9, 1868.)

(*d.*) At Church Minshull no characters are asked for. The old " key system," which was very common 14 years ago, is now almost extinct. (Meeting January 15, 1869.)

(*e.*) At Acton " generally taken without character. " It is no hindrance to a woman getting a place if she " has had two or three illegitimate children. Two of " the gentlemen present lock up at 9 o'clock, but one " of them always leaves the key in the lock, because " otherwise they say it is like a prison." (Meeting, 1869.)

(*f.*) At Crewe Green some farmers require their servants to be at home at 9, some later. I have known them allow them to sleep in the buildings on Sunday night.

165. Extract from Mr. Temple's general report on Cheshire for 1867. (Report of Committee of Council on Education 1868, p. 261.)

The best schools that I have ever seen as an inspector are agricultural schools, where the " squire's " wife takes a strong interest in education, and where influence and authority are brought to bear upon the working classes for their own benefit.

I cannot close this report without expressing my strong sense of the public spirit and generosity which the landowners of Cheshire showed with regard to the support of the national schools with which they were connected during the ruinous losses caused by the cattle plague.

I expected to find half the schools in the agricultural parts of the country closed, but on the contrary every school has been kept open, and I doubt whether a single subscription has been withdrawn.

Domestic establishments have been reduced and houses shut up, but the school has throughout been supported, and its staff has remained unimpaired.

166. * [The notes of the remaining meetings I shall not reprint.

The following is a summary of the information given at them, and in answer to circulars, &c.—E. S.]

Women rarely employed except at harvest, and in some cases to assist in milking both morning and evening. For this they sometimes get 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, sometimes a dish of butter.

Girls are never employed in the fields, but from 11 to 12 they get hired as nurse-girls, and about 14 take to cheesemaking.

Boys in some parishes begin work as crow-keepers as young as 9, but *regular* work seldom begins before 12 or even 13. In one parish only it was said that boys after were absent four months in the year. When employed among the stock the hours of work are long, being from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

In several cases distance from school was mentioned as a difficulty. At Wrenbury some had three miles to go; at Acton some had three and a half, and a great many had two miles. At Malpas some had two. The

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* [The remaining meetings which I held were at—

ACTON.

Population - 3,123; acreage - 15,542.

Present:—Rev. R. S. Redfern, vicar; Mr. W. Holding, clerk; Mr. Webb, schoolmaster; and Mr. Boffey and Mr. Furber, farmers.

BARTHOMLEY.

Population - 416; acreage - 1,982.

Rev. E. Duncombe, vicar; from Barthomley, Messrs. Jones, Thornhill, Remer, Wardell, Babbington, farmers; from Batterley, Messrs. J. Hollins, Hollins, Booth, and Glover, farmers.

BADDILEY.

Population - 272; acreage - 1,772.

Rev. J. W. Edwards, vicar; Mr. W. E. Hall, farmer.

WRENBURY.

Population - 2,505; acreage - 11,665.

Messrs. Thomas Nield and William Thelfa, farmers.

CHURCH MINSHULL.

Population - 392; acreage - 2,286.

Rev. J. Prosser, vicar, and Mr. Bolshaw, farmer.

MINSHULL VERNON.

Population - 402; acreage - 2,753.

Rev. M. Reid, vicar.]

great deficiency of infant schools was remarked on. Boys left generally betweed 11 and 12, or in three cases return between 10 and 11. Girls one year later.

Farmers manifested a good deal of hostility to advance in education. At Barthomley "part of the "scarcity of labour was considered due to over educa- "tion." At Baddiley "it is the general opinion in the "neighbourhood that the more education they have "the worse servants they make."

Sunday cheesemaking was remarked on at most meetings. In most cases it was thought necessary. At Acton it was the opinion that with additional buildings for storing milk the system might be changed.

167. Evidence as to the situation and condition of the cottages.

BARTHOMLEY.

Population - 3,002; acreage 11,035.

There are enough for the land. They are improving. Lord Crewe is building. There still remain some one-bedroomed ones out on lease for lives, which are improved as they fall in. Rents 4*l.* to 5*l.*, including about 10 perches of garden. (Notes of meeting, December 8, 1868.)

WRENBURY.

Population - 2,505; acreage 11,665.

Sad want of bedroom accommodation. They mostly belong to landowners. Almost all have gardens. Rents 4*l.* to 5*l.* (Meeting, December 9, 1868.)

DELAMERE.

Population - 1,146; acreage 8,770.

Rev. W. D. Fox. — The average cots have two bedrooms, one good one and one little offset. Some have only one, but it is generally large. In one house with two rooms, where a man with five children lives, he took in last year eight adult Irishmen. Scarcely any of the bedrooms have ceilings. The new cottages built by Government are very good, but are sometimes overcrowded.

TARPORLEY.

Population - 2,557; acreage 6,058.

Not in all cases well distributed, and it is very common for men to have to go one mile or one and a half miles to work. Instances of two miles are rare. At Utkinton there are some very bad cottages. Some have only one bedroom. With the exception of two new ones, there are none with more than two.

At Eaton there are also some very bad ones, but they are generally represented as better. At Tarporley there are a good many bad ones, but most of them have two bedrooms. Some are very bad at Brick Heath in Bunbury, of which parish Mr. Cawley says that they are in many cases very poor cots. The particular reason for this has been the letting plots of land on leases for lives, on which the occupiers have built cottages mainly of wood. But Mr. Tollemache has built some very good ones.

Gardens are very general, commonly a quarter acre in size. New cottages let at 5*l.* a year, the older ones at 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.*

BUNBURY.

Rev. Wm. Lowe.—Every description both in shape and dimensions, from poor old cottages with one room, to new ones with three, exist here. Mr. Tollemache is building and improving. The drainage has been improved through inspection, but many houses still exist quite unfit for human habitation, in which fever has been rife. There are some miserable tenements in Cumberbach square, which have no back yard nor even a convenience for discharging the slops, &c., except through the front door. Rents from 2*l.* 10*s.* to (with three acres of land) 12*l.*

CHURCH MINSHULL.

Population - 392; acreage - 2,286.

Meeting, January 15, 1869.—Improving, for which there is great room. Many have one bedroom, and contain large families. Most belong to the landowners.

Rents 4*l.* to 5*l.*, including a garden, which most of them have.

Four acres of allotments, on which corn is allowed. The tendency of this is to make the land pass out of the hands of the poorest class.

MINSHULL VERNON.

Population - 402; acreage - 2,753.

Rev. M. Reid.—Enough. All have been made good by Mr. Lloyd and Mr. France. Most have three bedrooms. All have gardens, often a quarter of an acre. Rents, 4*l.* Some have land for a cow.

AUDLEM.

Population - 2,870.

There are too many cottages in the parish. In Combermere alone, where Lord Combermere is about to build some cottages, some few of the men would have to go a mile and a half or two miles to work. Cottages are not usually let with the farms. In Audlem itself, the cottages are good, some few only with one bedroom; there are some very bad ones at Cock's bank, mostly belonging to small owners. One gentleman present thought that one-third had one bedroom only.

In Buerton the cottages have mostly two bedrooms. In Hankelow they are better than in other parts of the parish, but very few have three bedrooms. In these townships few of them belong to the landowners. In Dodcott they chiefly belong to the landowners, but are scarcely sufficient for the labourers employed. Many of them were built with only one bedroom, which have since been divided into two. The sanitary arrangements are fair. Cottage rents (almost always including a good garden) from 3*l.* to 6*l.*; the average would be about 4*l.*

A piece of land is given for a cow; some have half an acre added, which they cultivate in corn and potatoes. Some of the gentlemen present think this amount of land an injury to a labourer, who has not sufficient time to cultivate it properly.

ACTON.

Population - 3,125.

Meeting, January 19. 1869.—In Acton township tolerable; none have one bedroom containing a family. There are very few here with more than two. They mostly belong to the landowner. In Burland and Brindley they are good, with the exception of (say) 10, which are dilapidated, and unfit for habitation.

In Cholmondestone, Worlestone, and Stoke fair. In Poole very bad. Many have one bedroom reached by a ladder. They were run up on the waste, but now belong to the landowners. It is an exception where there is no garden. Rents average, 4*l.*

WYBUNBUBY.

Population - 4,985.

Meeting, January 20, 1869.—Two-thirds of the parish belong to Sir H. Broughton, but only a smaller proportion of the cottages. In all the townships where they belong to him they are bad. It is doubtful whether they would average two bedrooms. They are generally half timber, and thatched, the intervals having been filled up with clay or brick. In Checkley, Chorlton, Hunsterson, Walkerton, and Blakenhall they are very bad. In Bridgmere many have been built on the waste, and the same remark applies. In Wybunbury township they are good. Some have one bedroom containing a family, but the greater number have been rebuilt, and have mostly two bedrooms. Hatherton is a divided property, and contains several very good new cottages, but the rest are bad.

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In Sharrington, where many Crewe artizans live, the majority are new, and have two bedrooms. In Stakeley they are fair, generally with two bedrooms. In Weston, Lord Crewe's cottages are very good. In Hough there are a good many indifferent cottages in a bad state of repair. Almost all have gardens, the older ones averaging from 20 to 40 perches. The average rent is 4*l.*; new cottages let higher.

There are seven allotments of one acre each.

MALPAS.

Population - 1,037.

Rev. Chancellor Thurlow.—The average have two bedrooms; it is uncommon to find any with one only. They mostly belong to the landowners and these are the best.

On the Cholmondeley estate they are very good and comfortable. They generally have three bedrooms. Some other landowners have built; on other estates no improvement is taking place. Rent, 4*l.* to 5*l.*

BURWARDSLEY.

Population - 500.

Rev. E. Titley.—Sufficient and not crowded. Generally two rooms. Average height, 10 ft. × 9 ft. Rents, 2*l.* to 6*l.*

Shropshire.

SHROPSHIRE.—EVIDENCE.

168. A meeting of the Shropshire Chamber of Agriculture was held at Shrewsbury, on Saturday, February 6th, to meet the Hon. E. Stanhope, assistant-commissioner. D. F. Atcherly, Esq. (vice-president) occupied the chair, and amongst others present were the Earl of Powis, J. R. Ormsby Gore, Esq., M.P., Gen. the Hon. Percy Herbert, M.P., Colonel Corbett, M.P., Baldwyn Leighton, Esq., R. Jasper More, Esq., Rev. W. Garnett Botfield, and a very large number of tenant farmers.

Mr. Stanhope in his remarks called especial attention to—

(1.) Education.
(2.) Cottages.
(3.) The employment of women in indoor and outdoor farm work.

(1.) The Rev. W. Garnett Botfield in opening the subject remarked, that at a previous meeting the chamber had agreed that a good sound education ought to be placed within the reach of every child. Now he wanted them to go a step further, and say that every child ought to be brought under it. In his view the remedy was not to be found in night schools or any half time system. But when there was a fair school in a district, he thought it would not be unreasonable to require every child to pass Standard IV. of the Revised Code, or in default to attend school 300 days in the year, up till 12 or 13 years of age; which he thought would be a good stimulus to the parents. He had fixed this impression mainly from his acquaintance with Cheshire.

The Rev. C. F. C. Pigott moved that it is desirable to discourage the continuous employment of boys in agriculture under the age of 12.

This being seconded, it was very favourably received; Mr. Davies thinking the employment of children no boon to the employer, though he was opposed to any legislative restrictions; and Colonel Corbett, M.P., after pointing out that the employment of young boys was very much less than formerly, observed there could be no objection to the resolution, but that it did not meet the case of girls, which was especially difficult, owing to their early withdrawal from school for farm service. Few boys were stated to be employed under 12, except for occasional work, of which it would be hard to deprive them altogether. The resolution was carried by an enormous majority.

It was moved by Lord Powis, seconded by Rev. W. G. Botfield, and carried unanimously, almost without discussion—

"That it is desirable that greater facilities be given "to schools in small rural parishes than are now "afforded by the Committee of Council on Education, in order to make the labour of youths more valu- "able."

(2.) On the subject of cottages, it was unanimously represented that great improvement was needed, both in respect of quality and quantity. Colonel Corbett and the Rev. W. G. Botfield pointed out the hard conditions imposed by Government in allowing money to be advanced for cottage buildings, the latter mentioning a case where he had built for 200*l.* a farm building which, under the Government requirements, was to cost 800*l.* The feeling was strong that such restriction made the privilege an useless one.

Opinions were unanimous as to cottages having three, or at least two, bedrooms, some farmers stating their preference for the latter number. One gentleman pointed out how in his parish the neglect of landlords in building had caused small speculators to run up cottages, in which they put only one bedroom, because they could get 5*l.* a year for them, and could not get more if they added better bedroom accommodation.

It was moved and seconded, amid loud cheers from some of the farmers present, "That there should be "three cottages to every 100 acres, and that they "should be under the control of the tenant."

Mr. Davis and others pointed out that as to the first part of the resolution, it depended on the character of the cultivation, and that on some farms one cottage to every 100 acres was sufficient.

On the question of letting cottages with the farms a strong opinion in favour of it was expressed by some of the farmers present, on the ground of the advantage it gives them in keeping their men at every season. Lord Powis and others, however, thought this a "one-"sided" arrangement, necessary perhaps for one or two of the more important servants, but not generally advantageous to a labourer, who (dependent to a great extent upon his garden) ought not to be turned out at a month's notice. He approved the nomination to the cottage being left to the tenant.

The resolution was not pressed.

Some discussion took place as to the amount of land to be let with a cottage, Mr. Bowen Jones, S. Minor, and others, deprecating (amidst loud cheers) too much land being so given. No one ought to have more than he could properly cultivate, which the speakers said could not be more than a quarter of an acre.

(3.) With respect to the employment of women, it was represented to be uncommon, except among the Irish women living in the towns. Opinions were expressed against any interference with such labour. Mr. Rainforth spoke strongly in favour of all sorts of employment for women, for which he said they were as well fitted as men. Mr. Davis, on the contrary, condemned "barn-work" for women, because of the danger caused by the chance of their dresses catching in the machinery, and also their being allowed to climb up and down ladders to stacks, &c. The state of morality among female farm servants was remarked on by Mr. Hassall, who admitted the great responsibility which rests upon farmers in this respect, and regretted that it was not more generally felt by them.

Mr. Stanhope having called attention to the part payment of wages in food and kind, Mr. J. Bowen Jones said that this was, to a greater or less extent, adopted throughout the county. In his part it exists only to a limited extent; and in spite of the prejudice of the labourers in its favour, he strongly advocated payment in money.

[For the above report I am myself responsible. —E. S.]

169. Extracts from Returns sent in to the Commission by Colonel Corbett, M.P. for South Shropshire.

I have no reason to think that the employment of women and girls, as far as it is carried out here, has any bad effects upon morals; and as there are cases in which they can earn money for their families, without neglecting their household duties (especially in the case of widows), I do not think it would be desirable to place a restraint upon their being employed, unless it were in the close proximity of machinery.

I am strongly of opinion that no such regulations about attendance at school as are laid down in the Factory Acts can be applied to the children of the agricultural labourers. Work is too irregular to admit of it. For instance, last autumn acorns were exceedingly plentiful, and keep for stock and pigs was scarce, consequently the children during some weeks at that time stayed away from school a good deal to earn money by picking acorns, for which they were paid by the measure.

I believe that the only legislative enactment which would be suitable to this subject would be to forbid boys being employed permanently under 12 years of age who could not read and write and do a little arithmetic.

As a rule, I do not like cottages to be let with the farms. They are very apt to be allowed to get out of repair, and at times lead to despotic proceedings on the part of the farmers towards their workmen, and a cottage can be kept for the use of a particular farm just as well when in the landlord's own hands. I have nearly all in my own hands, some being considered to belong to certain farms, if wanted, and I have no complaints from the farmers.

I think that extending the length of time for the repayment of a loan to build cottages might probably give some stimulus to their improvement, but it is not desirable to extend it over too long a period (say 30 years at the most), as it certainly ought to be repaid before there is a probability of the cottages needing repair. The real alteration wanted with regard to money lent by the Government and landowners is to do away with the hard and fast line which admits of little or no discretion; but makes it imperative to pull the building down and erect a new one, when in many cases for one-fourth of the expense the existing cottage may be made into a thoroughly good one by the application of a little common sense and practical knowledge. Each case should be decided on its own merits. If I had acted upon the principles laid down by Government, I should not have been able to improve one half the cottages that I have.

170. Extract from Return sent in by the Rev. R. K. Haslehurst, of West Felton, near Shrewsbury.

In the case of young children (from 4 to 6) distance from school completely *prevents* their attendance, and so they lose an opportunity which they can ill afford to lose. There is no class of children to whom the infant school is so important as those of the agricultural labourer, and for the simple reason that there is no class of children whose school life is so short. Hence the importance of bringing the infant school within the reach of the young children, or in other words, hence the importance in agricultural parishes of *multiplying infant schools*. What, for example, can be done for the education of a parish such as this, which, though containing only 1,067 inhabitants, is at least five miles long. For the elder children (*i.e.*, for those of 7 years old and upwards) the answer is easy. But what about the infants? How are they to be taught? If I am to have *only one* infant school I don't know where to put it. In fact, I can literally do nothing with only one, I want *at least three*. And yet there is only one school in this parish for boys, girls, and infants, all put together. I think the Education Board would do well to act more liberally for the encouragement of *infant* schools in agricultural districts.

LYDBURY, NORTH, and NORBURY.

Population - 1,437.

171. *Rev. C. Rolfe*, vicar. — About 20 of the mothers are engaged from time to time in field work, which often obliges a boy or girl to be away from school to look after the younger children. When they once take to it they seldom give it up, unless obliged by failing health, although they have three or four small children. They work in winter at turnip cutting or stone picking. At the latter work the younger members of the family can help. Young girls go to no other sort of field work.

Boys begin from 7 to 8 years old to "mind" birds, &c., and continue at this till 10 or 11, when they take to regular employment. They begin at 4*d.* a day, and are taken very young because older boys would have to be paid 6*d.* Thus eight months teaching (or nine at most) in the year is all that can be secured, and this decreases as the boy gets older, till he leaves altogether. I think it would be impossible to stop such work altogether, partly because of the necessities of the parents, and partly because of the pride the boys take in beginning to earn something. But some measure requiring all boys under 12 to attend school a reasonable time every year, so as not to interfere with such work, would be practicable, and would not be much felt by the parents, even if it had the effect of postponing regular employment for a year. The night school has been difficult to carry on, though the lads are willing to come, and the farmers inclined to let them. But the distance of many of them (two to four miles) and the short time left for the school work constitutes a great difficulty. The only way to meet this would be to pay some sufficiently competent person to go round and teach at the farmhouses throughout the winter. From half to two-thirds of the men belong to clubs.

It is the exception where they have any distance to go to work.

CLUN.

Population - 2,338.

172. Notes of Meeting January 26, 1869.

Present:

Mr. W. Beamond,
Mr. Hamar, Weston,
Mr. Hamar, Newcastle,
Mr. Statham, Clun,
} Farmers.

It was agreed that three-fourths of the cultivated land is in pasture.

Boys are not regularly employed before 13 years of age, as a rule, though some of the workmen's children are employed younger. Before that age boys will be a good deal employed in plough driving, bird-minding, pig-minding, &c.

All boys up to 12, or even 13, can attend school during three or four months of the year, so far as the employers are concerned.

Women are unwilling to go out, and consequently not many are employed. When a man is hired he is often asked whether or not his wife works out. A woman will earn from 9*d.* to 10*d.* a day, working from 8 to 6.

Waggoners have 11*s.* and a cottage. Ordinary men get 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week without a cottage. Each man has potato ground from half to two chains rent free. In grain harvest they have no piecework, but have all their meat found them for a month, or 1*l.* in money. At hay harvest they have a part of their meat given them. Some give waggoners all their meat in the house and 6*s.* in money.

Shropshire.
Mr. Stanhope.
g.

Turnip hoeing is generally set out to a stranger.

The married men are generally hired by the year at the fair in May; the ordinary labourer is hired sometime between Michaelmas and Lady-day, at which time he changes places.

Job men will go a long way to work, but, as a rule, the ordinary labourers have no very great distance to go.

It was agreed that there is great room for improvement in cottages, that some had one bedroom only, and that none, even of the new ones, had three bedrooms, except some erected by Lord Powis.

Very few men belong to benefit clubs here. Their confidence was shaken by the breaking down of a large club from bad management.

[The warden of Clun Hospital called my particular attention to the large sum earned annually by the families at "whinberry" picking. This in a good year lasts three or six weeks, and this year, an unusually good one, the sum paid for these berries by the buyers in the district was 800*l.*, and is generally 500*l.*—E. S.]

173. *Mr. Gwilliam*, farmer and bailiff to Lord Powis, Newcastle.—I have no boy nor woman now, and many fewer are employed than formerly. Perhaps, some farmers in hiring their men may make it a condition that the wives shall go out to work. Lord Powis' labourers get 11*s.* a week and regular employment, but no cottage or privileges. A farmer's labourer gets privileges, such has potato ground and a month's meat at harvest; some get a good deal of piecework, but on the other hand they lose time in winter. Some men get all their meat in the house, and a sum of money which the farmers often keep a secret. 6*s.* would perhaps be the amount. The ordinary hours of work are from 6 till 7, but it depends on the way the bargain is made with the master. It is better for the labourer and for the cottage if a landowner keeps his cottages in his own hands.

174. *Mr. H. Stewart*, schoolmaster, Clun.—Boys leave school altogether between 10 and 11 years of age. We complain more of this than we do of the irregularity of attendance; and yet out of 108 on the books the average attendance is only 50, and taking the class of boys about 10 years of age, the average absence will amount to 62 days, owing to field work. This is not at any one time, but distributed, and is hardly due to the distance some of the children have to come. The result of leaving so early is that they seldom get beyond the third standard. I should be satisfied if we could keep them even with the same irregularity up to 12 years of age. The real cause is indifference on the part of the parents; one-fifth of them are so careless that they either never send their children, or send them only for a fortnight at a time. I find from questioning the boys to-day that *all but one half of them belong to families living in cottages with one sleeping room.*

175. *Dr. Morris*, medical officer to Union, Clun.—Only 28 men belong to clubs here; they have no independence, and are not ashamed of getting relief. Six or seven years ago the People's Society, with a large number of members, broke down through the defalcation of an agent, and they have never had any more.

176. *Mr. Wolley*, farmer and guardian, Clungunford.—Women work a great deal here, and during the greater part of the year. The farms would average 200 or 300 acres, on each of which two or three women at least are employed. I have that number who are the wives of my regular labourers, and would earn, on an average, 2*s.* a week all the year. I make no condition with them as to coming, they are very willing to do so. The principal work in winter is turnip pulling and stone picking, and sometimes with threshing machines. At the latter work, and at fruit gathering, girls assist their mothers. A few girls go bird-minding, but we employ boys for the most part, as soon as they can run about, at 7 or 8 years old. I have one boy now at it; he is with me half the year for this work, and he might go to school the rest, but he does not. At 11 or 12 we take a boy regularly, but even then we could spare him part of his time. A boy would not be hired into a farm-house before 13. We have to go to the mop fair to get a boy or a girl.

I have two cottages on my farm let to me, each with two bedrooms; besides this I lodge four men and boys in my house, and hire extra men living in other cottages.

My regular men get 9*s.* and a cottage and garden, and beer or cider every day. I give them potato ground if they want it. Those I hire otherwise get 10*s.* a week, two quarts of beer or cider a day, or an unlimited quantity at harvest, with no other extras. Only one out of all my men belongs to a club.

STOKESAY.

Population - 559.

177. *Rev. J. G. La Touche*, vicar.—The school attendance here is pretty good, but when any difficulty occurs it chiefly arises from the poverty and ignorance of the parents. Formerly there was no good school in this neighbourhood, and most of the adults are unable to read and write. On the whole, however, they are anxious to get their children educated. There might be three or four families in the parish where poverty is the excuse for not sending them, but I don't think there is one where with proper management they could not do so. Those that stay from school appear to be idling and not to be employed in field work.

Women work occasionally here, and this affects the attendance of the girls. The chief work is the turnip pulling in winter, and weeding and stone collecting in summer. Boys also go to this a good deal, especially the latter. I see no objection in the work the women do to their being employed.

Occasionally young children under 10 are so employed, and are thus prevented from attending school. Boys leave between 11 and 12, though for a year or two before that they will have been at work occasionally.

This school was started 10 or 12 years ago. I regarded a high price for schooling as a good test of its being appreciated, and so I charge 2*s.* a quarter for the poorest children; the result is shown by the receipts of the school, which have gradually risen.

The quarterly payment secures a more regular attendance. They pay in advance, but the system must be worked with discretion, or it might have the effect of keeping them away. The charge keeps away some of the very poorest, but I doubt if they would come regularly if we charged nothing. I have sometimes tried the experiment of paying for them, or allowing them to come free of charge, but their attendance was so irregular that I have given it up. I am convinced they value the instruction more for having to pay something, be it ever so little, for it.

The cottages are mostly the property of the landowners, and, except Lord Craven's, are let with the farms. The system of letting cottages with the farms is in my opinion a very bad one, because it gives too great a power to the farmers, who allow the cottages to fall into sad disrepair. The cottagers generally speak with bitterness of the system, calling it slavery. There is a marked difference observable between the general condition of those under the farmer and those under the landlord, the former being more untidy. There are, I think, hardly any cottages with a single bedroom in the hands of small proprietors. In one cottage (and from the way I was told of it I believe it to be quite a common occurrence) the mother told me that her son, a young man of 20, sleeps with his little sister, a girl of nearly 12. "Indeed," said this woman, "we are in a sad state when the boys come "home at Christmas; they lie at top of one another."

BISHOP'S CASTLE.

Population - 2,083.

178. Notes of conversation with the Rev. W. M. Rowland, vicar, Thomas Griffiths, Esq., and Dr. Lemon.

The population of this town is composed chiefly of farm labourers, who, unable to find any cottages in the outlying townships, or in some of the neighbouring parishes, live here, and work in some cases at a considerable distance. Lydham, for instance (acreage 1,125), has no cottages available for farm labourers. So in the townships of Lea and Oakley, with an acreage of 1,700. There is only one cottage, and that a gamekeeper's. Many men go from one to two miles.

The houses in Bishop's Castle in which they are thus forced to live are deplorable. The majority have only one bedroom, and as some will keep their girls at home, in some cases grown-up boys and girls are sleeping in the same room. Mr. Griffiths says that it is not at all an uncommon thing for a bolster to be placed at each end of the bed, so that all the family sleep in it, with their feet towards the middle. On a recent occasion, the vicar going to baptise a child found five or six children in one bed with the mother, in which the father would also have to sleep.

The gardens are most inadequate; in some cases they have hardly any place to dry clothes in. In the hamlet of Colebatch gardens are attached. The rents vary from 4*l.* to 5*l.*; the windows do not always open. There is not a privy to every cottage.

Bastardy is stated to be unusually common in this neighbourhood. Mr. Scales, master of the workhouse, says that out of 38 women inmates, 27 are girls with bastard children, and out of 57 children 40 are illegitimate. The master considers the proportion twice as large as in any other union he knows of. The women always come to the workhouse with such children, and seem to have no shame in coming there several times. J. D. has just come in for the sixth time, and she has come in with every one of her children. The construction of the farm-houses is to a great extent to blame for this state of things.

In the vicar's opinion this state of the cottages is also an insuperable obstacle to a proper education. Dr. Lemon thinks "wages" to be the great difficulty. There is no independence in this place among the labouring class. A labourer who is ill one day, or whose child is sick, as a matter of course applies for the parish doctor, and a week's illness always sends him to the parish. Dr. Lemon believes union rating to have increased this tendency, because instead of having to claim relief before a parish meeting, a man goes now to the Board of Guardians, of whom one guardian only knows anything about him. Self-respect is a good deal impaired in this way.

Women do not work regularly, but a good deal of occasional work is done by them, especially just before harvest, because the privilege of "leasing" is made by the farmers dependent on their doing so.

The schoolmaster fixes 11 as the usual age for boys to leave him altogether; many, however, leave younger, even at 9.

[In the National school there were only about nine boys and eight girls, who were children of agricultural labourers. The oldest boy was 12, who had been at work.—E. S.]

179. *Mr. Lee*, bailiff to Lord Powis, Walcot.—I believe that the system of paying the labourer partly in money and partly in kind is on the whole, if in good hands, about the same advantage to the labourer as where he is paid wholly in money; but the objection to it is its liability to abuse, and that it places the man too much in his employer's hands. In many cases, at the time of hiring, the terms are fixed only in a very general way, and always verbally; so that although the labourer is hired by the year, the rate of wages paid him varies according to the price of corn or from other causes. A labourer, when so hired and living in his master's cottage, cannot even claim extra wages for extra hours of work; and if he gets extra food for it, it is from the charity of the employer. It is a great evil here that the hours of labour are not fixed as they are in most places, but men will work for the same pay, sometimes till 7 p.m. or later. Another great evil here is the system of giving beer or cider. The usual allowance every day is three quarts, but at harvest the quantity is unlimited on most farms, to encourage men to work. With the temptation thus thrown in his way, it requires a steady man to resist it.

Almost all the cottages have gardens, and good gardens, some as large as a quarter of an acre. I think that, considering the amount of time which a man can properly give to it, and the amount of manure he can provide, that two chains, or one-fifth of an acre, is as much ground as such men can properly cultivate.

180. Evidence of the labouring class from South Shropshire.

(*a.*) Waggoner's wife, Lydbury North.

Husband's wages, 10*s.* a week and his cottage rent free. This includes a garden, enough to set five bushels of potatoes in (about two and half chains). At grain harvest he gets his meat for a month (*i.e.*, all his food), but no extra money. At hay harvest he will have his dinner given him.

He has a piece of potato ground free on the farm, enough to set three bushels in.

Wife is "pressed" to go out at harvest time. She only goes then. Gets no money for it, but only some extra "leasing" (gleaning). This year she "leased" five bushels.

Husband goes to work often at 4 a.m., and don't leave off till 9. He will often come back to dinner; if not, he will come home at 6, and take some tea or what she can get for him.

They hardly ever taste butchers' meat. They killed a pig the other day. They try to make it last a year, as they sell some of it. Last year they were four months without any meat or bacon, because the pig had been a little one. They had nothing but potatoes and salt, bread and water to eat. Husband drinks water with his dinner; in very hot weather a little tea. At harvest he has some beer given him.

Wages paid every two or three weeks, when they like to go for them.

Has children at home; none working, but two attending school. Has only one bedroom.

[A very poor cottage. The next was as bad. The occupier earned 7*s.* 6*d.* a week and his dinner. His wife earned 10*d.* when she worked. Their rent was 4*l.* The earnings of the man may be taken as—

Wages - - -	10*s.*	per week.
Cottage (say) - - -	1*s.* 6*d.*	,,
Potato ground, 16*s.* - Value of dinner, &c., 20*s.*	say 9*d.*	,,
	12*s.* 3*d.*	,, E. S.]

(*b.*) Waggoner's wife, Clun.

Husband earns 10*s.*, and cottage rent free.

Cottage has two bedrooms, and contains two children of his, and two taken in to "nurse."

Potato ground free, to set three bushels (one and a half chains).

Garden only enough to set a peck in.

At harvest has a month of victuals given him, and some food at hay harvest.

Pigstye out of repair. Killed no pig at Christmas; will have to do without bacon this year.

Wages paid when they like.

They "scheme the money to pay the boot bill, one "pair at a time."

She did not quite get two bushels at "leasing" this year. On boy working at 4*d.* a day.

(*c.*) Labourer, Craven Arms.

Has 10*s.* a week and a cottage rent free. If he works on Sunday, gets 1*s.* more. Some of the farmers give 9*s.*, but Mr. ——— gives 10*s.*, because he won't allow pigs to be kept.

Hours of work, 6 to 6; some farmers work their men from 6 to 7.

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At harvest, 30*s.* extra; most farmers give meat for a month instead.

No potato ground, because he has half an acre of garden.

Wages paid every Saturday. Meat farmers pay every two or three weeks.

Would rather have a cottage of his own and pay for it.

[Cottage very small, tumble down, and with one bedroom. Belongs to Lord Craven.]

(*d.*) Labourer, Bishop's Castle.

Has 8*s.* a week.

Works for a farmer occupying 500 acres, but who has only one other regular labourer.

Rent, 1*s.* 6*d.*; cottage with one bedroom, about eight feet square. Garden, enough for half a bushel of potatoes. At harvest has meat for a month, and 10*s.*

Sometimes works till 7 p.m., and will have a supper or something for it by chance.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF WEM, &c.

HODNET.

Population - 1,979 (contains 10 townships).

181. Notes of meeting with Rev. S. H. Macaulay, rector; A. C. H. Percy, Esq., landowner and magistrate; W. Minor, Esq., Chairman of Market Drayton Board of Guardians.

Women rarely work in the fields at all. Mr. Macaulay thinks 4 or 5 per cent. go., but only to contract work with their husbands. Even this has very much diminished of late. Girls never work.

Boys work regularly about 11 years of age, and before that go to plough-driving, and especially bird-minding at certain seasons of the year. They are hired into farm service at 11 or 12.

It was stated that there is considerable laxity in farmhouses as to the control of the female servants. Sometimes they are allowed to come in at any hour of the night. Female want of chastity is the chief evil here, but it does not by any means follow that such women make bad mothers of families.

WEM.

Population - 3,802.

182. Notes of meeting, February 3rd, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. J. Wright, curate.
S. B. Gwyn, Esq., M.D.
Mr. J. H. Barker, } Churchwardens.
Mr. Owen, landowner, }
Mr. King, farmer.

Women are employed on the farms round, but mainly in harvest work, topping and tailing turnips, or picking stones. They would not, as a rule, be employed on the whole three months in the year. Their wages would be 1*s.* a day.

The effect of field work upon the day school is not great. Boys are generally kept till 11 or 12 years of age, before which they are not much taken. The boys of paupers, however, are generally required by the guardians to find work at 9 or 10 years of age, and Denison's Act is not made use of in the parish. Girls leave more than a year younger to go into small places. Distance is a difficulty; a good many children have one-and-a-half miles to come, and so cannot begin till 6 or 7 years of age. There are few children not attending some school. Boys go to tend birds at 8 or 9, but would not regularly be employed before 12 years of age. Wages are 11*s.* a week, and in most cases beer every day. At harvest, instead of piecework, they generally get from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, besides all their meat and drink for a month, according to the work and the sort of man. Those men who are boarded in the farmhouse have 6*s.* a week in money.

MIDDLE.

Population - 1,280.

183. Notes, February 16, 1869.

A scattered parish; some of the children come two or three miles to school, though there is an auxiliary school, under a mistress, in one of the outlying hamlets. This makes a night school difficult to carry out. The Rev. Geo. H. Egerton, rector, finds that field work causes little irregularity, except for a week or two at the bird-minding seasons. On an average the boys leave altogether about 11 years of age for farm service. Girls stay later, special inducements being offered. Mr. Egerton attempted for some time a sort of half-time system, having a gang of six boys attending school half the day and doing task work upon the farms during the other half. It answered well, and the boys made scarcely any less progress at school; but the system fell through some years ago owing to the small demand for such labour, it having to be sought from the farmers, and to the difficulty of getting a fit person to superintend them.

Women are not much employed except at harvest time. Some few, especially Irish, work among the turnips at busy seasons. Mr. Groom (farmer) employs four or five of his labourers' wives for three or four months of the year in all. It is thought by the larger employers that boy labour could be dispensed with up to 12; Mr. Brewster (farmer) thinks till 13 years of age. Before that they are employed only a few weeks in the year, and are at those times useful.

To illustrate the different modes of employment, and of payment, I give the wages of five large employers in this parish. I speak only of ordinary labourers.

A. gives 11*s.* and two quarts of beer a day. Has, on 300 (?) acres, five indoor male servants and three men out. Pays overtime in food.

B. gives 10*s.* At turnip cutting seasons, &c. employs Irish men and women from Shrewsbury. One of them takes it and hires the others. They sleep in his buildings. Last year an Irishman with his wife and child slept two months there.

C. gives 13*s.* and no beer; objects strongly to giving it; nor will he ever pay in food for extra time. Employs on 300 to 400 acres nine men, who are able to get in his harvest. Employs no extra labour, except one or two of the wives at corn harvest. His harvest lasts about 10 days, when each man earns 5*s.* a day.

D. gives 12*s.* and a quart of beer a day, 9 or 10 roods of potato ground rent free, and piecework when he can.

E. gives 12*s.* and beer. Does not allow some of his men to keep a pig, but gives them bacon instead. —[E. S.]

LOPPINGTON.

Population - 515.

184. *Rev. J. W. Davis,* vicar.—As to boys the plan adopted here, by agreement between me and the landowners, is to encourage them to take to agricultural labour, whether permanently or not, as young as possible. It is found throughout the parish that the best paid labourers are the least educated, who can neither read nor write. It is not thought necessary, but on the contrary, a disadvantage that a servant on a farmhouse should be able to write a letter. Labourers' children ought therefore to begin work as soon as they can get it, and by this means it is hoped that the children of the smaller farmers will keep ahead of their labourers in respect of education. It is found, however, that 10 is the earliest age for continuous employment. The majority do not leave till between 11 and 12, before this, even at 8 years of age, they are taken away for occasional labour, and sometimes as much as six months in the year. Girls are seldom employed except sometimes at bird-minding.

PREES.

185. *Mr. George Houlding,* farmer and guardian. —The holdings in this parish vary from 2 or 3 to

100 acres. There is a fair proportion of corn land. Women very little employed here, and they don't care to go. I don't know any women employed here all the year round. Boys at 10 or 11 go to lead horses, tent birds, pick stones, &c. Up to 12 or 13 school is the best place for them, except just at the time when you want to tent birds. We give them their meat, and I give mine besides 1*s.* a week ; some do not. The wages of ordinary men are 12*s.* all the year round. If they get all their meat in the house they would have 6*s.* or 7*s.* in money. There are not many that pay their men in this way. Beer is given at some farms, but I don't see any difference in the wages where it is and is not. There is scarcely a cottager but keeps a pig, and some have land for a cow.

WHITCHURCH.

Population - 6,093.

186. *Rev. W. H. Egerton*, rector.—We have no difficulty here in keeping boys at school fairly up to 12; but after that age they go into farm service (which the scarcity of female domestic servants has made more common), where they have few opportunities of self-improvement, and often forget what they have learnt. Those who come the greatest distance to school are, as a rule, more regular and punctual than those who live near it. No half-time scheme would answer here, because the farmers rarely take a boy under 12, and would not engage one on such a system, nor do I think there is any necessity for it. [Between one-sixth and one-seventh of the population were on the books of a day school; more than one-eighth in average attendance.—E.S.]

There is a "rag fair" here every year, which is attended by the farm servants of both sexes, and has a very bad and demoralizing effect ; but the hiring is not done there, having been completed before that time. In the condition of the female farm servants there is great room for improvement. Written characters are rarely required. Some few farmers have tried to do so, but they say that they have found that they could place no reliance whatever on the characters given. The fault, however, lies to a great extent with the farmers themselves for neglecting their servants. I believe that an improvement has taken place, but even now a great deal too much laxity is allowed.

The maximum rate of wages is 12*s.* ; it is more commonly 10*s.* or 11*s.*, or if a man has all his meat in the house, 7*s.* Under this latter system the families are very badly off, though it is less common than it was. It is, in reality, making the man take part of his wages in food.

187. *Mr. W. Hassall*, occupier of 405 acres, and Member of Council of Central Chamber of Agriculture, Bubney, thinks "many children are neither at school or "at work, and I wish some scheme to be devised to "compel them to attend school, and to keep them "from *continuous* labour up to 13.

"Our system of hiring is very unsound, being "simply verbal, with 1*s.* earnest money, and frequently "without a character. The earnest money is often "returned without notice at the last moment, whereas "a brief legal agreement could be enforced.

"The seven cottages on my farm are held under "the landlord, at a month's notice. This I find acts "unfavourably, as good labourers generally object to "so short a notice and decline to take cottages under "it; those who do frequently leave their master "without a man at a very inconvenient time. The "landlord rarely exercises his power, and therefore, "as far as he is concerned, the notice becomes a "dead letter. For my own part I much prefer three "or six month's notice."

188. On Wednesday, Feb. 15th, 1869, I visited the Loton Park Estate in the neighbourhood of Alberbury, in company with Mr. Baldwyn Leighton.

The system pursued by Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Bart., has been to encourage saving to the greatest possible extent among the agricultural labourers. Towards this end a certain proportion of the cottages have several acres of land attached, sufficient to keep a cow upon, but these are never let to any man who cannot produce a savings bank book, and show that he has saved enough money to occupy this amount of land. The result of this has been great increase of providence among the labourers, almost all of whom have a savings bank book, and for every cottage with land attached which becomes vacant there are many applicants.

I visited many of the cottages. Every one had a clock, most of them had bacon hanging up, and the cottages presented for the most part a comfortable appearance. Those erected by Sir B. Leighton contain generally one sitting room below, with larder, &c. ; above are two bedrooms, one of them a passage room. The following specimens show the working of the system :—

(*a.*) Cowman.

Earns 11*s.* a week, including work on Sundays.

Has from five to six acres of land at a rent of 9*l.* 10*s.* Lost four cows in seven years. Has 10*l.* in the savings bank. Has brought up six children ; one at at school now (13). A grandchild (7) living with them does not go to school. Will go when she has a pair of boots.

(*b.*) Labourer.

Has all his meat in the farmhouse and 7*s.* in money. Was waggoner till last year, when he got the land, and gave it up. Would rather have all his wages in money. Has worked 8 years for the same master. Has six acres, one cow, and a heifer. Rent 10*l.*

Has been at home for work four weeks in all this year. As he gets his board, he does not generally reach home till 8 p.m. For two winters got 8 lbs. of butter per week. In summer generally gets 6 lbs. Sold it at 1*s.* a lb. Gets now (February) about 2 lbs.

(*c.*) Labourer.

Has 10*s.* a week, and at harvest all his meat and 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. Has 10 to 11 acres, which he only got last year. Till then his wife was in domestic service. In their savings bank books I found that from 1859 to 1869, she had put by 89*l.*, and drawn out 34*l.* to stock the house and land. He had saved 51*l.* 14*s.* and drawn out 26*l.* 14*s.* They still had 90*l.* between them. Has to give up a month's work to manage his land, he thinks.

(*d.*) Labourer.

Wages 11*s.* and a little task work ; at harvest a month of meat and some extra money.

Has four and a quarter acres, including garden. Rent 8*l.* 10*s.* Gave up about three weeks last year of regular work. Has no pig.

(*e.*) Labourer in quarries.

Has eight acres, two cows, and a heifer. Rent 8*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* It took nearly two months of his time last year to look after it. Has two pigs, one to sell.

(*f.*) Labourer.

10*s.* a week; loses no time ; no extras. Has seven children. Has five acres and one cow, now dry.

Has bread and potatoes for dinner, seldom bacon or cheese. A "strike" (bushel) of flour costs 8*s.* 6*d.* and lasts a week. No pig this year.

(*g.*) Labourer.

12*s.* a week. Has eight acres, two cows. Rent 11*l.* 5*s.* Loses about a month of regular work.

My visit convinced me of the prosperity of the cottagers, but Mr. Leighton was of opinion that the system required to be worked with caution to prevent unthrifty men from getting the land.

One objection occurred to me, that the grass land was in almost every case badly farmed, not being sufficiently manured.

The instances above quoted show that each cottager has to give up about a month of regular work to attend to his land and cow. Mr. Leighton doubted whether so much time was necessary, and was of opinion that it did not interfere with their fitness as agricultural labourers.

189. [As regards this system of allotments of two or three acres of land for a cow, it is objected to by many

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employers of labour here and elsewhere; in consequence of which Lord Hill is gradually discontinuing it on his estate.

Mr. Plymley, farmer, of Alberbury, says of Sir B. Leighton's cottagers "they are better off than many "of the small farmers, because the land is let to them "so low, they do not appear to me to care about "regular employment. I have employed a dozen of "them and have never liked them; if they know that "you are likely to have a particularly busy day, "they sometimes stay away. My neighbour, Mr. "Kempster, finds the same difficulty."

Mr. Crane, of the same parish, says "it interferes "very much with their efficiency, especially on the "stock farms, and also in hay harvest and other "times."

Mr. W. Minor, Chairman of the Market Drayton Board of Guardians, also thinks it a disadvantage to labourers, "as a matter of course they have a pro- "portionate quantity of land in tillage; the cows are "clandestinely turned out in the roads, and providing "for his cow by cutting grass round his master's "fields occupies the time which the labourer ought "to spend among his potatoes."

Mr. Houlding, of Prees, thinks "it makes a man a "bad labourer because at busy times he is looking "after himself instead of working for us."

On the other hand it was mentioned favourably to me by the Ven. Archdeacon Allen, and by Mr. Campbell, bailiff to Sir B. Leighton, Bart.

Mr. Timotheus Burd, land agent, Shrewsbury, says of it,—"There is some truth in the objection raised "by farmers that such occupiers are not so much to "be relied upon as regular labourers as those who "have a cottage and garden only; but these and "other objections sometimes raised do not in my "mind outweigh considerations in favour of a limited "adoption of the system.

"Where a labourer has the means of purchasing a "cow, and of renting land with his cottage to keep "her, obtaining it is a great benefit to his family, "particularly where he has many children; and it "seems to me that an agricultural labourer, who by "industry and prudence has saved money, should not "be shut out from improving his position; it is there- "fore desirable that there should be on all large "estates a certain proportion of cottages with land, "to afford opportunity of bettering the condition of "those labourers who deserve it; from three to five "acres is better than more."

190. NOTES of MEETING at Montford, February 5th, 1869.

PRESENT:

Mr. J. Bowen Jones,
Bowen, and Cureton, farmers.

This district is rather more arable than grass; women are little employed, though two or three of the workmen's wives sometimes do a little weeding, but a considerable number of Irish men and women come out from Shrewsbury to take up turnips and do other work. Sometimes one man takes the job and gets others to come; sometimes it is taken separately. The objection to it is the distance [6 miles] which they have to come to this parish.

Boys are not continuously employed before 13, though they lead a horse at harvest time, &c. younger. So far as this district is concerned, restrictions upon the labour of boys under 13, during half the year at least, would produce no effect, and it is thought better that boys should not engage as regular plough drivers before 12 at any rate.

Wages, paid fortnightly, are 12*s.* or 11*s.* with three pints of beer a day; at corn harvest meat and beer are given for a month; at hay time most give food for overtime; piece work is usually taken by strangers, which is partly due to the want of sufficient cottages for the cultivation of the land.

191. STATEMENT by Mr. Timotheus Burd, estate agent, Shrewsbury, to show the number of cottages for agricultural labourers, the average amount of land attached, the average rent, and the acreage on seven estates, comprising upwards of 20,000 acres, within 20 miles of Shrewsbury, 1869.

Estates.	Cottages with Gardens under One acre.	Average Rent of Ditto.	Cottages with Land upwards of One acre and under Five.	Average Rent of Ditto.	Total Cottages.	Acreage.	Average of Farm Acreage to each Cottage.
	No.	R. P.	No.	A. R. P.	£ s. d.			
A. - -	48	1 7	2 18 6	21	2 3 30	8 15 0	69	Farms - 5,132 Wood - 468 Total - 5,600	81
B. - -	24	1 25	3 4 0	11	3 3 0	7 7 0	35	Farms - 2,805 Wood - 146 Total - 2,951	84
C. - -	18	1 30	4 8 0	7	3 1 27	7 15 0	25	Farms - 2,005 Wood - 118 Total - 2,123	85
D. - -	45	1 5	3 0 0	4	2 2 6	5 15 0	49	Farms - 3,039 Wood - 232 Total - 3,271	67
E. - -	29	0 36	3 0 0	—	—	—	29	Farms - 1,835 Wood - 110 Total - 1,945	67
F. - -	35	1 16	3 0 0	5	3 1 20	9 6 0	40	Farms - 2,583 Wood - 78 Total - 2,661	66
G. - -	30	1 22	3 16 0	1	2 1 0	8 0 0	31	Farms - 2,071 Wood - 253 Total - 2,324	75
Total -	229	—	—	49	—	—	278	20,875	—

The foregoing statement comprises all the farms above 30 acres each, and lands in hand, and wood lands on the several estates referred to, and all cottages occupied by agricultural labourers.

Houses occupied by blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, shopkeepers, and artificers are not included, nor are tenements above five acres and under 30 acres. The occupiers of these houses and tenements contribute little, if any, labour to the farmers, and they seldom require additional labour themselves, beyond that afforded by members of their own families.

The wages of labourers vary from 10 to 12 shillings a week with a small allowance of beer in some cases, and generally with meat and beer, and an addition to money wages, for about a month in harvest time. The wages are paid weekly, or at periods not exceeding a month, and in cash.

In addition to cottage labourers, farmers generally keep one and sometimes two indoor men servants at yearly wages to take charge of the garden and hack horses, and to assist occasionally in the work of the farms.

Women are employed at intervals on the farm, "at the harvest, &c.," but not uninterruptedly, or for long periods; the wages about 10*d.* per day. Boys are often employed, but seldom under 10 years of age.

The cottages generally contain a dining room or kitchen, a small scullery or washing room, and pantry, with two bedrooms above. Some cottages have three bedrooms, and some one only, but these are exceptions; a privy and pigstye is appended in most instances. Water is obtained usually from a pump on the premises, but in other cases from wells or streams near.

Many of the cottages have been newly erected or put into substantial repair within 20 or 30 years (and are built with stone of the district or bricks with tile or slate coverings), and although some others require improvement, or to be rebuilt, the majority are substantial and comfortable, as far as the accommodation afforded; there is a great desire on the part of most landlords to improve the condition of the cottages on their estates.

By the foregoing statement it appears that on an average the cottages for agricultural labourers are in the ratio of about one for every 75 acres; this we think a fair proportion; a greater number would probably create a supply of labourers in excess of the demand, and tend to lower the price of wages.

The cottage tenants (with few exceptions) held directly from the landlord, but the farmers are allowed to recommend labourers whose characters they approve as the tenants.

192. Summary of answers in other returns.

Women not regularly employed in outdoor work, but considered useful during parts of the year; all but two deprecate any restrictions, except on girl labour.

Boys are employed regularly from 10 and upwards in three cases, in two only at 13, and in the rest about 12 years of age; in most returns the time of bird-minding is especially excepted.

The majority of returns approve restrictions on boy labour up to 12 years of age.—[E. S.]

193. Evidence of the labouring class from North Shropshire.

(*a.*) Waggoner, Stanton.

Wages 12*s.* and three pints of beer a day.

Pays 3*l.* 10*s.* rent.

Has a month's food at harvest; has some potato ground, for which he pays 1*s.* 6*d.* a "rood" (perch); coal drawn for him.

Keeps two pigs, one to eat, "one for rent."

Objects to living in a "farmer's cottage."

(*b.*) Labourer, Hodnet.

12*s.*; no extras.

Piecework at harvest.

Rent of cottage (two bedrooms), 4*l.*

Has half an acre allotment at 10*s.*

[I found some men here sub-letting parts of their allotment.—E. S.]

(*c.*) Waggoner, Loppington.

12*s.*; no extras, except potato ground, for which he paid 2*s.* a "rood."

Task work only lasted a fortnight.

Rent, 5*l.* (two bedrooms).

(*d.*) Cowman, Alberbury.

Gets all his meat and 5*s.* a week in money.

Rent, 1*s.*; garden enough to set up four or five "butts" (two bushels) of potatoes.

No pig. Wife "leased" (gleaned) two bushels this year.

194. Evidence as to the effect of field work upon school attendance in the under-mentioned parishes.

Lydbury, North.—Occasional work begins at 7 or 8, increasing till 10 or 11, when schooling ends.

Clun.—Leave at 10 or 11.

Clungunford.—Irregular at 8 or 9. Few are kept over 12; they generally leave at 11, girls younger. Some are one mile from the school. Many families don't send their children. From one little hamlet, where there would be 20 to 30 children, none of them are sent.

Stokesay.—Leave between 11 and 12. Occasional work for a year or two before that.

Prees.—*Mr. Goffin*, Lower Heath School.—"This "is one of Lady Hill's schools for Lord Hill's tenants, "the others being at Manhamby and Peplow. By "payment of 1*s.* entrance the children get a free "education, and by payment of 1*d.* a week become "members of a clothing club. Field work interferes "a good deal, though absence for that purpose is not "strictly allowed without leave. Probably two months "in year would thus be lost. They leave us about "12 or 13 years of age altogether."

"Agricultural labourers' children seldom stay after 11. A good many stay after 10, but are irregular. Girls go to service at 10 or 11."

[There were 29 labourers' children out of 75. The two shown me in the first class both lived in one-bedroomed cottages.—E. S.]

Hodnet.—"Boys leave about 11. Before that they are taken away only for a few weeks at a time. Leave is asked. Girls leave about 13. They are clothed free of expense while at school."

Stanton.—"Boys leave at 12 or 13. Before that they are irregular. Some come three or four miles to school. Girls leave about the same age."

[Here too special inducements were offered.—E. S.]

Wem.—Distance is a difficulty; a good many children come a mile and a half to us, and so do not begin to come till 6 or 7 years old. There are few children not attending some school. Boys are generally kept till 11 or 12, before which they are little employed. The boys of paupers are generally required by the guardians to go out at 9 or 10. Girls leave a year younger for small places.

Loppington.—The majority of boys leave school between 11 or 12, some at 10. Before this, even at 8, they are taken away for occasional work, sometimes as much as six months in the year.

195. Night schools existed in winter in five parishes out of 23.

At West Felton, the *Rev. R. K. Haslehurst* says, "It is impossible to conduct an evening school with "effect, unless there is at least one *paid* teacher. It "is very desirable that the clergy and educated laity "should help, but you must not depend upon them; "there must be at least one paid teacher. The "master has already had plenty of work in his day "school, without adding to it. The addition of the "evening school must have either the effect of work-"ing him beyond his strength, or of causing him to

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" omit that personal and constant superintendence of " bad pupil teachers, which is so necessary for them. " The difficulty is to find funds to pay him. More- " over, those who most value the evening school are " generally those who (comparatively speaking) least " want it."

The *Rev. W. H. Egerton*, rector of Whitechurch, says, " the evening school in my parish has given way to evening classes, which we find more profitable. The classes are held twice in the week. We had an evening school for several years. It consisted of three classes of pupils: (1) the best of the week-day scholars, anxious to make the most of the opportunity; (2) the children who had neglected school; (3) some adults desirous of improvement. The first scarcely needed it. The second looked upon it as a sort of premium on their previous neglect. The third were not numerous. There was great difficulty about finding good teachers. The work in fact fell upon the clergy. We thought that teaching monysyllables to those who had neglected our good schools four nights in the week, occupied more time than could be consistently given to such work. The evening classes are most satisfactory in every respect."

196. Evidence as to the condition of the cottages in 24 parishes :—

LYDBURY NORTH.

Population - 1,025.

Rev. C. Rolfe.—Accommodation is in most cases too small where there is a family. Some with three bedrooms have lately been built by Lord Powis. Few of the rest have more than two bedrooms, many have one only, sometimes partitioned, sometimes not. Lodgers are common. Nearly all have gardens. Rents, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

[In this and some of the adjoining parishes there was great complaint of the privies and pigsties being put up against the wall of the cottage.—E. S.]

HOPESAY AND ASTON.

Population - 676.

Rev. R. E. Haymes and *Mr. W. Downes*, registrar. —Very scarce. There are some very bad ones with one bedroom, especially those built upon the waste. Four or five new ones have been built. Rents, 4*l.* to 6*l.* No allotments. Potato ground on the farm is charged for at 16*s.* a chain.

CLUN.

Population - 1,758.

Rev. C. Warner.—Generally very bad, and very little improvement is taking place, except by Lord Powis. Probably from half to two-thirds have one bedroom only; some of the very worst with one bedroom and a small garden let for 5*l.*

Mr. W. Downes.—The roof in many cases slopes down almost to the floor; the windows are very small, and not always made to open. Most of them have privies; but in a few cases there is one only to every two or three.

NEWCASTLE.

Population - 580.

Rev. H. Creswell.—Nearly half have only one bedroom, about half have two, and a few have three. Water supply, drainage, and gardens fair; outhouses insufficient.

CLUNGUNFORD.

Rev. T. O. Rocke.—Very exceptionally bad and dilapidated. Some few are freehold, and are the worst; but they mostly belong to the landowners. Many have but one bedroom; and there is none occupied by a labouring man with three. Lodgers are common. There is no cottage to be got under 5*l.*, those with three bedrooms fetch 8*l.* or 10*l.* Few have no gardens.

CLUNBURY.

Mr. W. Downes.—The old cottages are wretched, almost all with one bedroom, with the roof sloping down to the floor, and the windows small, and not always made to open. Some good new ones built by Lord Powis, at Kempton, otherwise there is very little improvement taking place.

EDGETON AND HOPTON CASTLE.

Mr. W. Downes.—Rather better, but the outlying cottages in lone places are miserable.

WISTANSTOW.

Population - 1,121.

Rev. E. C. Swainson and *Mr. J. Taylor.*—In a sad state. In almost every case the second bedroom (if there is one) is a passage room. Eight or 10 new ones have been built. Privies and wells bad, and inspection much needed Almost all have gardens. Rents, 4*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

STOKESAY.

Population - 559.

Rev. J. G. La Touche.—The cottages are in a most deplorable state hereabouts, and especially in this parish. This is the cause of demoralization. They are mostly the property of the landowners, and (except Lord Craven's) are let with the farms. In some cases they are almost like pigsties, with only one bedroom, and a kitchen under. Of late Lord Craven has been improving, and has built some two-bedroomed cottages.

All have gardens. The rents are very low, about 3*l.* 10*s.* for a cottage with a quarter of an acre of garden. This is on Lord Craven's and Lady Windsor's property. The rents are higher under small proprietors.

In Stokesay parish, which I imagine is an average parish in this respect, there are 123 houses, and the state of the cottages is shown by the following table :—

Proprietors.	Cottages with One Bedroom.	Cottages with Two Bedrooms.	Total.
A. - -	19	25	44
B. - -	9	2	11
C. - -	1	6	7
Various -	7	29	36
Total -	36	62	98

In most of the cottages with two bedrooms, the second is a lobby at the top of the stairs. In 14 the average size of the single bedroom is 11·2 feet square.

BISHOP'S CASTLE.

[For this, see post, No. 198.—E. S.]

KINLET.

Population - 450.

Rev. E. G. Childe.—Not sufficient; most have two bedrooms and gardens. Rents, 2*l.* to 3*l.* " I hold " strongly on the practical working in this parish, " that farmers are bad landlords."

NEEN SAVAGE.

Population - 450.

Rev. C. R. S. Cocks.—Sufficient, but generally very bad; same have only one bedroom; all have gardens; most are let with the farms. Rents, from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*

PREES.

Population - 3,097.

Ven. Archeacon Allen.—The mass have two bedrooms; some are in a bad state of repair; too many

have one bedroom only. On Lord Hill's property great improvement is taking place. Rents, 3*l.* to 6*l.* [For details, see post, No. 199.—E. S.]

WHIXALL.

Population - 938.

Rev. John Evans.—Not sufficient, and high rents are paid for some cottages unfit for human beings to live in; wretched mud and timber walls, with one lower and one upper chamber, and the spring of the roof in several cases 14 or 18 inches from the floor. In all the ventilation is imperfect. Gardens more general.

HODNET.

Population - 1,979.

Meeting, February 2nd, 1869.—As a rule, well situated. Not in a good state, as quantities have only one bedroom, generally a large one. It is doubted whether or not these constitute the majority. Mr. Percy has built some with three bedrooms, and divided the one bedroom into two in 30 cases at once. The second is almost always a passage room. All have gardens. Rents, 4 to 5 guineas.

STANTON.

Population - 648.

Mr. Hilditch.—Fair; some new ones built by Lord Hill, but a few have one bedroom only. All have gardens. Rents, 3*l.* 10*s.*

WEM.

Population - 3,802.

Meeting, February 3rd, 1869.—Almost all belong to small owners, and scarcely any are therefore let with the farms; they are not good. A great many have one bedroom only. Where there are two, the first is generally a passage room. Overcrowding is common; they are insufficient in number. Some of the neighbouring landowners have pulled down cottages, and many men have to walk two or three miles to work. Not always gardens. Rents, from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Very great improvement is thought to be required in respect of out-door nuisances. Some one ought to be compelled to report as to overcrowding and nuisances.

LOPPINGTON.

Population - 578.

Rev. J. W. Davis.—Some have one bedroom, gene- they have two, one of which is a passage room. They are in fair repair; all have gardens, some an allotment of land for a cow. Rents, 4*l.*

ALBERBURY.

Population - 1,918.

Mostly rebuilt by Sir B. Leighton. They contain generally two bedrooms, one a passage room; gardens common, and many allotments of land for a cow. —[E. S.]

MIDDLE.

Population - 844.

Scarcely sufficient. They belong partly to small owners, partly to landowners. Some are very bad, and contain only one bedroom for a family, but they are improving. All have gardens, and let from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*—[E. S.]

ELLESMERE.

Mr Shingler.—Generally not very good, and small; insufficient in number, much overcrowded, and badly ventilated in most places. Gardens general.

WHITTINGTON.

Population - 1,500.

Rev. W. W. How.—Chiefly belong to landowners, but there is one instance at least of tenants being obliged to deal with a tradesman landlord. They are fairly good, usually with two bedrooms. Some belonging to small owners are small, but there are not many with only one bedroom. Windows made to open, though there are exceptions to this. Most have gardens. Rents, from 4*l.* to 6*l.*

WHITCHURCH.

Population - 6,093.

Rev. W. H. Egerton.—Round here there is great complaint of scarcity for farm labourers. Numbers of men go two and three miles to work every day. It wears them out. There is also great complaint to be made of the small accommodation in them and of the small garden.

Mr. W. Hassall.—The majority are thatched, with one living room and small scullery, and one or two bedrooms. The new are brick and slate with two or three bedrooms. One-third are owned by landowners. Rents, 3 to 4 guineas.

197. [In only one parish visited was the "allot- "ment system" existing. At Hodnet some of the heath land has been inclosed and let in allotments of half an acre each; this was done by Mr. Percy "because of the high rent charged for potato ground "by the farmers." They are allowed to plough and sometimes hire labour to cultivate it.

Mr. Minor, chairman of the board of guardians at Drayton, thinks this half acre not too much for a man to cultivate properly if it adjoins his house. The ploughing is often done by the master, so that most of the labour required can be done in extra hours, and the man would only be required to give up a few days of his regular work. The straw from the corn grown upon half the ground and from his gleanings will supply him with enough manure.—E. S.]

198. Notes of visit to the agricultural labourers' cottages in Bishop's Castle, February 15, 1869.

The first visited, a little over nine feet square, one room below, one above, no backdoor. A little bit of garden. Rent, 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Husband a "bas" (bastard) child; wife, G's daughter—the daughter of the man, not of the woman. The next contained a waggoner, who, with his wife, grown-up daughter, and one child taken in to nurse, had a very small cottage. Room up stairs divided into two, one window not being made to open. Rent, 1*s.* a week.

Then followed a group of six cottages, water supply deficient, and only one privy to the whole group. They belonged to a small owner.

(1), with one bedroom, contained husband and wife and five children.

(2), with one bedroom, husband, wife, and four children.

(3), with two bedrooms, no back door, contained husband, wife, and four children.

(4), with one bedroom, contained a single woman and three children.

The gardens attached to these were only a few feet square. Rents, 1*s.* 9*d.* a week.

(5), with two bedrooms, man and wife and four children. Rent, 5*l.* 10*s.*

(6), with two bed rooms, man and wife and two or three children.

I next visited a block of six cottages, belonging to a small owner, the only one almost in the place which showed any sign of recent improvement. Each had two bedrooms and good large windows.

Then I saw a double cottage belonging to one of the great landowners, built of stone. Each had one room above and one below. One contained a family of nine in all, the other one of six in all. Good gardens were attached.

199. Notes of visit to the cottages of Prees, February 1st, 1869.

A row of three, all with one bedroom; rent 4*l.* In the first two the bedroom window was very tidy, roof open to thatch, and sloping down almost to the floor; no back door; pigsties close to wall under bedroom window. They contained (1) husband and

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wife, an old woman, one girl, and a young man; (2), which was worse, husband and wife, five children, and two lodgers; (3), with a very rotten roof and staircase, husband and wife and five children.

Then came another row of three very old ones. (1), with two bedrooms, husband, wife, and two children; rent, with three acres of land, 14*l.*; (2), with two bedrooms very bad and ruinous, man and wife, his father, and seven children, rent 4*l.* 10*s.*; (3), with one bedroom, worse, husband and wife, and two children, rent, 4*l.*

We next came to a pair, one with two bedrooms at 4*l.* 10*s.*, and one with one only at 5*l.* Small families in both.

Two cottages belonging to a large landowner came next. (1), with two bedrooms, fair, unceiled, four children in the family; (2), very bad, with one bedroom; two young daughters and a son lived at home. Last year another was confined of an illegitimate child here.

Then a block of two with two bedrooms each, rent 4*l.* 5*s.* The first contained man and wife, his mother, two grown sons and daughters.

Next, two cottages with two bedrooms, at 4*l.* 10*s.* (1), five children at home; (2), no children, two beds in one bedroom, the second kept for the children when on a visit.

The next two, let at 5*l.* 5*s.*, were fair, and contained two bedrooms each. In the first I noticed, as an exceptional case, that the second bedroom was not a passage room.

Staffordshire.

STAFFORDSHIRE.—EVIDENCE.

199 (*a*). STAFFORDSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

A meeting of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture was held on Saturday, February 13, and as it had been arranged that the Hon. Edward Stanhope, Assistant Commissioner, was to meet the Chamber, there was an unusually large attendance. The Earl of Harrowby, the president, was in the chair; and amongst those present were the Earl of Lichfield, the Hon. and Rev. A. C. Talbot, Mr. Thomas Neville (the vice-president), the Rev. R. W. Essington, Mr. Harvey Wyatt, Mr. R. H. Masfen, Mr. May, Mr. Parr (Alrewas), Mr. Edward Knight, Mr. Stacey Norris, Mr. Collins (Aston), Mr. J. Brawn, Mr. C. Byrd, Mr. C. R. Keeling, Mr. J. Carrington Smith, Mr. Perkins, Mr. S. Byrd, &c.

Mr. Stanhope having opened the subject, it was, on the suggestion of the Chairman, agreed to take first the question of the employment of women, and, with a view to excite discussion, his lordship threw out, but not as expressing his opinion, the proposition "that the employment of women in fields should be "entirely forbidden."

Mr. T. Neville said in that county young women were seldom employed in fields, but almost entirely as domestic servants. The women who worked on the farms were employed from about April and through the summer in weeding, haymaking, and such light work, and after harvest occasionally with the thrashing machine, cutting turnips, and so on. In that way a woman would add 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week or more to the wages of her husband, and the homes of such industrious women were invariably the best. (Hear, hear.) They got up early and prepared breakfast before they went out; they got home for an hour at dinner, and were able to return to prepare their husband's supper, their children being at school whilst they were at work. Women with small children did not as a rule go to field labour, if they did they left their children in the care of a neighbour. His experience was, that assisting with a thrashing machine was not objectionable work for a woman. They did not go early, the work was light, and he knew of no case of accident from their dresses. Mr. Neville proposed "That it is "not desirable that there should be any restrictions "upon the employment of married women in agri- "culture."

The Hon. and Rev. A. C. Talbot said as a clergyman he could not disguise from himself that the employment of women with young children had a deteriorating effect upon the children, and he thought that mending and making clothes, and the preparation of the meals of the husband, the bread earner, where in such cases so much neglected that nothing really went into the pocket as the result of such employment. (Hear, hear.) In the case of women, however, without children, or whose children were grown up, he saw no reason why they should not assist in the bread earning of the family. He believed that the labour to which women were put was not unsuited to their strength, whilst it was most important to the farmer. (Hear, hear). Those who lived in the neighbourhood of a mining district knew the great difficulty of procuring labour. In his own parish, when a young man left the farmer's house he generally left the place, and he did not know how the places of the labourers who were getting old were to be filled up. (Hear, hear.) He had a steam engine at work every day, and an elderly woman attended to it, fed the mill and the cutting machine, and did it better than any man in his employ, and her petticoats no more interfered than a man's smock frock. Mr. Talbot seconded the proposition of Mr. Neville.

Mr. Brawn objected to the resolution being limited to married women. As a rule girls were employed in the houses, but it would be cruel to forbid any who were unsuited for domestic service getting their living in the fields. He proposed to strike out the word "married," so as to make the resolution affirm that it was undesirable to interfere by legislation with the labour of women.

Mr. R. H. Masfen took the same view. He employed three women, and paid them from 13*l.* to 15*l.* a year; and he wished to know how the loss of such earnings to the labourer was to be compensated? He quite agreed that it was undesirable for women with small children to go out to work, and did not think it often occurred. He would not prohibit the employment of young single women in the fields. One of his workmen was a widower, and his daughter kept his house, and in the summer she got almost enough in two months or ten weeks to buy her clothes.

Mr. Perkins, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Parr, Mr. May, and others spoke to similar effect, and Mr. Mein also made some remarks.

Mr. Neville, with the assent of Mr. Talbot, amended his motion so as to make it of general application, adopting the following terms:—"That there is "nothing in the system of agriculture as pursued in "the county of Stafford which requires legislation "for the restriction of female labour in agriculture, "and that such legislation would be injurious to the "employers of labour, and to the labouring classes."

The Chairman observed that there was this great distinction between town and country, that in towns there was as it were a great bank of labour available as special demands arose from time to time for labour in particular branches; but in the country, where perhaps to an area of 4,000 acres there would be only some 400 or 500 people, there were no resources from which to draw an additional supply for any pressing

necessity, as harvest, nor was there accommodation for additional persons if they could be brought to the places where they were needed; hence the necessity of employing women and children to meet emergencies. He thought any attempt to interfere with the labour of women in the country would create evils, because it could not be adapted to meet the variety of circumstances adverted to, and he thought any abuses connected with it would be best prevented by the growing public opinion against anything which was of an evil tendency, and which would admit of the adaptation of arrangements to the actual necessities of the case far better than any legislative plan could. (Cheers.)

The resolution, as amended, was then unanimously agreed to.

In response to the invitation of the Chairman for some proposition as to the restriction of the labour of children,

Mr. Carrington Smith proposed "That no child "shall be employed for day wages under 10 years "old, and that between 10 and 13 no child shall be "employed for more than half the year, unless he or "she shall have previously passed an educational "examination to the satisfaction of one of Her "Majesty's inspectors."

Mr. May thought the labour of children under 11 was of no value, except in bird tenting, dropping beans, and such like work. He proposed, as an amendment, "That no child should be employed "under 11, and after that age that no restriction "should be imposed."

Mr. T. Neville seconded the amendment, considering that by the age of 11 boys could obtain a satisfactory amount of instruction. If there were to be any restriction afterwards, he would prefer that it should take the shape of a certificate of possessing a certain amount of instruction.

Mr. C. Byrd said that last year he had five boys working for him, and one of them, who was 11 years old, drove all his harvest home. He drove three horses, and met a lady's carriage, and drew aside to allow it to pass, and she was so well pleased with him that she gave him a present. He paid that boy 9*l.* 10*s.* for the year; to another, 15 years of age, he paid 12*l.* 18*s.*; and to another, 11 years of age, he paid 8*l.* 16*s.* Boys drove the plough, and he could not dispense with their labour for half the year. On a strong land farm like his they were wanted all the year. He had to plough with five horses, and some times with eight, and he wanted boys to drive. He had once a boy 9 years of age to plough, who was now a policeman. Another boy was four years driving the plough, then he went to be apprenticed to the trade of a shoemaker, but after five years at that he returned to the farm, and now he was a stone and a half heavier than when he left shoemaking. He knew another boy who did not go to work, his parents having been in a rather better position, and after robbing gardens and partridges' nests, he robbed another boy, and was now in a reformatory, and he thought that was the result of his being kept from work.

Mr. Parr, speaking of his experience of the population of the village of Alrewas, asked what was to be done to compel boys to go to school who did not go to work. He observed that of 157 children on the books of the national school at Alrewas, only 54 were the children of agricultural labourers, the parents of the rest being small farmers, tradespeople, shopkeepers, and so on. The children who were running about the streets in rags were not those of steady agricultural labourers, but of a sort of jobbing people, who worked for one person and another, and did not continue in steady employment. Mr. Parr appeared to favour the necessity of adopting compulsion to send children to school who were not at work. He stated that great mischief ensued from the sale of "klink," which was beer which had been returned to the Burton brewers, was worked over again and sold cheap, though it was strong.

The Earl of Lichfield said he was perfectly satisfied to rest on the resolution adopted by the Chamber, two years ago, (1.) "That in the opinion of this meeting it "is desirable that some legislative regulations should "be applied to the employment of children and young "persons in agricultural labour; (2.) that no child "under 8 years of age should be employed for hire "in field labour at all; (3.) that the hours of em-"ployment of all children between the age of 8 and "13 be so regulated as to afford an opportunity for "attendance at school during a certain portion of "that time." But he wished to point out two or three practical objections to the present amendment and the resolution. The one said no child was to be employed up to 10, and the other to 11 years; but there was no guarantee, except by the alternative presented by the resolution, that a child might, after the age of 10, be employed continuously on passing a certain examination, that the child before that age would go to school at all. The objection was still stronger in reference to the amendment, which raised the age to 11 years. In the neighbourhood of towns, where the children of agricultural labourers were not altogether dependent upon employment on farms, they might be employed under the half-time system, from the age of 8, in manufactories, while it was proposed not to allow of their employment on farms until 10 or 11. (Hear, hear.) He had not heard of any proposal to repeal the Factory Acts, and that appeared to be an objection to forbidding the employment of children under 10 or 11, but the strongest objection was the first he had named, that there was no guarantee whatever of the child being either at work or at school before those ages. He was quite sure that it would be much better for them to be so employed, if at the same time they required that a certain portion of time should be spent at school; and he believed that the only practicable way of securing anything like proper education for the children was to require a certain amount of attendance at school up to the age of 13, but if they desired to modify that system in any way, they ought at least to provide that there should be some guarantee that the child should be at work or at school under the ages named. His lordship afterwards added that the resolution had an immense advantage over the amendment, because by making a certificate of having passed an examination a condition of continuous employment, a very strong inducement was held out to parents to take care their children went to school regularly.

Mr. Brawn said he did not approve of prohibiting the employment of a boy before the age of 11, which would be against the interest of the parents. He asked how Mr. Byrd could have got a boy to take charge of three horses at that age, if he had not begun to work earlier. He pointed out difficulties in dealing with children who had very little education, and had no one to support them, by an instance he adduced, and said by a regulation of the nature proposed they might prevent a boy from breaking man's law, "Thou "shalt not work," but they might not be able to prevent him from breaking God's law, which says, "Thou "shalt not steal." (Hear, hear.)

The Chairman suggested that they might take the resolution adopted two years ago, which forbade work under 8 years, so as to make it run parallel with the provisions of the Factory Acts in towns, and then add to its terms that the hours of employment of all children between the ages of 8 and 13 should be so regulated as to afford an opportunity for attendance at school for a certain portion of that time, with the proviso, "unless before that age the child shall be "able to pass a certain examination." That would give an alternative of passing an examination as a means of dispensing with the necessity of partial attendance at school. The Earl of Lichfield opposed this proposition on the ground that if a child passed such an examination as he could be reasonably expected to pass, say at 9 years old, and from that time went to work full time, he would soon lose what instruction he had gained.

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Mr. Stanhope thought it would be a great hardship on many poor families if their children could not be employed at all before 11 years of age. He also insisted that boys who worked continuously would soon lose all they had learnt up to an early age.

The Hon. and Rev. A. C. Talbot strongly confirmed this view from his experience in examining children before confirmation. The girls generally retained some portion of the instruction they had obtained at school, probably because they met with books and papers at the houses where they were servants, but the boys appeared to forget all they had learnt at school. Mr. Talbot mentioned a case of the best boy in the parish school at Church Eaton, who was now the best labourer in the parish, and yet he was astonished to find that he could not now read the large printed name, "Proctor and Ryland," on a bag of their artificial manure. Without continued attendance at school after 10 he was satisfied that boys would forget what they were taught. It was for wiser heads than his to say how that was to be accomplished. The half-time system was, he thought, impracticable. They could not keep two waggoner's boys in the house where they now kept one, for one was bother enough. (Laughter.) He feared the difficulty was an insurmountable one.

The Chairman said the difficulty was great. In answer to a suggestion that they should have night schools, he observed that he thought it would be better to dispense with the afternoon school, and let the master teach in the morning and the evening. He suggested that they might amend the resolution adopted two years ago, so as to read as follows :—

"That no child shall be employed for wages under 8 "years old. That between 8 and 11 no child shall "be employed without a certificate of a certain "amount of attendance at school every year; nor "between 11 and 13 without a certificate of having "passed a certain examination."*

Mr. Smith adopted the amended form, and on its being put to the Chamber it was carried without a dissentient, though only 11 held up their hands for it.

Lord Lichfield congratulated the Chamber upon having made a sound suggestion to Mr. Stanhope, and then a number of the members of the Chamber remained to confer with the Assistant Commissioner.

199 (*b.*) After the above meeting, some of the principal employers of labour discussed some of the remaining questions with the Assistant-Commissioner, amongst whom were Lord Harrowby, Messrs. R. H. Masfen (Pendeford), T. Neville (Shenstone), Parr (Alrewas), J. C. Smith (Blithfield), G. Swift (Fulford), W. Collins (Ashton), May (Elford), Keeling (Penkridge), &c.

Previous to the meeting, circulars of questions had been sent by the Assistant-Commissioner to these and to other members of the Chamber. The following is a summary of the answers received :—

(1.) Only one mentioned continuous employment for boys as young as 9, four mentioned 10, in one case chiefly during spring and autumn, in another in the proportion of one to each farm; one mentioned 11; one 12; one "all ages, and at all times of the "year;" two 13, "except for scaring rooks."

(2.) Girls were in no case stated to be employed in agriculture.

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* THE STAFFORDSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

To the Editor of the Staffordshire Advertiser.

SIR,

At the last meeting of this valuable Institution two resolutions were passed, both of which were intended to serve as suggestions to the Legislature. Which being the case, the last of them requires some comment. For it runs thus :—

"That no child shall be employed for wages under 8 years of "age, that between 8 and 11 no child shall be employed without "a certificate of a certain attendance at school every year, nor "between 11 and 13 without a certificate of having passed a "certain examination."

This seems to me very objectionable for the following reasons :—

1. Because the Legislature should interfere as little as possible with any man's business, which remark applies to the malt tax, &c.

2. Because when it does interfere, especially with the poor, it should (excepting for the repression of crime and the prevention of disease) use encouragement rather than compulsion; for behind compulsion lie penalties.

3. Because the work which children have to do in *agriculture* does not injure their health, but, on the contrary, improves it; and is not necessarily hurtful to their morals, and certainly not so hurtful as idleness.

4. Because a half time system is inapplicable to such a business as farming, since the work cannot be done when a master likes, but when the weather permits.

5. Because some children, through dullness or other defect of intellect, would fail to pass any examination worthy of that name, and yet be useful in farm work, and require to be fed.

6. Because the Legislature should hesitate to set up any new test whatever; and certainly has no right to enact that the results of instruction shall be the sole passport to the employment of the poor at any age *by private persons*, until it has provided the means of instruction gratuitously.

7. Because the work which a farm labourer has to do is not simple, but multifarious, and does not come by instinct, as some suppose, but has to be taught, and is rarely learned well unless learned early.

8. Because it is desirable to encourage the employment of the young in agriculture rather than to check it; since it is obvious that, while many children of farm labourers are drawn away to occupations, apparently (but often only apparently) better paid, the farmer's willingness to teach them (in other words, to take apprentices and pay for them) is unhappily not in proportion to the natural alarm which he feels at the well-known decrease of agricultural labourers of all ages.

9. Because the zeal for education thus exhibited, being without discretion, is not only calculated to damage the interests of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture, which would be a great evil, but also to injure the cause of elementary education generally, which would be a grave calamity.

10. Because all the good contemplated by the interference proposed would be effected by giving to night schools a more liberal and intelligent support than they receive at present.

11. Because the enactment shadowed forth in the resolution would have to be worded with such looseness, and worked with such laxity as to render it ineffective except for evil; and cause it to end, as the Smoke Consuming Act has ended, only in smoke.

These being my views, while I admire the happy acumen with which the Earl of Lichfield destroyed by one blow the original proposal of Mr. Carrington Smith, together with Mr. May's amendment and all modifications of either, excepting, unfortunately, the last, and while I agree with him in thinking that the corresponding resolution of the Shropshire Chamber was, when compared with our's, vague and unintelligible, I cannot agree with him in congratulating our chamber, as if the advantage in this respect was with us. For it seems to me that when suggestions are unsound in principle they become all the more mischievous in proportion to the clearness and persuasiveness with which they are presented.

But it may be asked why I, being a member of the Chamber, and present at the meeting, did not oppose the resolution. This I will explain. I had prepared an amendment, which was worded thus :—"That in the opinion of this Chamber the "Legislature ought not to interfere with the employment of chil-"dren in agriculture until it has provided means of keeping them "out of idleness."

This was actually on its way to the chairman when several voices affirmed that the resolution then before the meeting would receive universal support, and in deference to this statement, which was not challenged, I remained silent. This I regret now, for one whose opinion is valuable told me immediately afterwards that he would have seconded my amendment, and that it would have been carried. Moreover, the voting showed that the compromise, arranged by the chairman, and passed, did not obtain the lively assent of the board of agriculturists which had been predicted, but only the languid acquiescence of agriculturists bored.

I need only add, that the Assistant-Commissioner requested all who were interested in the subject to lay their views before him by letter. And when he said this, I understood him to refer not only to the few people who were around him, but to all, whether members of the Chamber or otherwise, who might wish to influence the Legislature upon the points then under discussion.

I therefore suggest that every one who may approve of this letter will do well to cut it out of the paper. He can then send it, endorsed with his name and address, to the Hon. E. Stanhope, 2, Victoria Street, Westminster.

Of course any further remarks, whether confirmatory or otherwise, can be appended.

R. W. ESSINGTON.

Shenstone Vicarage, Feb. 16th.

[In answer to this invitation I received a letter of approval from Mr. John Simcock (Leek).]

(3.) In every return but one, women were stated to be employed in the fields. Several said "occasionally "during summer and autumn." In one case this employment was stated to be diminishing. At Stonnall none would work if they could obtain employment. At Fisherwick the proportion was stated to be one woman to every 100 acres. They were described, in most cases, as being the wives or widows of labourers. At Shenstone, they were thought to make about half time; from April till after harvest, they work pretty regularly, "chiefly in weeding, twitching, singling "turnips, and hay-making. After this they are em- "ployed occasional days with the thrashing machine "or cutting off turnips."

One return says, "Stop all employment of women. "My mother, though we were very poor, never went "out; she taught her children to read. Mothers "tired with a day's out-door work cannot be expected "to do so."

(4.) In two cases only is complaint made of the want of cottages conveniently situated. In two parishes, labourers go one mile to work; in two, under two miles; in another some go two to three miles.

A discussion then took place on the subject of cottages and gardens.

(5.) *Mr. Keeling* thought that there should be at least one cottage to every 100 acres; the general feeling as to arable farms was that two were necessary.

It was thought generally that a quarter of an acre of garden ground is amply sufficient for a labourer. Mr. Masfen thought it too large, and preferred part of it being given as potato ground by the farmer. Lord Harrowby strictly limits the allotments on his property, which are universal, to between one-eighth and a quarter of an acre. Near Sandon every man has cow-grass, from two to four acres, which system he is extending in the hope of keeping his men at home. It has the great advantage that it is also a sort of retiring pension for a man; and in his district there is no complaint of its interference with regular employment.

Mr. Neville, however, urged that there is the same objection to a man's keeping a cow as a pig, owing to the temptation of stealing which it affords.

(6.) Wages, &c.

Wages were said to be usually paid fortnightly, and on Fridays. No labourers are stated to be hired by the year.

The rate of wages in money paid by the farmers present appeared to be 12*s.*, and in one or two cases 13*s.* or 14*s.*

At Shenstone beer is given all the year round, at Alrewas from March till after harvest, at Blithfield it is rarely given. Mr. Masfen gives 4 bushels of malt for brewing (valued at 10*s.*) instead of beer, besides 2*l.*

Harvest is commonly done by piecework. Some, and large farmers among them, give food at this time instead of money. Mr. Swift estimated the average harvest earnings of his men at 3*l.* One farmer gives 15*s.* instead of piecework at harvest. Another, double their wages for a month.

One of the farmers present gives potato ground free; another gives "five roods" (eight square yards each) at 1*s.* 6*d.* a rood.

Coals were drawn free by six of those present.

Several stated that their labourers were allowed to buy corn of them at cost price.

Several objected to their labourers keeping a pig; one farmer allows them 10 score of pork at 5*s.* a score. In his neighbourhood this is common.

199 (*c*). Stafford Board of Education. State of Church Education in the Archdeaconry of Stafford, 1868.

Early in 1868 the Stafford Archideaconal Board of Education had its attention drawn to the returns recently published by the "National Society for Pro- "moting the Education of the Poor," by which it appeared that in the decennial period from 1856–7 to 1866–7 the number of church week-day scholars, in the county of Stafford, had decreased from a proportion of one in 16 of the population to a proportion of one in 16·6; and that the number of Sunday scholars had decreased from 42,350 in 1856–7 to 39,200 in in 1866–7; though happily in the same period the number of evening scholars had increased from 928 to 3,933.

These facts being deemed unsatisfactory, it was thought advisable that the Board should endeavour to to obtain a more definite knowledge of the state of things in the several parishes of the Archdeaconry, with a view to steps being taken for improvement where required.

Consequently the President consented to issue under his signature a circular to the incumbent of each parish, enquiring:—

I. Whether there was in his parish a sufficiency of church school accommodation, (*a*) in relation to the whole population; or (*b*) in relation to the distance of the population from the schools:
II. Whether the attendance at the day schools was satisfactory:
III. If not satisfactory, to what cause the defect might be attributed:
IV. What proportion of children in the week-day schools attended church Sunday schools:
V. If this proportion were considered unsatisfactory, what remedy could be suggested.

From these enquiries the following were the results:—

Circulars were issued to the incumbents of 317 benefices, as printed in the Diocesan Calendar; but some of these being donatives, and some chapelries, the number from which separate returns might be expected was about 295.

The number of answers received was 231, or 78 per cent. of the 295 (besides a number of anonymous answers, which could not be identified).

Enquiry I. Of these answers 177, or nearly 77 per cent., report a sufficiency of school accommodation; 54, or rather more than 23 per cent., report a deficiency (8, however, to a slight extent); 9 others, whilst reporting a general sufficiency of accommodation, report a deficiency by reason of the distance of parts of the population from the schools. Consequently the total number of districts reporting a necessity for additional school accommodation is 63, or 27 per cent.

Of these 63 however 12 report schools to be either in course of erection or in contemplation; leaving 51 parishes in which a deficiency is reported, and means are not in operation to remove it.

Of these 51 parishes 15 are rural; 36 in towns or manufacturing places.

Three schools are also stated to be in course of erection in parishes where a deficiency is not reported.

To Enquiry II., 200 answers were given, and of these 140, or 70 per cent., report the attendance at the week-day school to be satisfactory; 60, or 30 per cent., report it to be unsatisfactory in a greater or less degree.

In answer to Enquiry III., 43 attribute unsatisfactory attendance to the indifference of parents (four of these adding "drunkenness" or "selfishness"); 21 (6 in agricultural, and 15 in manufacturing districts) attribute it to early employment, 16 to poverty, or depressed trade, and 11 to competition of other schools. Some few other causes are mentioned in individual cases.

The general result is that the hindrances to attendance at week-day schools stand, as represented in these returns, in the following order:—

1. Faults of parents.
2. Early employment.
3. Poverty.
4. Competition for scholars.

* * * * *

It is a matter of regret that the return could not be made complete for all the parishes in the archdeaconry; since in that case it would have been

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valuable as showing how far, in the opinion of the clergy, provision is made under the present voluntary system for the education of the children of the poor, in the important county of Stafford, which from the rapid growth of its population in certain centres, owing to the development of mines, may be considered one of the most likely to show a deficiency. But as the parishes which have not sent any answer to the enquiries are nearly equally divided between the classes "rural" and "manufacturing" (33 being of the former, and 31 of the latter) the *average* results may reasonably be considered to be those of the county generally.

It is the earnest hope of the Stafford Board of Education that this statement of the present condition of church education may stir up a hearty zeal to supply deficiencies, and to remedy defects, in those parishes where means of sound instruction are not yet provided.

JOHN G. LONSDALE, SAMUEL PLANT, } *Hon. Secretaries.*

January, 1869.

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200. NOTES of a MEETING held at RUGELEY on Feb. 12, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. R. M. Grier, vicar and rural dean.
D. H. Monckton, Esq., F.R.C.S.
Rev. J. Howard, curate.
Mr. J. C. Smith, farmer, Blithfield.

It was agreed that in this place there is no difficulty, as a rule, in keeping boys at school till 12 years of age, but in some peculiar cases exclusion from continuous labour up till 12 would be a great hardship—as to widows or to persons with large families.

There would, however, be some seasons of the year when children are employed very much younger at the potato-picking, and setting seasons, and at bird-minding.

Besides this, during the harvest very young boys are taken away to lead a team of horses to help their fathers, but not always for regular wages. These occasional employments of young children cause no physical injury, but do interfere materially with the progress of education. The improvement in their food caused even by the small earnings they may thus obtain, and still more by their being taken into regular service and boarded in the farmhouses, is a great advantage to them. Mr. Grier finds night schools to answer for a certain time, but that unless you can get specially good teachers the attendance falls off after a time.

Mr. Grier is of opinion that it is a small minority of families who do not send their children to school. In these cases it is not the earning wages, but the neglect of the parents, who let them stay at home in idleness. On the question of making school attendance, during (say) half the year a condition of employment up to 12 or 13, Mr. Smith says that he would rather be without the boys from four to six months of the year; that if the boys were to be required to attend school part of a day, or even part of a week, during busy seasons, they could not be available for agricultural purposes. Mr. Grier was of opinion that absence during half of the year would interfere seriously with education. Mr. Smith thought that an educational test would be a very great inducement to children to qualify for work under it.

It was stated that the present system of licensing beerhouses was one of the main obstacles in the way of education.

Women are not much employed. In Blithfield no unmarried women are employed, but married women go to harvest work, picking stones, &c. Probably ten or a dozen women only are employed at all regularly in this parish. No physical evil results from this, and the only objection is the withdrawal of children from school to look after the house in their absence. Women work upon the threshing machines in this neighbourhood, and although a good many accidents occur to men, no accident to women is remembered. The objection to any interference with such labour is the necessity of getting all the extra labour possible on threshing days.

The number of cottages on the farms round does not appear to be very inadequate to the labour required; but in quality great improvement is necessary. Some inspector, armed with compulsory powers, is wanted to remedy overcrowding. Defect of ventilation and outdoor nuisances are dealt with to a great extent already.

HANBURY.

Population - 1,027.

201. Notes of Meeting, February 25, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. J. R. Foot, vicar.
Mr. Geo. Hollis, agent to Duchy of Lancashire.
Mr. M. Hollis, farmer.
Mr. Blurton, farmer.
Mr. John Wood, Draycott, farmer.
Mr. Orme, Fauld, farmer.

It was agreed that—

Three-fourths of the parish is in pasture. Some of the holdings are small, and on these the occupiers do the main work themselves.

On almost every large farm a few women are employed, but very occasionally, and mostly in the spring and summer. Their wages are about 10*d.* a day, except at harvest.

Some lads go to regular work as ploughboys as early as 9 years of age, more generally about 10 or 11 years of age. The farmers present employ the following boys, viz.:—

(1.) 14, employed the last half-year only.
(2.) 11.
(3.) His own boys.
(4.) 14, but had been out in other service for some time before.

Mr. Foot thinks there is not much difficulty, except in the case of large families, in keeping boys till 11 years of age; the year following is a very uncertain time.

Besides employment by farmers, there are other things which keep children far more away from school, such as getting cowslips, blackberries, and acorns. This applies also to the girls, who leave about the same age as the boys, but are kept at home a good deal for nursing.

It is thought that it would cause no great inconvenience to farmers in this parish if boys were not allowed to go to continuous labour till 13 years of age, and that cases of hardship from this cause to the parents would be exceptional.

Wages are 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week in winter; some give 2*s.* 6*d.* a week extra during the summer, working several hours a day extra, some give piecework. Some give potatoe ground to regular men; this is sometimes given as a payment for milking, and sometimes food is given. It is not uncommon to give a man all his food in the house and 7*s.* in money. It was agreed that this was better for the men but worse for the family.

NEWBOROUGH.

Population - 788.

203. Notes of Meeting, February 25, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. T. Roper, vicar.
L. K. Hall, Esq., Hollybush Hall, landowner and magistrate.
Mr. Wakelin, schoolmaster.
Mr. Hall's bailiff.

It was agreed that,—

The parish contains a good deal of arable land. Farms are not more than 100 to 200 acres. Women are thought indispensable; they top and tail turnips, pick stones, and go with threshing machines; but work with steam machines is not thought safe. There

was a woman killed on one here a year or two ago. On one farm of 440 acres there are two women employed in winter and perhaps six in summer.

Boys of 9 or 10 are taken away from the school and go to regular work in the farm houses; before that age they are taken away for field work much less than they used to be, and are absent only a few weeks in the year, except in a good acorn year, such as 1868. It is thought that it would not be impossible to put off regular employment till 13 years of age, and to require before that an attendance of — days in the year. Some of the families live two or three miles from the school, but distance appears to Mr. Wakelin to lead to better attendance and punctuality.

ABBOT'S BROMLEY.

Population - 1,538.

203. *Rev. J. M. Lowe*, vicar.—Women in this place occasionally hoe turnips or weed, or go to threshing machines, especially upon the smaller farms. Girls are not employed separately or to any considerable extent. A girl is scarcely in her 'teens' before she is drafted off to the neighbouring country towns or to the manufacturing towns. I doubt whether one-quarter of the women work, and in my opinion the labour performed by them is not at all degrading, nor does it lead to neglect of the family, while any serious interference with it would cause great pecuniary hardship. Boys are employed at bird-minding, potato, chestnut, and acorn picking, and in harvest at a very early age, but they do not leave school for continuous work till between 10 and 11. From what I see of them afterwards, at confirmation, I am very much dissatisfied with the state of their education. They appear to me never to have been properly instructed with a view to their understanding what they learn. There are more cottages here than are now required for the supply of labour to the parish, and a good many men work in the neighbouring parish, some going as far as two miles to work. This does not appear to me to be prejudicial to their interest to any great extent. Wages have risen two or three shillings since I have known the parish, but not in proportion to the cost of provisions. The chief improvement has been in the dress of the labourer. Few of the labourers have a pig, and those who have one can seldom afford to eat it themselves. They very rarely can eat bacon, as it is selling at 11*d.* per lb. Their usual diet is tea and bread, rarely cheese. The poor here fall too much into the hands of travelling hucksters. Most of the men belong to clubs, which are here of the old-fashioned description, and are of very doubtful stability. I would suggest, as a means of raising generally the condition of the labouring classes, 1st, a generous increase in their wages; 2nd, that they be encouraged to make use of the Post Office Banks, and also to insure their lives by taking out Government policies, and when they shall thus be enabled to pay for the effectual education of their children, that then, and not before, they should be required, and if need be compelled, to send their children to school and to keep them there for a reasonable time. Landlords should be urged to improve the dwellings of their labouring tenants, but not without reasonable, that is moderate, additional rent for the outlay, the labourers being the servants, not of the landlord, but of the farmer. Properly constituted building societies might do much.

UTTOXETER.

205. Notes of Meeting, Feb. 24, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. H. Abud, vicar.
W. Sneyd Kynnersley, Esq.
Mr. J. Bakewell, farmer.
Mr. Bott, farmer.
The Schoolmaster.
The Schoolmistress.

The greater part of the parish being laid down in pasture, few women are employed. Mr. Bakewell has two, who work in spring and summer and sometimes in winter also.

Some of the labourers' wives are employed to milk morning and evening at about 6*d.* a day. Boys are taken for continuous work at 12 or 13. Mr. Bakewell has one of 11, who might go to school but will not. There are thought to be a good many families not sending their children, even though unemployed, to school. It would be no hardship to say that under 12 or 13 boys should not be regularly employed.

Ten per cent. of the boys at school are children of agricultural parents and 30 per cent. of cottage farmers. They leave on the average about 11. Before that age they are irregular, but it would not amount to four months in the year. Between 11 and 12 girls leave us for small places.

The night school here is the only one within eight miles. There are no farm servants attending it.

Younger boys are taken for occasional work. Some very young ones, even under 10, are allowed to ride horses by themselves in the roads.

The farmers employ a great many men who live in their houses or in lodgings, and in consequence the cottages are almost sufficient in winter.

Wages, 13*s.*; some men get 7*s.* and their meat. Irishmen have 10*s.* or 11*s.*, a bed, and supping.

STOWE AND GAYTON.

Population 1,516; acreage 6,559.

206. Notes of Meeting.

PRESENT, Feb. 23, 1869:

Rev. W. Hides, vicar.
Mr. J. Chirus, schoolmaster.
Mr. W. Woolley, guardian, Stone.
Mr. G. James, farmer. } Gayton.
Mr. J. Shaw, farmer. } Gayton.
Mr. Byrd, farmer. } Gayton.
Mr. Bamford, farmer. } Gayton.

It was agreed as follows,—

The cultivation is mixed.

Women are employed on the arable part during the greater part of the year, but they would not work half their time. They are generally married and are thought to keep their houses in better order than those who do not work. They get 10*d.* at day-work and 1*s.* at harvest or when they work longer hours. With most threshing machines there is a women or two. Only one or two accidents have been known to happen from this cause, and no more to women than to men.

The school is at Stowe for both parishes, with a dame's school at Gayton. As a rule boys leave about 12 years old, but are sometimes taken away at 7 or 8 for bird-tenting, &c., and between this and work for their parents are some of them absent for eight or nine months. Some families live three or four miles from school, but few do not send their children. Some are on the free list, but we find it best to send some of the half free. No physical harm is thought to result to lads from early work; on the contrary, their health is much improved by the better food they get. As a rule, they do not go to regular work before 11 years old; some who are unusually strong, or belong to a large family, begin sooner. Those present would rather employ a boy who is not a son of one of their own labourers. One of them employs a boy regularly of 10 years old, two employ boys of 11, one of 12, and the other farmer his own son. Before 10 or 11 they are wanted on the whole not for three months in the year. Most of the labourers live out of the house. Wages are 12*s.* Sometimes potato land is given rent free, sometimes beer is given, sometimes coal is drawn for a labourer, for extra time, when not at piecework, food is given. There are two and a half to three acres of allotments let in six or seven lots. A few men have land enough for a cow, but opinion is divided whether or not this interferes with their usefulness as agricultural labourers. Plough-ground was thought objectionable.

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FRADSWELL.

Population - 220.

207. Note of Meeting, February 22, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. T. Worthington, vicar.
Mr. Jos. Elsmore, farmer.
Mr. Jones, farmer.
Mr. Houldscroft, farmer.
Mr. Middleton, farmer.

Very little arable land. About five women are employed a good deal among the turnips, but it is hard to get them. Young boys work constantly at 12. Few men are employed, the farms being very small. Wages are 12*s.*; one man who comes three miles to work gets 8*s.* and his food. Rarely keep boys at school beyond 10 or 11. Before that age the parents constantly withdraw the children for work, especially where they own a cow. One of the farmers present has a dairymaid who has had three illegitimate children. The usual plan at night is to lock the outer door, but to leave the key in the lock.

WESTON-UPON-TRENT.

Population - 502.

208. *Rev. S. Plant*, rector.—The parish is not exclusively agricultural as there are saltworks. It contains 19 agricultural labourers, of whom 12 work in the parish. Seven women work occasionally in the fields knocking manure, or in the turnip lands; a few more go the hay harvest. I never saw one here with a threshing machine. No girls work. Two boys aged 13 and 14, are permanently employed in the parish; two others (over 14) live here and work elsewhere. There is no family of agricultural labourers (though there are some of men employed in the saltworks) with children fit to go that does not send them to school to some extent. The children that attend school most irregularly and are most neglected in this respect are those whose parents have a donkey or a cow. Boys leave school about 11 or 12 years of age; girls rather sooner to go to a girls' school.

SANDON.

Population - 590.

209. Letter form the Rev. W. E. Coldwell, vicar.

1. The system of letting land to labourers to enable them to keep a cow (or two), has been in use for, I suppose, upwards of 30 years in this parish on Lord Harrowby's estate, and so far as I can see is a very good thing for the labourer and his family, and by no means unfavourable to the employer. On the Sandon estate there are about 12 of these little holdings in the hands of labourers (some few are in the hands of tradesmen, blacksmiths, tailors, &c.). Of these, four are held by men who have been working on the same farm from 15 to 30 years, a perfectly good feeling existing between employers and employed. Three by men employed here and there, but in the parish. Two by widows assisted by sons or sons-in-law, who must otherwise have been dependent on the parish or on their children. One by an old man over 84 who worked on a farm as long as he was able.

I have found that these families have attended to the education of their children quite as much as those who are without land, and that their children have in many instances grown up in habits of self respect and thriftiness.

On the whole I value the system, because it seems to raise the labourer from the position of a mere drudge to one of some comfort, because it keeps the wife at home to look after the dairy, and because it is an incentive to thriftiness and good conduct among the labouring class, these little holdings being offered to men of good character who have saved a little money. I may add that in this parish, where the system has been so long tried, there has been a remarkable absence of crime and illegitimacy.

2. The effect of field work on the schools, generally speaking, is that it withdraws the boys entirely at about 13 years of age, and makes the attendance of some irregular at particular times. I do not think it shuts out any entirely from school, nor are girls employed.

(Signed) William E. Coldwell,
March 17, 1869. Vicar of Sandon.

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210. Extracts from Returns sent in by the Rev. F. J. Bolton, Vicar of Salt. (Population, 808).

Employed in agriculture in the parish, two boys between 8 and 10, and 11 between 10 and 13; six unmarried women over 18.

Boys should not be allowed to be employed under 10, or (better) under 12 years of age.

Women weed or assist at threshing machines or cutting turnips, &c. Going among turnips or corn crops when wet sometimes causes rheumatism of a severe kind. Two young men are without sufficient education; one can read a little, the other not at all.

Our cottages are of various sorts and sizes. Of course where the occupants are too numerous so as to have to consort together, especially in their bedrooms, without sufficient separation of age and sex, bad consequences must often follow. Still it is a difficult problem to solve. Suppose a general rule were made that no cottage should have less than three bedrooms, there would be cases in which such accommodation would be useless waste, *e.g.*, for an old married couple who had no children and did not like to be plagued with lodgers. Tenants vary so much. A young man and wife may begin and take a cottage with only one bedroom, sufficient at first; a family begins to appear and to increase, perhaps he cannot get another cottage in the neighbourhood, and his landlord refuses to enlarge it specially for him because he may leave next year, and an old man and woman may take the house. [I assume that on the whole there is sufficient cottage accommodation on the property.] Or a man and woman may have taken a more roomy house, and when no family is forthcoming they may wish to pay their rent by taking lodgers.

It is difficult to lay down precise rules about separation of sexes, &c. &c. for such lodgers. I should be truly glad to see some remedy devised for the evil, but it appears to me that this, like many other of our social and moral defects, must not look for its cure so much to legislation as to a gradual improvement in the tastes and feelings of the poor. Why has drunkenness become uncommon among the upper classes, and why would a gentleman and his sister shrink from occupying the same room? Let us only imbue the lower orders with something of the same feeling, and then they will take care not to live in houses where their delicacy is not consulted.

I cannot refrain from concluding what I have hastily scribbled with a little anecdote from my own parish. We have some cottages with only one bedroom. One of these, which is now tenanted decently enough, was occupied some five or six years ago by an old widow. A grown up son, unmarried, who had always lived with her took a wife and another cottage. Another son John then came, who was married, with his two youngest children; then a grown up daughter of his, who had been in service, came to be nursed in a decline; then another daughter who had lost her husband came, and brought her little child with her. Soon after all these had congregated I called one day at the house and saw John's wife's mother, who lived a great way off. I said, "Are you come to pay your daughter a visit?" "No sir, I am come to stay altogether if I can make "myself comfortable." I said, "I should think you "would not be comfortable with so many in the house." "O I don't mean that, sir, I mean if we can agree "together." I ought to say that this is an exceptional case here.

211. EXTRACT from a LETTER to Mr. E. Stanhope from Mr. Jno. Yates, farmer for 50 or 60 years near Stone, dated February 11, 1869.

"I will take the average weekly earnings of an able-bodied labourer at 13*s.* per week, with beer and occasional meals. This I consider a full average of wages in this part of the country, and quite as much as the farmers can afford to pay, especially after so disastrous a year as that we have just passed through. Now let us see how far this 13*s.* will go, provided the wife and children are debarred from earning anything:—

	s.	*d.*
Rent - -	2	0
Coals - -	1	6
Flour - -	6	6
	10	0

Which leaves 3*s.* a week for shoes, clothing, and all other necessaries. Now, if our charitably disposed ladies and gentlemen were to establish in agricultural villages infant schools, where children who are old enough to be taught reading, sewing, and knitting could be taken care of during the day, while their mothers were working on the farm, a great boon would be conferred on the labourer and his family, with many additional home comforts, which could not be obtained if the mother were compelled to remain at home with her hungry children. The stronger children might work on the farm, the best thing they possibly could do, both for health, strength, and morals. At the present time there is a great scarcity of strong young girls to assist in milking and other domestic work. Our mothers and grandmothers thought it no degradation to put their hands to such employment, but the education, falsely so called, of the present day produces a practically uneducated set of young women, with high notions, unfit either for farm servants, wives, or mothers. I am of opinion that interference in this matter by Parliament will be injurious to the farmers, and ruinous to the labourer and his family."

212. *The Rev. R. K. Haselhurst*, late vicar of Alrewas, writes in 1867 to Lord Lichfield:—

"In this parish 85 families are dependent on agricultural labour for support. Of these there are 26 unmarried males living, varying in age from 13 and upwards; 12 boys between 8 and 13, and for the most part at work, and one only under 8 years; 20 children under 8; and 18 between 8 and 13 are at school; of these last two only are above 11.

"The number of children between 8 and 13 neither at work nor school would exceed the number at school. Among these families there are a good many of indifferent character, from whom we shall never be free so long as we have so many cottages which no decent family will occupy. The home training of such children is so very bad that I sometimes (for the sake of the other children) feel reluctant to urge their attendance at school."

213. EVIDENCE as to the age at which children leave school in the under-mentioned parishes:—

ABBOTS BROMLEY.—10 or 11, boys.

HILDERSTON.—13. No employment for them, except at potato picking.

FRADSWELL.—10 or 11. Before that the interruption is constant, from the boys being withdrawn to work by their parents. Where parents have a cow they often keep it in the lanes, and their children from school to look after it.—[*Rev. T. Worthington.*]

MILWICH.—13. A little absence in summer, especially where the parents have a cow. Distance from school is a difficulty here.—[*Rev. S. Layng.*]

WESTON-ON-TRENT.—11 or 12.

STONE AND GAYTON.—12. Sometimes later. Many at 7 or 8 for bird-tenting, &c., and are sometimes absent eight or nine months. Distance is a difficulty.

UTTOXETER.—Boys, 11; girls, between 11 and 12

CHECKBY.—Boys, 11, maximum.

HANBURY.—Some boys at 9. More generally at 10 or 11.

GRATWICH AND KINGSTON.—"Boys, 11. Before that age they are very irregular, chiefly from the indifference of their parents."

214. EVIDENCE as to the cottage accommodation in the under-mentioned parishes:—

RUGELEY.

Meeting, February 12, 1869.—The number of cottages on the farms round is not very inadequate to the labour required, but in quality great improvement is necessary. In the country part of this parish there are many cottages, say 20 or 30, with one bedroom, some of them crowded. An inspector, armed with compulsory powers, is very much needed to remedy these evils, but defect of ventilation in bedrooms and out-door nuisances are to a great extent dealt with by the Nuisances Removal Committee.

The majority have gardens.

Rents 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

ABBOT'S BROMLEY.

Population - 1,538.

Rev. J. Lowe.—For the most part belong to small owners. A great many are owned by the occupiers, having been originally run up on the waste. They are mostly brick, but many are ill-planned and very bad. Some have one bedroom only. There are generally no gardens, but the labourers working on Lord Bagot's estate have allotments, and some are let by me also. Rents vary from 50*s.* to 5*l.* (with garden).

HILDERSTON.

Population - 448.

Brick. None with one bedroom; the second is, however, in half the cases a passage room. They partly belong to landowners, but are let with farms. All have gardens. Rent, 4*l.* to 6*l.*

FRADSWELL.

Population - 220.

Rev. T. Worthington.—Have been built upon the heath, and belong to small owners, they are therefore wretched. Only three or four belong to landowners. Three have no bedrooms at all, except the living room; nine others have one only, the rest have two. During Christmas especially they are overcrowded. All have gardens. Some have enough land for a cow.

MILWICH.

Population - 567.

Rev. S. Layng.—Mostly belong to landowners. Half a dozen are in a bad state, with one bedroom for a family. Not all have gardens, but there is one acre of allotments. Rents, 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*

WESTON-UPON-TRENT.

Population - 567.

Rev. S. Plant.—Some very bad, but two just built by Lord Harrowby with three bedrooms. Seven have one bedroom, four have two, and two have three bedrooms. All gardens or allotments, some both. I speak of cottages only that are now occupied by agricultural labourers. Rents very low, often 1*l.* to 2*l.*

GAYTON AND STOWE.

Population - 750?

Meeting, February 23, 1869.—"Two only let with "farms. Most belong to landowners. There are "many, perhaps half, with one bedroom, but improve- "ment is going on. There are none with three. "In Gayton nearly half have one bedroom only. To "one group of six cottages there is no pump, and

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" only one privy, erected by one of the occupiers. " They are condemned to be pulled down. All have " gardens, and there are two and a half to three " acres of allotments. Rents, 50*s.* to 4*l.*"

UTTOXETER.

Meeting, February 24, 1869.—" All thought to " have two bedrooms that are occupied by agricul- " tural labourers, but none have three. Almost all " have gardens. Rents, 4*l.* to 5*l.*"

CHECKLEY.

Population - 2,428.

The Vicar.—" Mostly belong to landowners, and " generally have two bedrooms. All have gardens. " Rent, 4*l.*"

NEWBOROUGH.

Population - 788.

Meeting, February 26, 1869.—" Mr. Hall has 52, " among which none have one bedroom only. Some " others belong to small owners and are worse. But " great improvement has lately taken place. All " have gardens. Rents, 3*l.* 3*s.* to 4*l.* 4*s.* Some men " living here work at a considerable distance off."

HANBURY.

Population - 1,027.

Meeting, February 26, 1869.—" Cottages belong " to many small owners, the largest landowner being " the Duchy of Lancaster, who own very few. " Many have one bedroom, nearly half those tenanted " by the poor. In many cases even these are not fit " for the purpose. Lodgers are taken in many cases. " Some houses, in Draycot particularly, have been " built by a building society, and are externally of " the most pleasing character. They, bad as they " are, mostly have two bedrooms. There are several " groups of cottages, with only one privy to each " group. Almost all have gardens. In Draycot " nearly one-half the poor have little bits of land; " the children of this class are the worst in point of " school attendance. Average rent, 4*l.*"

SALT.

Population - 808.

Our cottages have generally, dormitories, a kitchen (say 12 or 14 feet square), a parlour not so large, a small scullery, and a pantry, the last sometimes badly ventilated. The parlour is not always found. There are two or three bedrooms over, generally two, sometimes only one. Drainage often left to chance. No proportion is observed as to family. They generally have good gardens, not always a certain supply. The landowner lets most of them; in two or three cases the farmers sublet to their labourers, a bad plan. Rent, 4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.*

215. [For the following return I am indebted to the kindness of Captain Congreve, chief constable of the Staffordshire police.]

RETURN showing the NUMBER of AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' COTTAGES with one, two, and three bedrooms respectively, and the number of those containing but one bedroom occupied by families with three or more children, in each of the under-mentioned UNIONS in STAFFORDSHIRE.

Name of Union.	Parish or Township.	Number of Cottages. With three bedrooms.	With two bedrooms.	With one bedroom.	With one bedroom, occupied by families with three or more children.	Remarks.
Ashbourne (Staffordshire, part of).	Alstonefield	1	27	31	7	
	Blore	—	13	2	—	
	Ellastone	4	43	19	8	
	Ham	4	4	1	—	
	Mayfield	3	17	12	5	Except the township of Butterton.
	Okeover	1	1	—	—	
	Waterfall	—	6	4	—	
Cheadle	Alton	6	39	12	1	
	Bradley-in-the-Moors	—	2	1	—	
	Cauldon	—	5	2	2	
	Caverswall	—	28	9	4	Exclusive of the suburbs of Longton.
	Cheadle	3	10	3	2	Except the town.
	Checkley	9	62	6	1	
	Cheddleton	3	14	6	1	
	Cotton (Upper and Lower)	—	11	1	—	
	Denstone	—	10	4	—	
	Dilhorne	—	24	5	—	
	Draycott-in-the-Moors	2	15	8	3	
	Farley	—	3	1	—	
	Ipstones	Returns received were not satisfactory.				
	Kingsley					
	Forsbrook	—	13	1	1	Dilhorn parish.
	Baswich	1	34	13	5	
	Bradley	2	33	25	13	
	Chartley Holme	—	—	—	—	
	Colwich	7	78	23	5	
	Creswell	4	—	—	—	
	Ellenhall	2	16	2	—	
	Fradswell	—	5	7	2	
	Gayton	1	13	1	—	
	Haughton	1	27	22	18	

Name of Union.	Parish or Township.	Number of Cottages. With three bedrooms.	With two bedrooms.	With one bedroom.	With one bedroom, occupied by families with three or more children.	Remarks.
Stafford	Hopton and Coton	2	26	8	3	
	Ingestre	3	5	—	—	
	Marston	4	6	1	—	
	Ranton	1	23	5	—	
	Salt and Enson	1	29	7	1	
	Seighford	4	42	29	10	
	Stowe	4	56	23	5	
	Tillington	—	3	—	—	
	Tixall	4	21	2	1	
	Weston-on-Trent	1	7	6	3	
	Whitgreave	—	8	4	—	
	Yarlet	—	3	—	—	
Stone	Barlaston	2	25	1	—	
	Chebsey	4	18	14	6	
	Cold Norton	3	2	—	—	
	Eccleshall	18	165	105	35	Except the town.
	Milwich	5	11	11	7	
	Sandon	9	39	3	—	
	Standon	8	8	5	1	
	Stone	26	159	44	19	Except the town.
	Swinnerton	6	38	19	8	
	Trentham	6	51	10	1	
Uttoxeter (Staffordshire, part of).	Abbots Bromley	12	82	25	12	
	Blithfield	6	22	5	1	
	Bramshall	—	3	4	1	
	Croxden	2	2	—	—	
	Draycott-in-the-Clay	4	23	5	4	
	Gratwich	—	9	1	—	
	Kingstone	1	3	5	2	
	Leigh	6	35	13	1	
	Marchington	1	10	5	3	
	Marchington Woodlands	3	5	3	2	
	Newborough	10	52	5	7	
	Rocester	2	8	5	—	
	Uttoxeter	1	18	2	1	Except the town.
	Total in 63 Parishes	213	1,572	596	212	

SUSSEX.—EVIDENCE.

PIERCELANDS, near WEST HOATHLY.

216. In April 1869 (in accordance with the instructions of the Commissioners) I visited the estate of Piercelands, near West Hoathly, Sussex, the property of John Dudgeon, Esq., and now occupied by his son.

The actual farm, exclusive of woodland, comprises 550 acres. The soil is sandy, but sticky, unfit for turnip culture, and best adapted for pasture.

Five years ago, in 1864, Mr. Dudgeon, having previously lived in Roxburghshire, came to reside here, and brought with him, as his principal labourers, some Scotchmen previously employed by him in Scotland, with their families.

For their accommodation he erected a row of five cottages on the Scotch model, which were visited by me. They are all on one floor, and comprise a kitchen with a place for a bed in it, two bedrooms, one of which contained a fire-place (and is used in one case as a parlour), a pantry, and a dairy. The rooms were small. The fifth cottage, containing the bailiff, was larger.

Two of the women occupying these cottages explained to me that the chief advantage of being thus all on one floor was that the children could be watched with less inconvenience to the mother, while the bailiff considered it to be the warmth of the room at night.

Each cottage had a garden about 22 yards by 11 (under one-eighth of an acre).

The first cottage contained a man, till recently a ploughman, now employed in the garden, with his wife and six children. The three eldest were attending school. The eldest (11) was to go to school two more winters, but was expected to get work this summer. The school is two miles off. After that his father intended "to give him a copy" at home.

The family had a bed in the kitchen, and used one bedroom as a parlour. They had a cow and one pig; sometimes two pigs in the year.

In this, as well as the other cottages, was a small library of books.

When Mr. Dudgeon came to the farm there was only one cottage upon it. He considers the seven now upon it, or very near it, to be sufficient for the ordinary labour of the farm. Extra men, as all the men had formerly to do, walk about two miles from West Hoathly.

On the old system the men could not be at work with the horses at 7, and left off at 5, so that there

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was not only a loss of the men's labour, but of the horses' labour, which Mr. Dudgeon calculated would amount on a farm of 400 acres to the value of one team in the year.

The hours of work observed by the Scotch labourers, both men and women, are from 6 to 11, and from 1 to 6.

The wages paid to the plough and herd men differ from those paid in Scotland, because of the different circumstances in which they are placed. Here no payments are made in barley or oatmeal. The hiring is by yearly agreement; the money wage 24*l.*, payable half-yearly, though advances are made if asked for. Besides this there are allowances, estimated by Mr. Dudgeon at 16*l.* a year, making 40*l.*, or 15*s.* a week.

These include the keep of a cow, valued at 6*l.*, but worth on the average fully 12*l.*; a cottage rent free, valued at 2*l.*; potato ground (about one-third of an acre, that is, one row 1,600 yards long) valued at 4*l.*; and the cartage of coal and wood.

All, except the man with six children, are saving money. They put by for a rainy day, but do not belong to clubs. They send their money to Scotland for investment.

The cow is provided by themselves; if they were provided by the master there might be complaints of the quality of the cow. Nor do the labourers look after them themselves, because it might lead to pilfering. They are looked after by the regular farm herdsman, but some of the labourers buy oil cake or other extra food for their cow.

This is looked upon by Mr. Dudgeon as the great advantage of his system. It provides milk and cheese for the family, besides being a large source of profit.

The foreman, who said he had a specially good cow in 1866, showed me an account he had kept of the profit it was to him, independently of the milk and cheese he obtained for his own use. He sold the calf for 50*s.*, and the sum received for butter sold in the year 1866 (in all 295 lbs.) was 17*l.* 7*s.* 10½*d.*, the only deduction from which was the cost of 4 cwt. of cake (2*l.* 10*s.*) which he bought for his cow. He estimated his ordinary annual profit at 12*l.*

The Scotch people told me that their diet had been somewhat changed since their removal to Sussex. The difficulty of being unable to procure oatmeal was got over by sending for it to Scotland, and with the abundant supply of milk, which their cow could provide, a good wholesome meal was easily obtained for the children, but which did not appear to be much eaten by the grown-up people. Their usual beverage is tea. Before going out to work at 6 a.m. they appeared to eat bread and a little cheese or butter, putting some in their pockets for lunch; at 11 or 12 some bacon, or sometimes butchers' meat; and after work a lighter meal, with a little bacon, bread, and tea. At harvest food and beer is found, according to the Scotch system, by Mr. Dudgeon.

While looking at the cottages the workers came home to their dinner. Two of them were women, dressed as in Scotland, in short petticoats and a sort of trousers. This they had maintained since coming to England, in spite of some ridicule. One of them was sister to the shepherd, and worked with him among the sheep. Lately, she told me, she had not been to bed before 12 at night, as it was lambing time. The other did general work. In one of the cottages was a woman who had worked here regularly, but had given it up on marrying.

This Mr. Dudgeon represents to be the common system of Roxburghshire, and to be the one which he prefers. He sees no objection to young women working in the fields, so long as *they live in cottages on the farm*, and so are sure to know each other. It may be otherwise where they come from a distance, and there is some objection to "barn" work in winter, where they have more opportunities for evil.

That after having being so employed they make good wives in respect of doing the household work is thought by Mr. Dudgeon to be capable of explanation on account of the simplicity of the cooking operation which they have to perform. As to the management of a dairy, which is more complicated, they are brought up in houses where a cow is kept, and cannot help learning something of it. The tendency of the English plan of forcing all such girls out to service is to raise up a class of women hardly fit to make good wives for labouring men.

The two points in the Scotch system which Mr. Dudgeon thinks might with advantage be extended to England are, the building of all cottages upon, or quite close to, the farms on which they work, and the giving them the keep of a cow. It is a very different thing from giving an allotment of land sufficient to keep a cow on, and he characterizes it as a means of benefiting the labourer, without any real expense to his employer.

Mr. Dudgeon remarked also upon the state of intelligence among the agricultural population in his neighbourhood as contrasted with that in Scotland. He expressed his belief that the boys are no less well taught in Sussex, but did not seem to care for knowledge, and forgot it in a surprisingly short time. Of course this was chiefly owing to the negligence and ignorance of their parents, but also to the want of any books, &c. in the cottages; and in this respect he advocated the advantage of the Scotch system of requiring the parents of children to pay for their school books, which enabled them to have books for use at home, and parents having paid for the books would be more likely to take care that the children made use of them.

Rutland.

RUTLAND.—EVIDENCE.

217. *Mr. R. F. Mitchell*, chief constable, and *Mr. Swift*, relieving officer of the Oakham Union.—The number of women employed, except at haytime and harvest, is very small. A few more work in the east of the county where there is less grass land, but as a rule there are very few regular workers. Boys would be taken regularly to work at about 10 years of age, where the parents are of the poor labouring class. They are put to drive horses with the plough, &c. Many fewer boys are taken into the farmhouses than there used to be; they are now for the most part day-boys.

In two or three cases, from Ryhall and Empingham gangs of women and children go to work at some distance from their homes. Mr. Mitchell caused notice to be given them after the passing of the Gangs Act, and they are now hired directly by the farmers. In the case of Empingham the gang consisted this year of 19, namely, six girls, aged 16, 14, 12, 11, 10, and 9; and 13 boys, two of whom were 7, three were 8, three were 9, four were 10, and one was 12. The distance to their work in the case of one gang was four miles, starting at 6 a.m. They are for the most part employed during April and May for weeding and "twitching."

There used formerly to be complaints of men having to go some distance to work, but this is gradually being remedied. The wages vary from 12*s.* to 13*s.*

Decent labourers' cottages are very much wanted. In the old ones there is seldom more than one bedroom; many of them having been built by the ancestors of the present occupiers. The average rent in

the village for good two-bedroomed cottages cannot be less than from 5*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* They are in very few instances let with the farms, unless they are actually built upon them.

Some power should be given to some official to see them properly cleaned and inspected; as it is, some of the tramps' lodging houses are, Mr. Mitchell thinks, cleaner than many of the labourers' cottages.

In the country villages there are not many cottages without gardens, and many of them have allotments. Some at Hambleton, Burley, &c., have land enough to keep a cow. Mr. Finch, who owns some of these plots, does not any longer approve the system. But it is thought to make them more respectable labourers, and to enable them to get their children off better, and give an improved education. In these parishes there is very little pauperism. Mr. Mitchell remembers the allotments being started 40 years ago. He is sure that they and the prizes given for their proper cultivation have much improved the condition of the labourers wherever they have been introduced.

Some farmers will not allow their men to keep pigs. Others feed them themselves, and sell them to their men below market price.

Mr. Swift thinks that many of the young married men are not going into benefit clubs. The tendency is rather in that direction. The old clubs are gradually giving way before the Foresters and Odd Fellows.

The best conducted villages are those where there are no public-houses, and no temptation to drink.

218. *Mr. Wortley,* farmer, Ridlington.—I occupy from 500 to 600 acres, and board no men or boys in the house. I find it saves a great deal of trouble. Neither I nor my neighbours employ women, except at haymaking. Sometimes, but rarely, they go to the thrashing machines, but it is only the common sort of women who will do this. For my own part, out of 600*l.* paid in labour I only pay 3*l.* to women. Boys come to us at 8 or 9 for occasional work, and at 10 or 11 they would be kept regularly on. I think 10 years quite old enough for them to be kept at school. Before that I could always spare them in the winter.

The regular wages for my day labourers are 13*s.*, 1*s.* of which is paid instead of beer. Many give 12*s.* and a quart of beer a day. The cottages at Ridlington are insufficient in number. In all the villages about they may be said to be deficient in size and in ventilation. In may cases large families are huddled together. We have allotments which are full large in size. We look over them each year, and award prizes for the best cultivated. They pay 2*l.* 2*s.* a year for them. They are all cultivated by the spade. I think them most valuable, and to have no tendency to draw men from regular work. I say the same of keeping a cow, which eight men in my village do, renting a piece of land jointly. They can save a great deal of money by it. Some say that it leads to pilfering. I never found this, any more than I do in the case of a pig. I have only one labourer who does not keep one, and I give them every encouragement to do so. Providence is on the increase, but it does not lead to the men joining any sounder benefit clubs than they used to do.

219. *Rev. S. Davidson,* vicar of Hambleton and Braunston.—In this district at least one-fifth of the land is arable. In Hambleton there is a little deficiency of labour, some cottages having been lately taken down. In Braunston there is none, but it is a much poorer parish; the land is older and poorer, and the farmers smaller. In the former the cottages belong mostly to two proprietors; in Braunston the property is more divided. In one part of the parish some six or eight cottages are very indifferent indeed. As a rule, they have improved, and are not generally crowded. There are some, but not many, with one bedroom, and in a tumble-down state. Rents from 25*s.* to 40*s.* Most have gardens, and in Hambleton there are allotments. A number of men also have land enough to keep a cow. The late Lord Aveland disapproved the system, so does Mr. Finch. It is doubtful whether these men work regularly for the farmer.

Women are very little employed, except in harvest and haymaking.

Boys keep birds as soon as they can possibly go, and leave school on the average between 10 and 11; many leave even before 10. Girls leave almost as soon as the boys, because of the knitting, but they do not seem to value education very much. The payment of school pence is sometimes a hindrance.

There is a good deal of drinking, but not much drunkenness; even among the respectable, they can never meet or do any business without it.

220. Out of 24 parishes and townships in the Oakham Union, 10 have schools under a master, eight under a mistress, and six very small ones have no schools.

At Oakham National school boys were said to leave altogether under 11 years of age, and from 9 to be away fully half their time. In the case of the girls knitting takes them away even more.

In the night school there were four boys under 12 of the labouring class, who began regular work at 9½, 10, 10, and 10½ respectively.

In the case of 17 other boys of this class the average time that they had been at a day school was five years, the average age at which they left was about 11. Only two had left under 10 years of age.

MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE.

(*a.*) Half-time and industrial schools.

[In addition to Rostherne (Nos. 152-3), Bradwall (No. 154), Oulton (No. 148), and Middle (No. 183), the following instances occur in my district.—E.S.]

QUATT.

221. [On Tuesday, February 9, I visited this *district industrial school* in company with two of its managers, the Rev. F. H. W. Whitmore and Mr. F. W. W. Browne. From the information received I have compiled the following account:—

The district school was first opened for the children of the Bridgenorth Union in 1836; extended in 1849-50 and 1862 for the children of other unions in South Shropshire and elsewhere.

It is managed by a committee of magistrates, landowners, and tenant farmers, which acts independently of the boards of guardians.

Mr. Roach, who is responsible for the whole working of the institution, has been head-master since 1859.

The average number of children during the last few years has been 170, of whom there are from 10 to 15 more girls than boys.

Lessons are given from 9 to 12, and in the winter in the evenings sometimes. The younger children only are taught in the afternoons.

Boys younger than 9 are occasionally put to light work, such as fetching and carrying; but the regular industrial training for boys begins about 9 years of age, They are then put to all the work necessary to cultivate a farm of 10 acres arable, and (nearly) two pasture, under the superintendence of one special teacher in this department. Spade husbandry only is allowed. The hours of work are from 6 till 7.40 (in summer), from 12 till 12.40, and from 2 till 5. The boys take their turns in looking after the stable, and cows, and pigs. These boys rise earlier than the others, viz., at 5 in the summer, and 5.30 in

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the winter. All over 9 are bound to go through this course.

They leave from 13 to 15, the former being the earliest age. Very few are taken away by farmers and put to agricultural work. During the last four or five years four or five have been sent to this employment, but the demand for them for other sorts of service and for various trades is very great indeed. As a rule, when they leave this school they would write and spell correctly, have a good scriptural knowledge, and have reached about the rule of three in arithmetic. They are thought to be as well taught as in any National school. Some do not go through the whole of this course because they are claimed by their parents and friends.

Girls begin industrial work about the same age (9). They do the household work, washing and ironing, cooking, baking, and dairy work. Three assistants teach these subjects. The girls take it in turns to learn each subject. For this purpose they are divided into classes, and are allowed in turns to be absent from school work in the mornings. They do all the mending, &c. in the house. They leave also about the same age as the boys. Very few of them go to farm houses, most of them to tradesmen.

They are fit to be the only servant in a house where the mistress superintends everything herself, but they are not kept long enough to be thoroughly efficient servants.

It may be said generally that the boys almost invariably turn out well; it is not so universally so in the case of the girls.

Excluding the cost of labour on the farm the receipts for last year were 236*l.* as against an expense of 165*l.*, showing a profit on nearly 12 acres of 70*l.* towards paying the expense of the keep of the 30 boys. Moule's earth closets are adopted here, and result in the supply of good manure to the farm. —E. S.]

Extracts from the General Report for 1857 of the Rev. J. P. Norris, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools (p. 422).

222. At *Tarporley* (Cheshire) the managers allow each boy or girl above a certain age to be absent two days in the week, provided that the time is spent in industrial work. The boys for the most part are employed to this extent in the school garden, and occasionally by neighbouring employers; the girls in washing, cleaning, or nursing at home. A most accurate register is kept of the time so employed.

Mr. Statham, the rector, writes to me:—

"In adapting the short-time attendance to the Tarporley school the managers were desirous of adhering to their original rule, which requires that every child should actually be in school at the rate of not less than three days a week throughout the quarter, it being supposed that allowance would thus be afforded for prolonged absence under particular circumstances, provided the lost time should be subsequently made up. We are all satisfied that the plan works well, that the whole time is fairly, and for the most part honestly, accounted for; that the children are beginning to understand that time is a 'talent' granted for their use, and not to be abused. The very business connected with the system imparts to the children some notion of individuality, while the combination of instruction and industry strengthens the schools connexion, and is likely to retain the children somewhat longer under our charge. Allow me to add that the industrial department is extremely popular with the boys.

"At Ellesmere, in Shropshire, the school is small, and only three of the boys are at present old enough for the half-time scheme. They work three hours a day on some ground belonging to the vicar. I am glad to learn that, with the promised co-operation of a neighbouring agriculturist, the class is to be increased to 12 in the ensuing year."

Mr. Day, the vicar of Ellesmere, writes to me:—

"Ellesmere Vicarage,
"21st December 1857.

"I am sorry that I have been obliged to delay till to-day sending you a short account of the working of my very small agricultural class. I have kept it going for two years, but with only three boys and a superintendent, and the result of this last year's profit and loss I enclose you a summary of. There cannot be a doubt abaut the good effect which the system has upon the boys who work in this class. They progress in school nearly, if not quite, as well as though they had no loss of school time (for which paradox many good reasons may be given). Then, again, from continuing under supervision they become more humanised and better mannered, and certainly would present a strong contrast to the clownish dolts of their own age who present themselves for hiring each Christmas time. Indeed, I believe this two years' additional education lifts them over the dangerous part of their lives, and gives them not only a moral superiority over other lads who have not had the same advantage, but also makes them much more generally useful as servants when they leave. The parents, too, like the system, and I have no doubt the good which the lads receive from continual schooling and supervision is to some extent of good influence at home.

"The difficulty about these classes is to make them pay. You will perceive that in any instance the loss must be considerable, for there is no account at all of the supervisor's stipend. Now every class, however small, requires an overlooker, and I find I cannot manage this at a less cost than 12*s.* a week, about four times the amount of balance (to profit) in the account I have sent you; but then the same overlooker could as easily take charge of 12 or 16 as three, and if the plan were enlarged to this extent I have no doubt the balance would be satisfactory."

The Teddesley farm school was continued with the best results during last summer. I visited it several times, and was glad to bear testimony on all hands borne to the improved behaviour and quickened intelligence of the boys. The class numbers from 26 to 30 boys from 11 to 15 years of age.

They receive instruction from 6 to 8 o'clock each morning in a spare room in the farmyard. Lord Hatherton tells me that he sees only one serious objection to the plan, and that is, the difficulty of dispensing with the boys' services first when the men need them most, when they are driving the teams afield. If this difficulty could be met (and I think it may), the plan would answer as well commercially as it does educationally, for the boys' increased steadiness and diligence in the field more than compensate for the curtailment of their hours of labour.*

The following letter from the rector of a country parish is instructive, as showing some of the minor difficulties that hinder the adoption of the half-time scheme:—

"I fear I cannot help you much about half-time schemes. I have made the attempt, but without permanent success. Perhaps I had better give a history of the matter:—In the autumn, Lord ——, having taken into his own hands one of the largest of the farms and committed it to the management of one of his tenants, whose farm was also large, it seemed to me that it would be a good opportunity to try what could be done to further a half-time scheme. I said to myself, 'Here is a farmer, one of our school managers, who has the supervision of nearly 900

* A similar attempt was made in 1865 by the Miss Tollets, at Bettey. Mr. Thomas Lees (farmer), who wrote to me about it, described it as most useful to him as a farmer. Twelve boys worked on alternate days on his farm, when they were wanted. —E. S.

acres, surely, therefore, he can find regular work for a class of boys.' So I went to him, and he at once agreed to try. Our master talked the thing over to the boys, and I quite hoped the thing would have been managed; but, first of all, the farmer was not ready for the boys; then, the biggest of the boys got employment elsewhere; and then, when the farmer said he was ready for the boys, some of them were elsewhere, and some of them did not like the walk (for the two farms in question are at least two miles from the school); and thus, the thing fell through. I am sure that the great difficulty will be with the farmers. As a class, they seldom look forward, and if only they can get boys when they want them, they care not whether they are of an age when they ought to be at school. Besides, so much depends on the weather and the work to be done. At one time of the year, for a few weeks, a farmer can do with many boys; at another, he wants none. If you will engage to send him the boys, and thus save him all trouble, you will succeed. By degrees, perhaps, more may be done. As the class of farmers improves and see the advantage of education to their labourers, you will have a better chance. * * * Besides, there is another difficulty to be surmounted, you cannot work your half-timers in school with your whole-timers, and therefore, you must have a distinct class of half-timers, which would be almost impossible, unless you had at least 20 lads under this system, 10 being always at school. I quite agree with you that the half-time plan *ought* to answer; and it would answer if all would try; but there's the rub. However, don't suppose that I am desponding."

I have given this letter at length because it states very fairly what has happened in many rural parishes where the thing has been attempted without success. There are some other minor difficulties which I have learned from conversations which I have had with practical men on the subject. For instance, one farmer, who was well disposed to try the scheme, stipulated that he should have the boys alternate weeks instead of alternate days. His reason was that it was the custom for the men under whom the boys worked to give them their directions overnight for the ensuing day, and this, of course, could not be done with daily relay. In another conversation I discovered a second reason for preferring alternate weeks to alternate days or half-days: a labouring boy's linen is changed once in the week, and his shoes are cleaned once in the week. After being in the field all Monday, his clothes are thoroughly soiled, and would be unfit for school on Tuesday. If he is to go to school alternate days, he must have his two suits in constant use, and the washing arrangement would be a great difficulty, whereas if he were to go one week to school and another week to work the weekly cleaning of clothes might go on as usual. Another expression has been used which I can well understand, "If a lad came "alternate days, he would never get his hand in." Hints of this sort seem to me particularly instructive, showing how essential it is that in each case where the experiment is tried there should be some one man arranging and directing it who thoroughly understands the agricultural system of that neighbourhood. The secret of the success which has attended the scheme at Acton is that the schoolmaster himself has a practical knowledge of farming matters. The cause of failure in many instances has been that neither schoolmaster nor clergyman was really conversant with the requirements of farm-work; and this leads me to the suggestions which I have to offer to those who wish to try the experiment. We have seen that it is vain to expect the farmers to begin the thing. We have seen that if it is begun, and shown to answer by any one employer of the neighbourhood, they will by degrees take it up. We have seen, too, that the boys must have some previous training in the use of their tools. And we have seen, lastly, that it is essential that the director of the scheme should be practically conversant with farming matters.

Now, unless our mode of training schoolmasters for country places be much altered there is little chance of the principal teacher being able to undertake the thing himself, as is done at Acton; and even if he were competent to do so, the demand on his time would be very great. I would propose, therefore, that in a country school large enough to make it worth while to form a half-time class, a steady skilled labourer should be engaged as agricultural superintendent. A garden of half an acre should be given him, and he should have command of the labour of all the boys above 10 years of age during three hours of each day, provided that he could gain their parents' consent. To the parents he might hold out two sorts of inducements: first, an occasional bonus to the boy out of the proceeds of the garden; and, second, the prospect of being admitted into the field class after a year's training in the garden. This field-class should consist of the most able-bodied of the half-timers, being at least 11 years old, and having, therefore, had a year's training in the garden. Having formed this class he should farm their labour, I mean that he should guarantee them regular wages, say 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, letting out their services to the neighbouring employers whenever he could at the best terms he could make, and in slack times when they were not wanted in the field employing them himself in garden-work, making nets, carpentering, or the like. It must, of course, be stipulated that the boys shall attend the school half-time (alternate weeks, or days, or half-days), and that the school managers shall have a veto on any part of his arrangements of which they may disapprove.

223. At Stokesay (Salop) the *Rev. J. G. La Touche*, vicar, says, "Up to April last there was an industrial "element attached to the school here. Cooking was "taught by a woman who was paid 3*l.* a year. The "whole expense of the system including this was 8*l.* "a year; this was paid by collection made in the "parish."

"It was taught in the afternoons for two hours "twice a week. Girls from 8 to 12 were selected for "it, and taken two at a time into the kitchen. It did "not interfere with the teaching of needle-work, for "which there was another mistress. They made "little pies, broth, puddings, &c., which were dis-"tributed among the poor; it was all done with the "common apparatus of a cottage kitchen. They "were required to keep accurate accounts of this, "weighing out the provisions, &c. Another im-"portant point is that they should do it intelligently, "understanding the reason for what they do, and on "this point I used to examine them myself; this "would help them to retain the knowledge in after-"life.

"The parents, far from objecting, liked the system "very much, and said their children became very "useful to them at home."

"On the whole I considered it productive of very "great good, and I intend to resume when I can. "The only reason for its being in abeyance was the "unwillingness of the master to let the cooking go "on in his kitchen.

"We hardly taught any washing, &c. in it. Besides "this, there is a workshop attached to the school "where I teach some of the boys a little carpentering, "bookbinding, &c. I don't think it ever made them "fit for those trades, but they liked it, and the chief "advantage has been the bringing them into intimate "relations with myself.

The following shows the way in which the girls have to keep the accounts:—

1863. A. Price, E. Corns,—

Two rice puddings.	*d.*
4 ounces of rice at 3*d.* per lb.	¾
2 ounces of sugar at 4*d.* per lb.	½
2 eggs	1½
1 pint of milk	¼
Total	3

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Mrs. Butcher, Mrs. Banks,—
Three quarts of broth.

	d.
1 lb. of mutton at $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb.	$7\frac{1}{2}$
1 ounce of oatmeal	$\frac{1}{4}$
Onions, pepper, and salt	$\frac{1}{4}$
Total	8

Mrs. Butcher, Mrs. Banks, Mrs. Webster,—
Mutton pie.

	d.
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. mutton at $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb.	$3\frac{3}{4}$
Lard	$\frac{1}{4}$
Potatoes and flour	$\frac{1}{2}$
Onions, pepper, and salt	$\frac{1}{4}$
Total	$4\frac{3}{4}$

224. Of this school Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools says (Rep. 1867, p. 127), "The great aim of "the instruction is to practise girls in the most "economical way of preparing food with the aid of "such apparatus only as is to be found in every "family furnished cottage. * * I think that such "a system would be very widely adopted if it were "generally known with how little fuss, how little "expense, and with what success it may be carried "out."

Sandbach Industrial School.

[For the following information I am indebted to the Rev. S. H. Armitstead, vicar of Sandbach Heath, E. S.]

225. A certain number of girls are appointed each week to do the washing connected with the church and the master and mistress's house, and also on three days a week the same girls cook by means of a gas stove meat dinners for all the sick of a parish; both are carried on under the supervision of the regular mistress. The funds for carrying on the kitchen are supplied from a distinct source. In 1865-6 there was derived from the offertory 29*l.* 6*s.*, from donation and subscriptions 22*l.*, and from guardians 2*l.* The meaning of the latter item is that the medical officer of the union instead of ordering the pauper so many lbs. of uncooked meat, &c., puts the patient down at the school for so many dinners, &c.; the account for such dinners is sent in quarterly to the guardians, who pay cost price for the same to the schools. This is found to work so well that the amount received annually from the guardians for food as supplied is now very considerably more than the enclosed sheet.

225*a*. In the parish of Astbury, near Congleton, the Rev. E. Clayton, rector, says, "There is a laundry "attached to the school in which about eight of the "elder girls were instructed in laundry work; in "former years this was found to be of much use, but "for the last few years very few girls have taken "advantage of it, as we do not make it compulsory "on any to attend."

226. *Mr. Diggens*, schoolmaster, Tunbridge Wells, gives the following arrangements as essential to the success of industrial training in a school:—

(1.) A fair market for the produce by selling perhaps to the children themselves at cost price, or to invalids.

(2.) The employment of a woman who is a good plain cook.

(3.) Giving the girls a material interest in the work in the form of a substantial dinner as its result.

(4.) Allowing each girl a suitable dress and apron.

Co-operative Store.

The following which relates to the co-operative store at Whitchurch (Dorset) is due to S. C. Mansel, Esq., Longthorns, near Blandford.

227. At Whitchurch we have established the Pioneer Co-operate Society, which has now been in existence more than two years and a half, and is apparently very prosperous. The shares (10*s.* each) are held by working men for the most part. After payment of expenses and interest, quarter of the balance is put to the same fund, and the rest is divided among the shareholders by means of a per-centage on their purchases. If they like to leave their dividend in the concern they can do so, and so gradually hold more shares. The business is confined to "grocery and drapery." No doubt a great deal of the success of such an institution depends on the man who can be got to manage it. Here we have one who devotes a great deal of time and attention, and is proud of the plan.

The dividend on purchases during the present quarter is 1*s.* $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound; last quarter it was 2*s.*

[Among the shareholders I found 15 or 16 of the lower class of labourers, one holding eight shares, two held seven, two five, and one four shares. One man, described as one of the poorest men in the parish, because he had a family of girls, only one of whom was old enough to earn anything, held one share of 10*s.* During his two years and three months he had received as dividend on his purchases 2*l.* 4*s.* $9\frac{1}{2}d.$ During the past quarter he has spent 4*l.* 10*s.* in the store, and receives $\frac{1}{2}d.$ a month on his share, and a dividend of 1*s.* $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound on his purchases, or 7*s.* $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ This would not include all his purchases, because he can only buy at the co-operative when he has ready money to pay with. E.S.]

At Milton Abbey the Rev. R. Roberts says:—"We "have a co-operative store, started in February last. "The shares are held by labouring men; but here "we could never get on without credit, and so I am "not inclined to back up the store, because the small "shopkeepers, who still have to give credit in winter, "lose the benefit of the summer earnings."

Friendly Societies.

228. Extracts from a Pamphlet entitled "Friendly "Societies *versus* Beerhouse Clubs," by the Rev. J. Y. Stratton, Rector of Ditton, Kent.

A few words will suffice to describe the common construction of the friendly society. It is an institution intended to provide support for its members during sickness and old age, together with a sum at death. These benefits, as they are called, are secured by periodical contributions, which are in some societies uniform, in others are graduated according to age. An entrance fee is not uncommonly charged, and the benefit of medical attendance is frequently added to the foregoing, for which an additional charge is made. It will thus be seen that the friendly society is that kind of insurance best adapted to the requirements of the "wage-paid" class. To them, provision during sickness becomes of the first importance; next in their estimation is the burial money. It is a common and excellent practice to secure the double benefit of sickness and burial money by one insurance. For instance, A, aged 20, insures for 12*s.* a week during sickness, together with 10*l.* at death, for which he pays, sick or well, eighteen pence a month. Provision for old age we will not say is as yet unknown, but it is extremely rare among those who live by manual labour. One reason among several for their indifference to this benefit deserves notice. Although many societies offer it, prudent men distrust their ability to make the offer good. They apprehend that, long before the time arrives when their old age pay should begin, the society will be broken up, and its funds dispersed. In the face of the constant and prevalent mortality of these societies, the apprehension is by no means groundless.

Another class of insurance offered by the friendly society, which only requires to be better known among artisans and mechanics to become as popular as it deserves to be, is that called "endowments," by which the insurer may secure, either for himself or for his nominee, a sum not exceeding 200*l.*, which is

payable at the end of a term of years, as agreed, usually not less than seven, or exceeding 20.

By means of this excellent and easily managed class of insurance the apprentice fee for the boy, or the portion for the maiden when the time comes, is obtainable, and that by a better investment than the savings' bank affords. For in the latter case the depositor can easily withdraw his savings, and a slight pressure will often induce him to do so; but an "endowed member" of a society cannot thus readily dissipate his savings. He must prove his inability to continue payments, or show cause why the society should return his deposits. We may add that no persons appear to be better pleased, when they come to receive their money at the expiration of the term, than those who, but for the wholesome stringency of the rules of the society, would have withdrawn their deposits from its custody under some transient pressure. Further, as endowments are calculated at 3 per cent. interest, they have an advantage over the great majority of savings' banks, which seldom pay so much, and over the Post Office banks, which do not pay more than 2½ per cent.

Again, next to the influences of religion, there is probably no lever by which to raise the labouring classes in the moral and social scale, so powerful as the independence to be acquired through the medium of the friendly society. There is, however, a lower though still an important point of view. It is estimated that an annual reduction of two millions is effected in the poor rates by friendly societies as at present constituted and managed; and if it should appear, as is undoubtedly true, that they are for the most part untrustworthy, being in respect both of their funds and management in the last degree insecure, the consideration arises whether an improved system of friendly societies would not, in addition to other advantages, materially lessen the burden of the poor rate. If it is true that in spite of all their shortcomings and mismanagement, which are not the exception but the rule, they reduce the rate by 3*d.* or 4*d.* in every shilling, is it unreasonable to expect that with a trustworthy system of societies such a reduction would soon become much greater? On pecuniary grounds alone therefore, if no higher existed, this question demands attention, and the treatment which friendly societies commonly receive at the hands of the Poor Law, in return for such benefits, may well give rise to unfavourable remark.

There are upwards of 23,000 certified friendly societies in England and Wales, of which their learned registrar may well say that he cannot satisfy himself of the solvency of 20. There can be no doubt that the vast majority of these societies (composed, be it remembered, of persons who prove their desire to secure solvency and good management by availing themselves of the advice and protection afforded by the law) are at this moment eminently unsafe. It behoves the managers and the members of these societies to bestir themselves without delay, and ascertain by means of an actuary what their financial position is. So general is the ignorance both of managers and members on this vital question, that it is a common practice to assume that the few hundreds of *capital*, the bulk of which is probably invested at a high rate of interest in some local speculation, means *surplus capital*. The prospective liabilities are not taken into account at all, and a distribution of a portion of the capital among the members is made. An actuary would tell them whether they were in a position of hopeless insolvency, or of insolvency which by care and prudence and increased contributions might be retrieved. Had the praiseworthy efforts of the registrar of friendly societies been supplemented by the assistance of actuaries, for the purpose not merely of graduating the rates of pay, but of valuing assets and liabilities, much distress would have been already averted from the industrial and labouring classes. One important step in legislating for the friendly society will be to secure the appointment of such a staff, who shall value assets and liabilities at stated intervals of three, four, or five years, as may be thought best.

If such is the evil case of societies which are recognized and protected by the law, what shall be said of the "Brummagem" or "Sharing-out Clubs," which are supposed to greatly outnumber the certified societies, and which, from the terms of their constitution, cannot have their rules certified to be in conformity with the law?

In almost every parish one or more of these clubs will be found, the management of which is usually in the hands of the landlord of the public house or beershop. "Sometimes," says Mr. Tidd Pratt, "the "club is sold with the goodwill of the house." The Sharing-out Club is formed on the principle that a halfpenny a week from each member will secure a shilling a week for each sick member for a term which (independently of all further calculation) is sometimes three, sometimes six months. When this term is expired a similar one commences, during which half the amount only is payable, which is in turn succeeded by superannuation pay, of which more anon. An extra levy is made in case of the death of a member, or member's wife, or child. All the members pay alike, and each one on joining the club makes a verbal declaration that he is in sound health and of good constitution, or states truly and plainly whether he is more than ordinarily liable to sickness or disease. If his statement is false, he runs his own risk, and on the discovery which his continuance in the club would not fail to make, he is expelled and forfeits all his contributions. The clever but unscrupulous device of the annual dissolution of the club deserves notice. This Phœnix of the tap-room, the benefit society, so-called, dies once a year, usually on the first Monday in May, and forthwith arises from its tobacco ashes with new plumage, destined for a speedy plucking. By means of its annual rejuvenescence, it contrives to free itself of old or burdensome members, who are left to the care of the poor-rate. The poor-rate is in truth the virtual superannuation pay of these clubs; and hence the device of the annual dissolution. When a member becomes so infirm as to render him a greater burden than can be conveniently borne, he is reminded that out-door relief at 2*s.* 6*d.* is a better thing than superannuation at 1*s.* 8*d.* The advantage of his leaving the club is obvious, and he goes, generally with a good grace, "to relieve the "club and better himself." He oftentimes receives a donation from the "sharing out" proceeds, but whether he likes it or not, he will be passed over in the new list of members for the year ensuing.

In the course of the last session the Earl of Lichfield moved for a return of the number of paupers, in union workhouses in England and Wales, who had formerly been members of benefit societies. The return was obtained for the last week in August, when the numbers were reported to be 4,015. By the kindness of Mr. Owen, of the Poor Law Board, we are enabled to state that the number of male paupers in the workhouses at that time was 32,497, whence it appears that about 12 per cent. of such inmates were formerly in friendly societies. At first the proportion does not seem to be large; but when it is considered that the workhouse is the refuge of destitute infirm persons, whose constitutions, and also of the idle and vicious whose characters, would alike debar them from admittance to such societies, the per-centage will be thought a high one. At the same time we believe that if returns were forthcoming of the number of out-door paupers formerly in benefit societies, a much higher per-centage would be the result. Of all these poor men, there is but too much reason to conclude that had the money wasted by them in insolvent or fraudulent clubs been properly applied, *they would at this moment have been in the receipt of a sufficient sum to raise them above pauperism*, unless in those cases of exceptional distress in which help, whether from poor rate or parish charities, entails no moral degradation.

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In 1865 the Post Office, which, mainly owing to the zealous and able efforts of Mr. Scudamore, had previously undertaken a considerable share of what may be termed the banking business of the wage-paid classes, came into the field of work of the friendly society. It is true that it was empowered to grant no more than two of the classes of insurance (omitting their sub-divisions), namely, annuities and sums payable at death. The former unprofitable branch of insurance, as the companies have commonly found it to be, was already open to the public, though in a less degree, at the office of the Commissioners of the National Debt. Unpopular as it still remains, it will perhaps ere long be much sought after by the labouring classes. It may be noted that annuities have hitherto been offered at advantageous terms to purchasers, and it is not improbable that as soon as tables can be framed to show the extraordinary length of life which annuitants commonly attain, the rate at which they are sold will be raised.

But however welcome the Post Office may have been to insurances of so unprofitable a kind as the latter, we doubt whether the remunerative business of life insurance is gladly shared with it by the companies. Be this as it may, the Post Office is at present restricted to granting sums payable at death not exceeding 100*l.*, although friendly societies, by the last change which the capricious and troublesome alterations in the law have permitted them, may insure to double the amount. Nor can the Post Office effect insurances on less than 20*l.* Thus this most valuable and trustworthy ally in the great work of extending safe means of insurance throughout the United Kingdom has been grievously crippled at the very outset. Skilled labourers who would gladly insure for upwards of 100*l.* are debarred from going to the Post Office, and their proposals, unless they drop them, which is not unusual, fall into the hands of some keen agent of an assurance company. On the other hand, farm labourers and men of small means are excluded, for they cannot afford to insure so large a sum as 20*l.*, even if circumstances in their opinion justified their securing so much "burial money." And, lastly, endowments, the most easily managed of any class of insurances, requiring no medical evidence or proof of age, and causing no trouble beyond receiving the contributions for them and paying them when due; and which, moreover, are remunerative, and in all respects would have been the best for the Post Office to have started with —are not as yet to be obtained by means of the Post Office.

We have thus endeavoured to show the actual state of friendly societies, certificated and uncertified, together with the facilities for insurance already afforded by the legislature, and it is a true statement *that there is at present no trustworthy system of insurances suited to the requirements of the industrial and labouring classes of this country.* That the higher class of labourers would reform and improve their societies, provided that they had help in the way of valuation of assets and liabilities and of audit, is far from being improbable. But it must be remembered that labourers in husbandry, who have contrived societies which do not debar them from their presumed right to a share of the poors' rate, are not commonly permitted to join the clubs of the more intelligent nnd better educated work-people. The heart aches to record *that their weekly savings, though sufficient if invested in a trustworthy and durable provident institution to raise them above pauperism,* are devoted to the maintenance of treacherous refuges for poor men in distress, all of which have a trap-door through which their members eventually fall into the union workhouse, or otherwise burden the rate.

We lay stress on the statement that labourers in husbandry have sufficient to secure them a better lot than the Poor Law can assign them, and in corroboration of its truth, point to the sums which they contrive to pay in support of their benefit societies. Taking the cost of the club, paying say 10*s.* a week in sickness and 5*l.* at death, at the moderate estimate of 8*d.* a week, which does not include expenditure in beer beyond that provided for in the rules, but not uncommonly incurred at club meetings held on a Saturday night in the tap-room, we have the labourer providing a premium of insurance, *quantum valeat,* of about 35*s.* a year.

On the supposition that the same labourer could join a safe and well-managed institution, *which legislation has never yet offered him,* and which he can do only in a very exceptional way, if he happens to live in a county where there is a trustworthy society with sufficient inducements to join it, we will ascertain what provision he might secure :—

(1.) A man of 21 (most able-bodied men join their clubs at an earlier age), living in a neighbourhood where wages are low, and where the sickness * and burial money will be low also, will pay—

For sickness at 8*s.* a week and burial money 6*l.* - - -	16*s.* a year.
For an annuity at 4*s.* a week, commencing at 65 - - -	11*s.* „
Or an annuity at 4*s.* a week, commencing at 70 - - -	6*s.* „

He will thus pay, dependent on the commencement of the annuity, 27*s.* or 22*s.* a year.

(2.) A man of the same age, in a locality where wages are high and insurance corresponding, will pay—

For sickness pay at 12*s.* a week and 10*l.* at death - - -	24*s.* a year.
For an annuity at 6*s.* a week, commencing at 65 - -	16*s.* 6*d.* „
Or an annuity at 6*s.* a week, commencing at 70 - -	9*s.* „

He will thus pay, according as his annuity begins at 65 or 70, 2*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.* or 1*l.* 13*s.* a year.

The sickness pay in each case is due till he reaches 70 years of age.

Viewing with deep sympathy the struggles which respectable poor people make in order to maintain their families, and the pressure on them when their little ones are numerous, and not yet able to help their father and mother, and bearing in mind that, whether the rate of wages is high or low, they do contrive to pay their contributions to their clubs, we have in the fact of such payments a proof of their ability, so far as the money is concerned, to secure their independence, once give them a safe system of insurances which they might avail themselves of. If this were done, some portion of the parish charities, at present commonly dispensed to the dissatisfaction of all concerned, trustees and recipients alike, might with propriety be devoted to aid honest labourers, struggling with their burdens, in paying a portion of their contributions. At present, whatever difficulty the poor experience in paying their club monies, such assistance would be open to objection.

If, therefore, our farm labourers have the pecuniary means of securing for themselves a much better provision than that assigned to out-door paupers, the inquiry becomes a very important one as to the course which legislation should take on their behalf. It is here submitted that it would be to the advantage, not only of the mass of the labouring population, but of the community at large, if measures should be carried into effect providing them with a trustworthy and easily understood system of insurance, suited to their position in life. That they can be coerced ints leaving their clubs and joining such an institution io not to be contemplated; but that it should nevertheless be offered, and that its advantages should be made clear to them, involves no invasion of the rights of the poor, no interference with their liberties. Give

* Sickness pay should be from ⅔ths to ¾ths of the amount a labourer will earn at weekly wages.

we say, to labourers not debarred by age or infirmity, the free offering of joining a safe and well-managed provident institution, which will secure them at a cost commonly within their reach a respectable, though it may be a humble, independence, and it will then be no longer their misfortune if they do not improve their position.

Effort has already been made, to which it is right to call attention, to induce the authorities of the Post Office to obtain certain alterations in the Act which enables them to grant insurances, and thus empower the Post Offiee to undertake the management of such a system.

There can be no question but that this department would, if the necessary powers were conferred upon it, discharge the duties in a thoroughly trustworthy and efficient manner; and it is reasonable to anticipate that it would slowly, but not less surely, gain the confidence and support of the labouring population.

One of two courses should be adopted by the Post Office; it should either quit the position which it has taken with respect to insurances, and transfer the business to an institution to be formed for the express purpose of managing a National system of insurances, or it should keep the lead which it has already obtained, and devote its great surplus facilities to the management of such a friendly society, or system of friendly societies, as is urgently required for the public good. If it remains content with its present sphere of work, it will soon be found to impede the work of reform which it is yet able successfully to accomplish.

One of the few safe and solvent friendly societies in England, aided by several boards of guardians of unions, clerical and agricultural associations of Kent, has already called attention to the proposal to establish a National system of insurances suited to the industrial and labouring classes through the medium of the Post Office. A deputation, headed by the Earl of Romney, presented a memorial on the subject to the Postmaster General, in the course of last summer, of which the following is a copy:—

To his Grace the Duke of Montrose, K.T., the Postmaster General.

The following Memorial of the Directors of the County of Kent Friendly Society,

Showeth:

1. That your memorialists are managers of a society established in the year 1828, for insuring a sum of money to be paid at the death of a member, for relief or maintenance of members in old age or sickness, and for the endowment of members, and that the rules of their society are certified to be in conformity with the law.

2. That your memorialists desire to represent to your Grace that in the present unsatisfactory state of benefit clubs which are not certified, or which although certified are insolvent, it is their opinion that a trustworthy system of friendly societies is greatly needed, inasmuch as it would furnish the labouring classes of this country with the means of securing their independence, and would thereby promote their moral and social welfare.

3. That relief or maintenance in old age or sickness, together with burial money, can be afforded by means of mutual insurance at a cost not greatly exceeding, and in many cases at a less actual cost, than that paid by labourers for assistance from uncertified clubs, and that the management and proper administration of the sickness fund are in practice easily secured by means of agents empowered to act on the claims for sickness pay being substantiated by medical evidence.

4. That your memorialists submit that by means of an extension and adaptation of the provisions for insurance secured by the Act 27 and 28 Vict. c. 43., a system of friendly societies might be organised through the agency of the Post Office, and that many provident labourers would, as your memorialists believe, avail themselves of its benefits in preference to the assistance offered by unsound and uncertified benefit clubs.

5. That they request your Grace to take into your favourable consideration the subject of establishing such a system as would allow labourers to secure by *a single policy of insurance obtainable from the Post Office, sums in sickness from 6s. a week and upwards, together with burial money from 5l. and upwards*, and they also request that the insurances known as endowments may be granted by the Post Office.

Signed at the Board of Directors held in Maidstone on April 10, 1867.

This is in effect a petition for a Post Office Friendly Society, which being controlled by the same central authority which is already managing the business of annuities and sums payable at death, shall make its way to the labouring classes through the same channels—the country post offices. The memorialists make no allusion to the provision of old age pay, considering that, with some alteration in point of detail, the same may be offered to the poorer class of labourers under the powers conferred by the Act on the Post Office.

There appeared to be a readiness to concede two points in the prayer of the memorialists, a reduction in the life insurances from 20*l.* to 5*l.*, and the granting endowments. For these purposes an alteration in the Act will, it is hoped, be obtained in the course of the session.

The proposal, however, that sickness pay should be granted by the Post Office did not meet with the same good fortune at the outset, and we shall notice the difficulties stated by the Duke of Montrose, the Postmaster General, in the way of this, the vital part of the scheme. Full consideration of them fails to alter the opinions expressed by members of the deputation at the time, that they were not sufficiently formidable to deter the Post Office from undertaking this class of insurance, and conducting it efficiently, and the arguments employed appeared to have considerable weight with his Grace, and further attention was promised to this part of the proposal.

In the first place, there is an apprehension in the minds of some who have interested themselves in the extension of insurance by means of the Post Office, that imposition in claims for sickness pay cannot be properly guarded against, should the proposal of the memorialists be carried into effect. It is alleged that in small societies, the members of which are commonly known to each other, there is an amount of personal supervision which in itself constitutes a check on fraud, and which cannot safely be dispensed with, but which could not be used by the Post Office.

We admit that the amount of personal supervision exercised by the members over each other would not constitute a safeguard against fraud, so far as the Post Office would he concerned; there are, however, good reasons for dispensing with the protection supposed to be derived from such vigilance. It is an invidious and unwelcome task (as any of our readers may satisfy themselves by referring to the stewards of clubs in their neighbourhood) to make one neighbour a detective of the sharp practice of another, and the custom should wherever possible be discontinued. As a safeguard against imposition it is entirely overrated.

The present rate of sickness in the south-eastern district of England is about 27 per cent. per annum, in societies which possess the presumed advantages of such protection. In the old established County of Kent Friendly Society, whose members are scattered over the county, and who as a rule have little personal knowledge of each other, the sickness rate is little more than half that amount. The society's protective measures are soon told: (1), great care is taken respecting the admission of members; and (2), when a member falls ill he must prove his claim. For this

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purpose he sends a written demand for sick pay to the agent in whose district he lives, which demand is dated and substantiated by a certificate from his medical attendant, who states what is the matter with him. The pay is due at the expiration of one week from the agent's receipt of the demand. The agent is careful to make all needful inquiries, and so long as the medical certificate, for which a printed form may be had, is repeated from week to week, he continues to pay. In the Essex Friendly Society a travelling inspector of sick members is appointed. In the Kent Friendly Society adequate supervision is obtainable in the manner and with the results described. The agents be it remembered are at all times subject to the inspection of the society's officers, their returns are tested with scrupulous care, and any fraudulent use of the sickness fund is as difficult as it is dangerous.

Putting the common honesty and fair dealing of the labouring classes for the moment out of the question, there are but very few inducements for shamming illness among them. The impostors belong to the class of idlers, who spend their leisure time with a few boon companions, boozing in the beer-shop. But when by the conditions of sickness there must be compulsory illness and no beer-shop, but in lieu thereof most likely a scolding wife and a comfortless fireside, the situation becomes in the opinion of the pseudo-invalid infinitely worse than working on the farm on a stormy winter's days. And if he has no honesty, he has sufficient acuteness to see that 14*s.* a week in wages are preferable to 10*s.* from the club, and he soon makes up his mind to keep in good health.

The advantages of the personal knowledge of the members as a safeguard against imposition in sickness are therefore not to be compared with the means of exercising proper vigilance and care of the sick members possessed by large friendly societies which extend over the counties in which they are respectively placed, and it is submitted that such precautions would be equally within reach of the proposed Post Office Friendly Society.

A second objection to be surmounted by the promoters of such a system is found in the statement that, conceding the feasibility of the plan, country postmasters would have a formidable addition to their labours in the duties thereby imposed upon them. We answer that such has not yet proved to be the case where country postmasters undertake the agency of friendly societies. On the contrary, they make very good agents, and find the work both convenient and remunerative. The amount of work in the management of sickness pay is also generally over-estimated. A hundred members of the sickness fund do not constitute a hundred sick members. According to the average of the south-eastern district above quoted (the highest in England), there would be but 27 claimants in the course of the year. They should not exceed greatly the average of the Kent Friendly Society. The payment of such claims is at least as easy as discharging a Post Office order. And even if no travelling medical inspector was appointed to report on sick members, there is neither difficulty nor hardship in requiring the country postmaster to ascertain by personal observation how the claimants are. Any addition to the duties of these officials should be remunerated by a scale of pay which we trust may be on a somewhat more liberal footing than that of the Post Office Savings' Banks. Endowments, sickness, and burial money insurance are sufficiently profitable to allow this without peril to the interests of insurers; and if the sickness pay is in practice dispensed without the trouble and risk commonly supposed, it is no less true that the proposals to join this class entail less work on the officials than that for which the Post Office has already made itself responsible in granting insurances on life.

There are indeed a few details of great importance in settling the terms under which such assistance should be offered to the public, but the consideration of them does not affect the proposal for the establishment of a national system of insurance conducted by the Post Office, nor need they occupy our present attention.

Passing allusion only will be here made to the difficulties in the way of sound friendly societies occasioned by the administration of the Poor Law. That law is antagonistic to provident habits among the poor, both in principle and in practice; and, as we have elsewhere stated, our labourers have framed their clubs with special reference to additional help from the rate. This they secure, and with it their own moral and social degredation. Alterations in the administration of the Poor Law are sorely needed in order to aid in the duty of emancipating them from a thraldom which appears every year to be getting worse. Guardians of the poor, who, contrary to the strict interpretation of the law of destitution before relief, afford some help where the club monies are insufficient, do not succeed in convincing the poor that it is to their advantage to join better societies; while in the majority of unions, as it is believed, the test of destitution is enforced; and no member of a club, whether it be good or bad, can receive one farthing from the rate, be his merits or distresses what they may. While we earnestly deprecate the application of any portion of the rate, however small, towards the maintenance of a better class of societies—inasmuch as the pauperizing influence will be perpetuated, and labourers who have hitherto been helping themselves from its funds, will be confirmed in the belief that they are only getting their rights—there are and always will be numerous cases where the members of safe and well-managed clubs should not be refused help, on a certificate from the managers that their claims require it, or other proof of distress.

Before further alteration in the laws relating to friendly societies is attempted, it would be worth while to adopt the course already taken in the case of trades' unions (with which the friendly society should not be confounded), and to appoint a commission of inquiry which should report upon the whole question, and thus furnish a safe basis for legislation. Or a Select Committee of the House of Lords, in which the subject might be brought forward, might undertake the duty.

229. At a meeting of the West Kent Chamber of Agriculture, held July 7, 1868, the following discussion took place on friendly societies:—

The Rev. J. Y. Stratton then moved "That the "delegates of the West Kent Chamber of Agriculture "be requested to invite the attention of the Central "Chamber to the proposal to establish a system of "insurances suited to the requirements of the wage-"paid classes by means of the Post Office." He said, that any system of insurance which would foster habits of providence among the working classes, and be in itself safe, would be a great boon to the country, as it would raise the moral and social position of the industrial and labouring classes. At the present time the majority of the societies were instead of being trustworthy in an exceedingly corrupt state. They might be divided into two classes. Those which sought the assistance of the Registrar of Friendly Societies in certifying their rules and regulations, which amounted to 24,000, and were of the better class, although of these Mr. Tidd Pratt said he was not satisfied with the solvency of 20. That was to say, not one in a thousand of these societies to which the better class of our labourers and mechanics belonged were trustworthy. Now, if that were the case with the better class, still those which were uncertified and could not face the registrar were much worse. It was said that there were 100,009 sharing-out clubs in this country. At all events they greatly out-numbered the certified societies. Mr. Stratton then pointed out that by an extension of the system of Post Office insurance, the principle of which had been established by Mr. Gladstone, the bill being promoted by Mr. Frank Ives Scudamore, who as a man of Kent he was proud to mention, it was possible to

give all the benefits which the present clubs gave without their disadvantages. Last year a deputation waited on the Postmaster General on the subject, and they were well supported with memorials from several clerical associations in West Kent, and also from several boards of guardians. The Government seemed prepared, although they had not brought in an Act this session, to support two out of the three proposals which they made, those for endowment and for reducing the minimum sum for life assurance to 5*l.*, and he believed that they very much shook the objections of the authorities to the adoption of sickness pay. Mr. Stratton concluded by moving his resolution.

Mr. Hodsoll said, as a member of the deputation to the Duke of Montrose last year he had great pleasure in seconding the resolution. They all felt great anxiety as to some change in the management of village clubs. In those certified there had been some improvement on the old-fashioned club. Many could remember the time when a great number of those village clubs met at Maidstone on Whit Monday to march to the old church, but almost every one of those clubs was now broken up. The reason of that was the want of proper administration. They were not sufficiently looked into, and they were frequently robbed by their secretaries and other officers. The Druids and Foresters' Societies had now large ramifications, and they were in a better position than others, but there was a jealous feeling upon the part of members of benefit clubs about putting their money into the hands of the Government. He was a very great advocate of the plan of Mr. Stratton, and he would have great pleasure in bringing the matter, as one of their delegates, before the Central Chamber. He trusted that they might ultimately succeed in offering to the wage-paid classes of this country a safe and reliable insurance. They did not wish to attack any particular club or society, they only wished to prevent what were evident abuses. In conclusion, Mr. Hodsoll pointed out what is an important fact, that out of 32,000 male paupers in the unions in England and Wales no less than 4,000 have been members of insolvent benefit clubs.

Mr. Hatch said the great difficulty which they would have to contend with was the peculiar jealousy which the labouring classes had as to any interference with them in the matter. There was no doubt that there was an immense number of societies which are in a hopeless state of insolvency, and it was almost impossible to convince the members that if they had a good balance at the bank, their dead weight of years and the liabilities of sickness and death made them practically insolvent. That was the great point which labourers did not understand.

Mr. Stratton said, with regard to the annual holiday, which was made an objection. although there might be much in it which was of an objectionable kind, he should not like to see it stopped, but it might be improved. The poor were very much improving. With regard to the difficulty of paying the contributions, he thought they would find it would be very easily got over by the members sending into the towns and villages agents to pay their subscriptions for them. He believed that the Post Office would ensure confidence. He was not advocating that a Post Office friendly society should swallow up all the friendly societies around it, as some had imagined, but merely that they should put a safe and sound friendly society among the mass of corrupt ones, and let it work its way itself. Even if it did not bring over people to itself, it would be doing good work in introducing good rules, and the principle of competition would have a good effect, and at the same time it would get a certain per-centage of very valuable labourers.

The Chairman said, at the time the agricultural labourer adopted those clubs it was his only possible mode of saving, and they banded themselves together to make a provision for a short time and not for old age. The Poor Law, in its wisdom, offered inducements for poverty, and for old and infirm people to come upon it in their old age. The poorer classes thought that with the *imprimatur* of Mr. Tidd Pratt no earthly contingencies could attack that club, and they could not understand that that signature did not apply to principles. He thought in establishing any new mode of collecting the savings of the working man they should remember that he would think he was about to lose his day's holiday and the enjoyment which his children and wife had for one afternoon at the public-house. He thought they should have an anniversary in each parish, let it be connected with the public-house if they choose, for after all the public-house was the centre of the working classes and necessarily so, for they had no institutions or public buildings where they had the opportunity of meeting as other classes had. For his part he saw no great evil or great harm in the working classes assembling in the public-house. Those were rather peculiar views, and he had been taken to task for holding those views. There were persons who would launch out and commit excesses everywhere, but he considered that the working classes would obtain no great harm from a public-house as a public-house. The chairman then put the resolution, which was unanimously carried.

230. *Mr. J. T. Hatch*, farmer, Lenham, Kent.—Most of the men here belong or have belonged to clubs. Some of the men paid until the club broke up, and were then to old too join another. One reason is that they want at the very least to get back as much as they put in, and they look upon the subscriptions of honorary members as for this purpose and not for insurance. In one club here, a burial club, the funds paid are paid on the death of any member. No new members were, however, taken in, the sum paid got less and less, and in the end those who had paid longest got nothing.

231. *Mr. Lovatt*, tailor, and secretary to the Church Sunday School Children's Friendly Society, Nantwich, Cheshire.—This is a club in which all parents sending children to the Sunday school can enter their children. The dissenting Sunday schools have similar clubs. We take children from the time of birth till 17 years of age.

The payment is 1*d.* weekly, with extra payments for deaths, &c.; in return 1*s.* 6*d.* a week is allowed for sickness, 4*l.* for the funeral of children of 5 years, and 2*l.* for younger ones. At Christmas every year the balance is divided. We have now about 1,350 members.

232. *Rev. W. H. Egerton*, rector of Whitchurch, Salop.—The population of Whitchurch (without Ash and Tilstock, which are severed for ecclesiastical purposes) falls short of 5,000, and yet our clubs contain the following members, viz.:—Tradesmen, 1,700; union, 852; Old Friendly, 300; Foresters, 259; Odd Fellows, 150; Female Friendly, 130; and Ladies Club, 300; total 3,261 males and 430 females. These clubs attract members from many of the surrounding parishes, and though I cannot call any of them really sound, they are doing a great deal of good. They have no disinterested auditor, and depend entirely upon getting new members every year.

We have tried to prevent the meeting at public-houses, and have provided a room, but none of them yet meet there, though we hope it may soon be the case. There is no longer any rule as to so much money being spent in beer either at the monthly meetings or the dinner, but in fact it is almost a point of honour that they should do so. In more than one case the public-house belongs to the club, and so everything that is drunk is supposed to be for the good of the club.

The competition between the clubs is dangerous to their safety. One club has its age of superannuation at 70, and the next to beat the other will fix it at 65, which the scale of payment will not justify.

233. *Mr. W. Minor*, chairman of the Market Drayton Board of Guardians.—Most of the men belong to clubs, except perhaps the older ones whose clubs have broken up. The relief to the rates is very great, and for that reason (if for no other) they ought to be sup-

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ported by farmers. The full pay of the clubs is 10*s.*, and when they get less pay and come to the board for relief we are disposed to be more liberal to them by way of encouraging the system; we should reckon 3*s.* a week as if it were 2*s.* in estimating the amount of relief. I act as treasurer to one club here which was formerly in an unsound state. It is one of the old clubs, and has some difficulty in contending with the attractions of such clubs as the Foresters or Odd Fellows.

There are evils attending the meeting in a public-house as all the clubs do here, but on the whole I think that the loss of popularity which would ensue from its being given up would be too great, so with the annual dinner, but neither the beer at the meetings nor any part of the expenses of the dinner are paid directly or indirectly out of the funds of the club. After the dinner the remnants are sold, and are commonly bought by the members to take home to their families.

234. *R. G. Jebb, Esq.*, The Lyth, Ellesmere.—The "County Provident" is making but little progress, because the county is occupied by local clubs which offer great inducements by meeting in public-houses and by promising higher benefits than it is safe to pay. I do not see much harm in their meeting in public-houses.

This society has done good in putting some check to compulsory payments for ale, &c., which has been to some extent given up.

CLUN.

Population - - 2,338.

235. "Very few belong to clubs; they have no independence, and are not ashamed of getting relief. Mr. Creswell, the clergyman at one of the hamlets, says that none of the men there belong.

"Six or seven years ago the Peoples' Society broke down through the defalcations of an officer; now there is only one club with 28 members." (Dr. Morris).

BISHOP'S CASTLE.

236. "There is no independence in this place among the labouring class. Anyone who is ill a day or whose child is sick, as a matter of course applies for the parish doctor, and a week's illness sends him to the parish." (Dr. Lemon).

"Clubs poor and rotten. If you were to take away the annual feast and display you would divest them of their chief attraction."

237. The following extract is from a paper in the "British Medical Journal" (Feb. 6, 1869), D. H. Monckton, Esq., M.D., of Rugeley.

"It is essential that the bread-winner or winners should belong to a sound, safe, and well managed sick pay assurance society; and of the many forms of such clubs (the Government at present declining the responsibility), the writer gives the preference neither to the small village pot-house club, nor to the universal association with its central metropolitan management, but rather to the district society, founded and arranged by a committee of noblemen, clergymen, &c., with the aid of competent actuaries. Such an association is usually large enough to be safe, and small enough to be well within the cognizance and control both of managers and members. It is inexpedient, however, that women and children should subscribe for sick pay; the mother may be ill, yet able to prepare the meal, to dress the children; her illness or her child's is mainly a loss as involving a doctor's bill. For these, therefore, and to include men too old or unhealthy for the sick-pay clubs, a dispensary is highly advantageous. Some of these have been purely gratuitous charities, subscribers giving tickets to their sick neighbours who are then attended free of charge; others, again, divide the cost of attendance between subscribers and the sick they recommend, the latter paying a small sum when requiring medical aid; but neither of these encourage providence and independence in those of limited yet regular incomes, while this is accomplished by the self-supporting provident dispensary or purely medical club. The mechanic should not, and does not as a rule, desire the unremunerated services of a doctor, or wish the rich to pay for such services rendered him; bring the article within his reach, and he will prefer to pay for it. As an arrangement between medical man and working man the provident dispensary is undoubtedly equitable and convenient, although, like the best of everything, liable to some abuse. As affording an opportunity to the benevolent to aid the deserving poor at their time of greatest need, it is most valuable; for while the members choose to pay their own medical attendants by small weekly contributions, in health as well as sickness, an honorary fund, administered by a committee and the medical officers, may be the means of affording an immense amount of comfort to those who have proved themselves worthy of assistance by their provident connection with the institution. Abuse of, and imposition upon, such a dispensary may perhaps be feared in large towns in which the inhabitants must be but little known personally to any committee; but even in such, the medical attendant would be well able to assist the committee, to prevent its being as much imposed upon as are the large hospitals of large towns.

"Such provident self-supporting dispensaries are especially suitable for smaller towns, and the district within a radius of four or five miles, including a population of perhaps less than 10,000 inhabitants. In August 1866, such an institution was founded in a town containing 4,362 inhabitants, and extending its operations over six parishes, containing in all 7,615 souls; and, although a number of men, women, and children were already members of sick-pay clubs, yet so rapidly did the new institution become popular with the working class, that 500 enrolled themselves members within six months, 1,000 within 12 months, and, at its second anniversary, 1,400 members were connected with it; and in proof of the good opinion entertained of the working of this dispensary by the benevolent lookers on, it may be mentioned that its honorary fund amounted in the first year to 61*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*; in the second, to 59*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.*; and, at the commencement of its third year, a bazaar held in its behalf, conjointly with a cottage hospital, realized a clear profit of 500*l.*

"The rules of the institution referred to are annexed to this paper, but the main features are the following:—1. That its members shall be strictly of the working class. 2. That the payment shall be one penny a week, made in advance weekly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly, at the option of the member. 3. That large families are assisted by all their children being free members of the institution, so soon as five of the family have been enrolled as paying members. 4. In these five, members of other clubs may count. 5. That, while every discouragement is given to delay in entering until illness occurs, yet, under certain regulations, admission may be gained even during sickness. 6. For married women, being members, the midwifery fee is partly paid from the fund in aid. 7. That all duly qualified medical men within the district are, if willing, medical officers of the society. 8. Each member, when sick, may choose his medical attendant, no change being allowed during the current year. 9. That the contributions of the benefit members be divided among the medical officers, in proportion to the number of cases attended by each. 10. That the honorary fund, arising from donations and subscriptions, be employed by the committee to defray the expenses of management, and in providing nursing, food, stimulants, &c. for the needy members during illness. 11. That local secretaries (generally the schoolmaster) be appointed for each village to receive the contributions of both benefit and honorary members, their remuneration being 5 per cent. on the amount passing through their hands.

"In its practical working, such a provident dispensary is found to present numberless advantages;

medical assistance is early resorted to; the working man's liability to his doctor is limited to a regular and definite amount; the doctor finds his booking work and doubtful debts greatly diminished; the poor but honest man gladly ceases to accept the gratuitous assistance of the medical profession; the dishonest have no longer an excuse for neglecting a Christmas account; the benevolent of the neighbourhood may assist the very poorest by enrolling them as members.

"From the honorary fund, or by special gifts, a variety of useful appliances, conveniences, and sick-room comforts may be accumulated at a depôt for sending out to sick members. If a cottage hospital be at hand to receive a diseased or injured member the weekly payment for board may be defrayed by the fund in aid. And to complete all, it remains only that skilled nurses be employed and an invalid kitchen provided, from which they may draw supplies for the sick members.

"With regard to that portion of the question proposed, which relates to public hospitals, it must be borne in mind that, however preferable a large cleanly and well ordered hospital may be to the small, close, filthy attic, living room, or cellar home, the statistics of mortality in such institutions do not bear comparison with those of patients treated in country cottages; and so apparent is it that the aggregation of patients in large wards of large hospitals is disadvantageous to them, whether regard be had to their comfort, quietude, or chances of recovery, that Sir James Simpson and other able thoughtful men of the day are advocating the distribution of sick people in smaller wards or pavilions over a larger area than is usually covered by a hospital. The multiplication, therefore, of small village or cottage hospitals throughout England (even to their being as many as its steeples) must be correct in principle, and tend to diminish mortality and suffering. Perhaps the advantage, next in importance, accruing to the public from such institutions, is the improved standard of medical and surgical skill which they tend to create by enabling provincial medical men to retain under treatment cases of severe illness or accident, which would otherwise be transferred to a county or metropolitan hospital, and so affording opportunity for the exercise and advance of that skill and knowledge with which so many young men annually leave the London schools of medicine for the provinces.

"A class of patients may be induced to submit themselves to systematic medical and surgical treatment in a comfortable small hospital near to their own homes and friends, who would not consent to enter the more distant and dreaded portals of the city hospital.

"It is well for a community to feel and know that there is always ready in its midst, a bed, a nurse, a medical staff, for the prompt care of the maimed, the crushed, the burnt, of whatever rank or station.

"The village or cottage hospitals may be made a depôt for the supply and a humble school for the education of nurses for duty in the surrounding neighbourhood."

238. *Rev. F. S. Bolton*, vicar of Salt, near Stone (Staff.) says:—The old clubs were chiefly originated by the publicans, with a view no doubt to get custom for their houses. They proceeded upon no scientific principle, but some one having started a club on certain given terms, others simply followed in it, the rates of payment being evidently made rather to tempt persons to join by their moderate amount than with any precise idea as to whether the concern would or would not pay. The common monthly contribution was 1*s.*, a sort of round sum accommodated to the pocket of the agricultural labourer very much as the ordinary guinea subscription is to that of the gentleman. For the 1*s.* the member was usually promised 6*s.* a week in sickness, with medical attendance; at least 5*l.* at his death; and perhaps 2*s.* a week when he passed the age of 70. If such a club prospered while its members are young and tolerably numerous, it always showed signs of decay when pressure from sickness or age of members came upon it, and it could only survive by either increasing the members' contributions or diminishing their benefits, or by inducing some wealthy neighbours to subscribe or help it in some way to live. I had a case a few years ago of an old man who entered what was once a very large and flourishing club in this neighbourhood [I believe it once had upwards of 400 members] when he was a young man; he began by paying the 1*s.*, and looking forward to all the benefits; in course of time the club began to totter, when the committee determined to increase the monthly contributions to 1*s.* 6*d.* This served for a while, then there came another totter and the sick pay was reduced; by-and-bye the club shook again and the pay after 70 was disallowed. In the last year of the old man's life he paid 3*s.* 6*d.* a month into his club, and received no old-age pay, and only a part of his sick pay. I need scarcely add that this club has since broken up altogether.

It was the dissolution of another and smaller club on his estate that led the late Lord Shrewsbury to promote the establishment of the "Talbot and Anson Club."

The best clubs next to such as the "Talbot and Anson," and now perhaps the most flourishing in this neighbourhood, are the "Odd Fellows," though great authorities have however pronounced them to be unsound. They certainly have the defect of holding their meetings at public-houses, and though no money is spent (as by some of the old societies) necessarily in drinks, yet the members are led to indulge, and no doubt are thought shabby if they do not spend something "for the good of the house."

Then there is a want of close connexion between the various lodges. If the so-called "Manchester Unity" were one vast society of which the various lodges were so many limbs, and if the receipts of the lodges all went into one great central treasury, from which again all payments were made; there would be more confidence to be placed where one weak limb could calculate upon aid from those that were stronger. But the lodges being rather so many little independent societies united by little more than a covenant to represent one another. When members move about the country the unity that seems at first sight to promise so much really dissolves into thin air.

I have always wished that Government could extend its Post Office savings' bank and annuity and life assurance system to the general objects of benefit clubs. A Government club would soon enlist all classes, and hence I suppose the difficulty of establishing one on account of the opposition of all present societies, and of the publicans that would probably be ruined thereby.

HIXON.

239. *Mr. Holbrook* says:—"There are two uncertified clubs, one for men, and the other for women. Both meet at public-houses. In the former a certain sum is allowed every club night for beer. In the ladies' a jug is put out for those who come a distance. Everybody is expected to dine at the annual feast. The cost of the band, the room, and the singers is paid out of the funds of the club."

WESTON.

240. *Mr. Yates* says:—"Our club broke up three years ago, dividing out the balance. Several old men are suffering now from it. The rate fixed here is too high for agricultural labourers to pay."

241. Letter on the employment of children in canal boats, from a working man at Stoke-upon-Trent, dated January 6th, 1869:—

"Sir,

"By your letter in the 'Warrington Guardian,' December 10th, you are about to commence an inquiry with the view to better education of children in the agriculture of Cheshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire.

"i beg to call your notice to the children employed on the canals in the above countys, as there is not such a poor neglected class in England. You will

Miscellaneous.

Mr. Stanhope.

g.

find, if you can see into it, there is hundreds of children from 6 to 12 years old that work 14 or 16 hours a day, and never go to school in their lives; there is plenty of familys brought up in cabins 11 feet long by 7 wide and 5 feet high, and 6 or 7 children, and it is awful to hear and see the immoral state they are in. i could say a deal more, but being brought up a boatman myself i am but a poor writer; i have been away from boating 16 years, and begun again, and since i commenced again i have had it topmost in my mind with seeing the wretched state the boatmen children are in.

"When i was of the canal i worked as porter on the North Stafford Railway 6 years, the Midland Railway 3 years, Sir John Brown, Sheffield, 5 years, and any of these managers of the above will say that my word is to be relied on. Please to excuse my freedom, but i feel it my duty to do all i can in this matter.

"Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"GEO. BENTLEY.

"My address is New Basard, Stoke-on-Trent.

"To Mr. Edward Stanhope,

"Assistant Commissioner."

THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN BRINE WORKS.

242. Letter dated May 26, 1869, from H. Neumann, Esq., Winnington, near Northwich, Cheshire (an owner of salt works, but not a manufacturer):—

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 18th inst., from which I gather that you wish to have an informal statement of facts and an expression of my opinion respecting the employment of females in salt works in this district.

"In the manufacture of salt women are employed chiefly in two processes: taking the salt out of the pan and carrying it in to the stove; and, when dry, breaking the lumps, putting them into sacks, and sewing up the latter ready for shipment.

"The system pursued:—A man contracts to work a salt pan as far as the labour is concerned at so much per ton of salt made, and hires a young woman at 8*s.* to 10*s.* per week to assist him.

"The *work* consists in the man filling square wooden forms with salt out of the boiling pan. After they have been allowed to drain a short time the woman turns out of the form the consolidated lumps, and carries them into the stove. When dry these lumps are broken, put into bags, and sewn up, the women assisting.

"The *hours* of labour are from 5 a.m. to about 3.30 p.m., with an interval of one hour for breakfast and another for dinner. The work is laborious, especially when the heat is considered. A man makes from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 tons of salt in 12 hours. The girl turns the lumps weighing from 15 to 40 lbs. out of the forms, and carries them from the side of the pan in to the stove, a distance of from 10 to 40 feet. A strong active young woman can do the work, though sometimes two are employed.

"The *danger* in the work.—I am not aware that there is anything injurious to health, or that tends to shorten life, in the manufacture of salt. The work is performed in a heated atmosphere (usually from 80 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit); perspiration is therefore constant, which of course produces emaciation, but does not seem to have any other evil effect. Accidents are not, however, unfrequent: within the last few weeks, one woman fell into a pan and was scalded to death; another narrowly escaped with her life from the same cause. The people work in a narrow passage which runs round the pan between a wooden platform (from 2 to 3 feet high, on to which the salt is lifted) and the boiling pan, the rim of which is in some cases raised 18 inches above the floor of the passage, and in others is on a level with the floor. The latter being wet and slippery, the room half-lighted and the hands engaged in carrying the lumps, accidents easily occur.

"With regard to morality, the employment of females in salt works is to be deplored. A man, generally married, and a young woman are left for hours together unobserved, in semi-daylight, in a house so obscured by steam that they cannot be seen at a few yards distance. The man works in a state of nudity, with the exception of a pair of drawers. The woman has very little clothing on, her petticoats being necessarily short, so as not to impede her work. The constant perspiration engenders thirst, which is the probable cause of the great intemperance which is almost habitual to this class. These causes combined easily account for the degraded state of the women, who begin to work at an early age, having previously received little or no education. Instances of young women, who have had two and even three illegitimate children by different married men can be easily pointed out. The records of the union workhouse prove this to some extent, but not fully. The friends of a girl, under such circumstances, usually protect her when it is in their power, for owing to the low standard of morality the offence is looked upon as venial, and is simply termed 'a misfortune.' The prostitutes in the neighbourhood, and those who remove to the larger towns to continue their vicious course, have generally commenced it in the salt works.

"I do not know whether you wish me to suggest a remedy. I will venture, however, to add that, in my opinion, nothing short of total prohibition of female labour in salt works, or nearly so, will answer. They are not employed in all salt works. In some they are not required; in others, where females are not admitted by the manufactures on account of the immorality, the work is done by boys or young men. There is no reason that I am aware of why the same system should not be adopted in all salt works. During the summer months boys prefer working in brick fields and other out-door labour; there might, therefore, at first be a little difficulty in obtaining the requisite number. This, I think, would be easily overcome, though it might involve a slight increase in wages, which would not however be felt, for the manufacturers, not being subject to foreign competition, but only to rivalry among themselves, the prohibition would simply place them on an equality."

EVIDENCE accompanying Mr. PORTMAN'S REPORT.

Mr. Portman.

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Hampshire.

HAMPSHIRE.

1. MEETING of HAMPSHIRE CHAMBER of AGRICULTURE at the Town Hall, Basingstoke, on Saturday, 5th December 1868.

W. W. Beach, Esq., M.P., in the Chair.

A large attendance of gentlemen and others interested in agriculture.

The following resolution was carried :—

"That in the opinion of this Chamber it is expedient that boys under the age of 10 years and girls under 13 years should not be employed in agriculture for hire, except for hay or corn harvest."

In the course of the discussion Mr. Chute said, "Schools should be judged by results, not upon the question of having a certificated master or not; he believed if the Government would relax the stringent regulation not to recognise any school but those under a certificated master it would prove very advantageous."

The Hon. and Rev. S. Best said, "He did not think that that education which could be given up to 10 years of age was sufficient for duly instructing boys in the knowledge of those implements which would afterwards be placed in their hands. * * * That they must not only improve the cottages, but teach the people who would reside in them how to appreciate them and how to live in them."

Mr. Trask thought "it might be taken as a rule on the high Hampshire farms that wages averaged 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week."

Lord Carnarvon expressed his objections to the employment of women in field work, as unfitting them for the domestic purposes of life.

Mr. Curtis advocated a national system of compulsory education up to a certain specified age.

Lord Northbrook said, "That the question of limiting the age for work must also be looked at from the labourer's point of view, when it became a very serious subject for consideration. Legislation on this point would probably be accompanied by a rise in labourers' wages."

The *Chairman* (*Mr. Beach*) impressed "on the Chamber that agriculturists should, as far as they could, meet the requirements of the age in the matter of education for the poor. He expressed an opinion that it would be extremely desirable to relax the rule as to grants-in-aid for schools with certificated masters only, in the case of small parishes."

2. MEETING of HAMPSHIRE CHAMBER of AGRICULTURE at Winchester, 12th December 1868.

W. W. Beach, Esq., M.P., in the Chair.

The following resolutions were carried :—

1. That, in the opinion of the Chamber, it is expedient that boys under the age of 10 years and girls under 13 years should not be employed in agriculture for hire, except for hay and corn harvest.

2. That this Chamber is of opinion that great encouragement would be given to the education of the agricultural population if the existing restriction of grants-in-aid to small country schools and also to night schools were modified or altogether removed.

Several of the speakers referred to the difficulty of fixing a limit of age for children's work without inflicting some injury on the parents.

Mr. Twynam said on this point, "Their (the labourers') position must be improved by an increase of wages, or by grants of land, or by some other means."

Mr. W. Spearing thought a system requiring the production of a certificate, either of attendance or of examination, was necessary for securing the education of the labouring class, and that their education should be continued by means of night schools. Between the ages of 10 and 12 or 13 an attendance of six hours a week at night school during the winter should be required.

3. MEETING at Lord Northbrook's, at Stratton, November 18, 1868.

PRESENT :

Lord Northbrook.
Mr. Neate.
Mr. Trask.
Mr. Stratton.
Messrs. Paine (2).
Mr. Richards.
} Farmers.

It was considered that there would be no objection to fixing 10 years as the limit below which no child should be allowed to go to field work; but that in consideration of the present progress in education a compulsory system was not desirable.

It was said that the labourers had a feeling against the fixing of a limit of age for their children's labour.

The district between Bishopstoke and Basingstoke, Alton and Stockbridge, *i.e.*, the whole of the large farm arable district, was fairly represented by those present. Within this area Lords Northbrook and Ashburton held from 30,000 to 40,000 acres.

Women are employed in stone picking at 8*d.* a load; they gather a load and a half per day; they are occasionally employed in winter, but not regularly.

The labour of children under 10 years of age was not thought to be of any value to the farmer.

Increased aid to night schools would be most acceptable to the farmers.

WAGES.

Mr. Richards.—Shepherd, and boy at 4*s.* a week, *yearly earning*, 55*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*, with house and garden; day labourer, 41*l.* 13*s.*; ditto, with thatching, 53*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

This may be a higher rate than ordinary, but 15*s.* a week may be taken to be the average *earnings* of a day labourer.

Ordinary wages, 10*s.* a week for men, *no truck;* for a woman, 1*s.* a day.

Women earn by **dock-picking* 4*d.* per 1,000, in which work children can help; at stone-picking, 8*d.* a load; at a long day in harvest, 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Children at bird-keeping earn 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day.

HOURS OF WORK.

Summer.

Men, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.; 1½ hours out.
Women, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; 1 hour out.

Winter.

Men, 7 a.m. till dark; 1 hour out.
Women. Same as summer.

Under-carters' wages:—5*s.* 6*d.* and 6*s.* a week and lodging; 2*l.* 10*s.* or 3*l.* at Michaelmas; no board; they sleep over stables.

Farmers would like to have a third bedroom in the cottages attached to their farms for the purpose of accommodating these lads.

An agreement is signed by the carter lads at hiring. Some would like to get rid of the system of yearly hiring of lads, and have married men for under-carters.

The cottages in the district are sufficient in number for the population, but there are not enough attached to the farms and under the farmers' control; they are well supplied with gardens and allotments.

One cottage per 100 acres was considered enough. There should be one cottage for each carter, and one for each shepherd, in the farmer's hands.

It was thought that savings banks would be more beneficial to the people than clubs, though the latter are very popular, and there is not much money put by.

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4. *Capt. Forrest*, chief constable, Winchester.—I often have to reject able-bodied applicants for police on account of their inability to read and write.

5. RETURNS OF POLICE SUPERINTENDENTS.

H. C. Station, Alton, Dec. 18, 1868.

CHILDREN and young persons and women are not employed in gangs for farm operations in this division.

Boys receive from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week throughout the year when employed in agriculture.

Girls receive from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week, and are only employed in the summer months weeding corn, haymaking and harvesting, and hop-picking.

Women and girls are employed in weeding corn, haymaking, harvesting, tying hops, and picking them.

WM. CHEYNEY.
Superintendent, H. C.

6. *Superintendent Campbell*, Andover division.—There are no gangs.

Boys earn 2*s.* per week pig minding, and the like in the latter part of the summer. There are not many little girls employed in the fields except during harvest.

Women help their husbands at harvest; other parts of the year they are engaged weeding, stone-picking, and spreading dung. Good-sized girls work at the same place as their mothers, but the great majority of girls go into domestic service.

7. *Superintendent Kellaway*, Basingstoke division.—There are no gangs.

Boys are employed by the year for ploughing; wages from 3*s.* to 4*s.* per week.

Women are employed for haymaking, harvesting, and manure spreading; they are generally the wives of the labourers who work on the farm.

8. *Superintendent Drew*, Fareham division.—No organized gangs employed in this division.

Wages range from 3*s.* upwards for male children, who are principally employed all the year.

Female children seldom employed.

On some of the larger farms the labourers' wives and daughters are occasionally employed stone and weed picking and haymaking, but not to any considerable extent.

9. *Superintendent Hornigold*, Alverstoke division.—Children, young persons, and women are employed for farm operations, but not in gangs, in Alverstoke division.

Girls and boys earn from 6*d.* to 8*d.* per day, women 10*d.* per day all the year round in agriculture.

Women and girls are employed during winter time picking stones, couching; summer time, weeding, harvest work, picking up potatoes in the fields.

10. *Superintendent Fey*, Kingsclere division.—Young persons and women are employed, but not in gangs; children are not employed.

Girls are not employed. Boys are employed all the year at about 3*s.* per week, and 1*l.* 10*s.* at Michaelmas.

Women are employed to a great extent in spreading of dung, planting of beans, weeding of wheat, assisting in steam thrashing, and cleaning the ground.

11. *Superintendent Cook*, New Forest division.—Children, young persons, women are employed in gangs for hay and harvest work on farms in this division.

Wages are 6*d.* to 8*d.* per day at all times of the year. Children of both sexes being employed.

Women and girls are employed, several in a gang, at harvest and haymaking, weeding corn in summer, pulling turnips; in winter months in agricultural work from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m.

12. *Superintendent Troke*, Odiham division.—No children employed for farm operations.

Women are employed.

In the summer women are employed at farm work, viz., couching, weeding corn, haymaking, and harvesting, by gangs of three and four, according to the size of the farm, at from 8*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

13. *Superintendent Bennett*, Petersfield division.—Young persons and women are employed in this division for farm operations, but not in large numbers or gangs.

Children are employed with their parents during the hop-picking season.

Women are used for weeding, haymaking, harvesting, and hop-picking.

14. *Superintendent Stephenson*, Ringwood division.—In the Fordingbridge sub-division only are such persons employed in gangs, and then during the summer months only.

As a general rule, boys only are employed all the year round, the average wages being 3*s.* weekly.

In the *F. Bridge* division girls are also employed in the *summer*, the wages being 3*s.* per week.

In the spring and summer *women* are employed respectively in weeding and harvesting. As a rule, *girls* are not employed.

The exception being in the F. Bridge sub-division (see answer to query No. 2), where they are employed in harvesting.

The term boys used in answer to question No. 2, includes all under 14 years of age. Some, however, are employed whose ages are not more than 11 years.

15. *Superintendent White*, Romsey division.—There are no gangs.

Boys from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week, and are employed the whole year. Girls from 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, and are employed in the summer months.

From 4 to 6 on large farms, spreading manure, weeding corn, cutting off turnips for cattle, haymaking, and harvest work.

16. *Superintendent Stannard*, Southampton division.—There are no gangs.

A few women and children are employed weeding spring of year and haymaking and harvest time at from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per day.

Very few women or girls employed in this district. A few are employed in weeding, haymaking, and harvest time.

17. *Superintendent Everitt*, Winchester division.—Women and children are not employed in gangs to my knowledge in Winchester division.

* Dock-picking is picking dock roots off the land after it is ploughed and harrowed.

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Children's wages are about 6*d.* or 8*d.* per day, and employed chiefly in spring and summer.

Women are employed in haymaking, harvesting, weeding, &c.

18. *Superintendent Horan*, Isle of Wight division.—1. Women and children are not employed in gangs for farm operations in the island.

2. Boys from 10 to 14 years of age get from 3*s.* to 5*s.* per week. On some of the farms they board and lodge them, and in addition they get from 1*l.* to 3*l.* at Michaelmas.

Boys are generally employed the year through, and are employed driving plough, cow-keeping, sheep-minding, keeping birds from the corn in the sowing season. Girls are not employed. The farms are generally small in the island, and not many boys are required on a farm.

3. Women and children are not employed to any great extent in the island; occasionally two or three women are employed on a farm, haymaking, turnip pulling, stone picking, and assist in harvest work.

ODIHAM.

Population, 2,833. Acreage, 7,287½.

19. *Rev. T. G. Clarke.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable, partly pastoral and hop-ground, with 894 acres in commons, roads, and waste land.

There are no private gangs in this parish. There are about 1,000 young persons and women employed in the parish,—in spring in weeding, stone-picking, and rod-stripping; in summer in hay-making and turnip hoeing; in autumn in harvesting, hopping, and acorning; and in winter in spreading dung. They either live on or near the farms on which they work. The hours of work upon the land are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; an hour is allowed for dinner. Those not living on the farms are employed from 7.40 a.m. to 5.20 p.m., from the time of leaving home in the morning to the time when they come back. Their health is certainly not injuriously affected by their work in this parish; they are not subject to any ill-treatment. I do not think the employment of females in agriculture has any bad effect upon their morals; on the contrary, staying at home appears to be more detrimental to the morals. I do not think it works injuriously upon the performance of domestic duties. Many women who go to work regularly in the fields keep their homes and children quite as clean and tidy as those who do not. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in field work, nor upon the age at which boys should be employed. I do not consider any restriction of distance desirable. The parents do not allow their children to be taken to work at a distance beyond their strength; they are very careful upon this point. I see no reason for any restriction upon the hours of work. I know of no cases where children or young persons employed in agriculture are overworked. It is a matter perfectly optional with their parents whether they go to work or not. I do not consider that any mode of enforcing education in this parish would answer; all classes would set themselves against compulsory means. The school attendance is materially affected in this parish in bad weather and winter by the distance the children have to come to school. Several children have to come from a distance of two to three miles in various directions, the National school being in the centre of the parish. The attendance is not much affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The payment is only 1*d.* a week, and the parents often say that they save the penny in wear and tear of clothing when the children come to school. The girls are trained also in needlework.

Proper cottage accommodation has undoubtedly an important effect on the morality, health, and comfort of the poor. There is so much woodland, copse, and common land in this parish that it is difficult to say what is the proportion of cottages sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land, but I should think there are quite sufficient here for the farm work, and generally speaking they are conveniently situated. The cottages generally have two bedrooms, in some cases three, a sitting room, a small back kitchen or wash-house, and a pantry; as a rule, they are not crowded with members of the family or with lodgers. The cottages in this parish average from four to five rooms, two of which would average 10 feet by 10 feet. The other rooms are smaller. There is, in general, good ventilation and drainage. There is fair accommodation, good water supply, good gardens in the rural parts (there are none in Odiham town), fair out-houses. Some belong to landowners, some to private individuals. Sometimes they are attached to the farms, and are sub-let by the farmer. A few are in the hands of tradesmen in the town. The rent averages from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. In a few cases, where needed, fresh cottages have been built on the farms. The Union Chargeability Act is having no effect whatever in causing an increase of cottage accommodation.

Schools.

In Summer.

——	On the Register of some School.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	170	150
Between 10 and 13 -	35	30
Total - -	205	180
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	145	130
Between 10 and 13 -	50	35
Total - -	195	165

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	170	160
Between 10 and 13 -	35	35
Total - -	205	195
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	140	110
Between 10 and 13 -	50	35
Total - -	190	145

The acorn-picking this year has been most productive. Some families have gathered 100 bushels, others 90 and 60, at 1*s.* a bushel.

I give some lads industrial training when they leave school. The children go to field work at 8 years; some even at 7 years. There are very few big boys in the school. Young men who have had some education go off into police and other employments not agricultural.

A limit of age for commencement of field work would be opposed by the farmers and objected to by the labourers on account of the loss of earnings; and the parents would not send their children to school any the more, if prevented from sending them to work.

A man's wages are 11*s.* a week.

There are hardly any children neither at school nor at work. There are a very few males growing up with insufficient education. There are three evening schools in the parish; they are open two nights a week, from November to March, for two hours each night; about 50 or 60 attend. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and Scripture are taught. It is only in the country districts night schools answer. In the town we have a mechanics' institute, with

maps, library, games, and lectures, open to all males above 12; penny readings; church choir and choral meetings; all these attract.

More boys are in education in this parish than girls, because, in addition to National schools, British schools, and dames' schools, we have a free school endowed foundation, with apprenticeships for poor boys only, from the age of 7 to 14 years.

Stephen Smither.—The cultivation is mixed. In this parish generally boys are employed in agriculture from the age of 10 years; they are employed in the summer months. Girls from 13 years of age are employed in hay-making and such like employments. Women are employed in light employments during the summer months. The children, young persons, and women in this parish go to a distance of one mile to their work; their hours of work are from 8 to 5 o'clock. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, nor upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There are in this parish a National school, a British school, and other local schools; the agricultural labouring class take advantage of these.

The cottages generally are good; they are not overcrowded; they have sufficient accommodation, are well supplied with water, and are well ventilated. Nearly all the cottages have good gardens, and when not, they have allotments of land conveniently situated for the use of the labourers and their families.

DOGMERSFIELD.

Population, 250; acreage, 1,728.

20. *Sir Henry Mildmay, Bart.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. Single women are not generally employed. The children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour in this parish are engaged in spring in weeding and bird-keeping; in summer in hay-making; in autumn in harvesting and hop-picking; and in winter casually; they either live on or near the farms on which they work; they usually work from 6 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., or, in summer, to 6 p.m.; one hour is allowed for dinner, and half an hour for breakfast; their health is not injuriously affected by their work. Neither the young nor females are subject to any ill-treatment; nor do I think there are any special employments which injuriously affect them. I think a restriction should be placed upon the employment of single women in field work. I do not think there is any necessity for restriction on the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture. It is not usual to employ any under 13 years of age.

The school attendance is not at all affected either by the distance the children have to go to school, or by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

The cottages are the property of the landowners; they are in good repair. There are three bedrooms to many. The rent is 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Lodgers are not permitted.

School.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	18	17
Between 10 and 13 -	10	5
Total - -	28	22
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	12
Between 10 and 13 -	11	9
Total - -	25	21

In Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	18	17
Between 10 and 13 -	10	8
Total - -	28	25
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	12
Between 10 and 13 -	11	9
Total - -	25	21

There are no children in this parish neither at school nor at work, and there are no young persons growing up with insufficient education.

There is an evening school in the parish, open during the months from October to February; it is opened two nights a week, for an hour and a half each night.

There are—

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	None.	None.
Above 12 - - -	17	14

Reading, writing, arithmetic, and dictation are the subjects of instruction. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

21. *Mr. Eggar*, steward to Sir Henry Mildmay.—Women earn 8*d.* a day in weeding and spreading dung. Girls are not employed in the fields. Boys, for bird-tending, earn 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week. A man's wages are 11*s.* a week, all money. Lads are sometimes lodged by farmers, but not boarded. A lad of 15 or 16 years gets 8*s.* a week.

Hay and harvest are let per acre; grass, 6*s.* an acre; wheat, about 11*s.* an acre.

In the spring men can earn 4*s.* a day at felling oak and bark stripping. There is a good deal of piecework in the district.

The cottages have half an acre of ground attached to them, and all the new ones have three bedrooms.

If children were forbidden to work before 10 years of age the loss to the parents would be very trifling.

All the younger generation of labourers can read and write, and most of the *men* among the older ones.

There are many small benefit clubs, but I do not know of much saving by labourers.

The Hampshire Friendly Society is a very good one.

HECKFIELD.

22. *Mr. Tait*, steward to Lord Eversley.—Men's wages are 11*s.* a week. The carter and best men have usually also a cottage and garden rent free. Cottage rent varies from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 2*s.* a week, according to the size of the garden.

Women earn 8*d.* a day in weeding. Turnip-hoeing is done by the acre, 5*s.* an acre the first time over, 4*s.* an acre the second time. Harvesting is mostly done by the acre.

Boys from 10 years to 13 years of age are hired by the year, and live for the most part in the farmhouses as carters and cow-boys. They get 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week and lodging, and 2*l.* 10*s.* at the end of the year, but no board, except, perhaps, a few vegetables. There is a little employment of small boys for bird-keeping at 2*s.* a week. The loss of earnings of children under 10 years would not be of any consequence to the parents. The education of the rising generation is improving.

23. *Mr. Mark White*, farmer.—The hours of work for women are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I employ several

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women and boys, but not under 10 years of age, except for bird-keeping.

The hiring of lads is for the year from Michaelmas. It usually takes place at the first market after the 11th of October, though they are more often engaged in the parishes adjoining the farms. They change places from year to year. The night-school is well attended by these lads.

The earnings of little boys under 10 years of age (say 2*s.* 6*d.* a week) in the case of a large family of an able-bodied man are in my opinion a very great consideration and assistance. I pay 25*s.* a week to one family at certain times of the year, and the children go to school in the winter.

Women earn 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day.

Boys earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week bird-keeping.

Men earn 10*s.* a week, but most of them work by the piece.

There are not many farms in this district of less than 100 acres.

The children of small farmers are worse off for education than those of the labourers. There is no school of a grade between the village school and the boarding school that would meet the wants of the farmer at a cheap rate, and I think such a school is very much needed.

There is a district school at Crondale for three unions, where the workhouse children are educated up to 16 years of age.

Men in the winter have plenty of employment in the woods, and in spring in stripping bark.

HASELEY HEATH.

Infant School.

24. Under care of Miss Lefevre.

On books, 54.

In attendance on 10th November 1868, 46.

They begin at 2 years old. The youngest in attendance, 3 years; eldest, 11 years, a girl; the distance to Heckfield girl school being three miles.

Some pay 1½*d.* a week. The elder girls can read, write, and do arithmetic up to simple division. They then go to service at Lord Eversley's to be trained, and soon to other places.

The mistress is careful, and the children are under good control.

Two cottages (Lord Eversley's). In each—

Downstairs.—Two rooms, scullery, and pantry.

Upstairs.—Three bedrooms.

Privy, pigstye, outhouses, and garden.

Rent, 5*l.* 4*s.* a year.

One fire-place in bedrooms, chimney running through centre of house.

HECKFIELD.

Girls' School.

25. *Mrs. Cox* mistress.

On register, 48.

Attendance, November 11th, 41.

Attendance previous week, 16, the children being engaged in acorn-picking.

I have been here for 17 years.

The eldest girl in the school is 15 years; but it is quite an exception to have one so old. There are none who have ever worked in the fields except at harvest and bean-pulling; 10 or 15 years ago the girls all went to the fields, now they very rarely go.

*The bean-pulling comes after harvest; it is taken by the acre; the children go with their parents; they go out at 9 years of age; it is hard work for them, and hurts their hands.

†"Peas-hacking" comes before harvest.

26. *Louisa Turvey*, 9 years old.—I have been out "peas-hacking" with mother for six days. I got no money. Worked from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The peas are thrashed not stripped.

27. *Jane Woolford*, 9 years old, has also been out to fields for similar work; the money was paid to her father.

Cattle Copse Cottages.

(1.) (Old). Two rooms down.
Two rooms up.
Garden and outhouse.
Rent, 3*l.* a year.

(2.) (New.) Two rooms down.
Two rooms up.
Garden.
Rent, 3*l.* a year.

(3.) One room and backhouse } 2*l.* 10*s.*
Two bedrooms - - }

29. *Mrs. Grantham.*—I get 8*d.* a day on farms pretty regularly; my husband works in gravel pit.

30. *Brown's farm.*—Four cottages in row; in each there was one good-sized room, and pantry downstairs, and two bedrooms upstairs. Rent, 3*l.* a year each. Garden on opposite side of road; held under farmer; there were privies, but the dirt was thrown in front of house-door. The buildings were not bad, but very untidy and badly kept.

31. *Mrs. Turvey.*—I work regularly on the farms at 8*d.* a day. I have done peas-hacking at 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* an acre, and took my own two girls with me, who also used hooks for cutting peas. The children were of some use to me.

MATTINGLEY.

Population - 630.

32. *Rev. John W. Blackwell.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. My own experience, founded upon 12 years' observation, is that the employment of females in agriculture decidedly lowers the tone of morals, and utterly unfits them for domestic duties, besides inculcating a most undesirable coarseness, and craving for freedom from indoor work. I decidedly recommend that restriction be placed upon the employment of females in field work. The agricultural labourer would be far better off if the women would stay at home and give their attention to baking, cooking, &c., so as to provide a more economical style of living. It would be a great boon to have female labour entirely prohibited, we believe also again, as many females will acknowledge that nothing is made by it. I do not believe the least benefit would accrue from restricting the employment of boys to over 8 years; 10 years is the lowest limit that would do good in this parish. Distance does not affect us much. Of course I should greatly prefer a higher limit than 10 years, and believe the result would be most beneficial. Parents who care for their children will not hear of their children going to work at 10. The State must look after those who are neglected by their proper guardians, or who are forced by the farmers that employ their fathers, &c. to work for them. I am inclined to think that legislation, preventing the farmers from employing children under a certain age, would be followed by a greatly increased attendance at school in the agricultural districts. The school attendance is only a little affected, in very bad weather, by the distance that the children have to go to school. It is very little affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. In most instances the people who earn most wages are the least careful in keeping their children at school.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	53	—
Between 10 and 13 -	39	—
Total - -	92	61

*Bean-pulling is "pulling up the stalks and all."
† Peas-hacking, "cutting peas with a hook."

In Summer—cont.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	25	—
Between 10 and 13 -	15	—
Total - -	40	32

In winter the attendance is nearly the same as in summer. There are no children here who are neither at school nor at work. There is an evening school held in the parish during the winter months, from November to February. It is opened two nights for an hour and a half or two hours each night. There are six scholars under 12 and 49 above 12; the average attendance is $39\frac{7}{12}$. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are the subjects of instruction. I do not think the evening school supplies the deficiencies of the day school, but I think an evening school most indispensable, as, restrict the employment to any age you please, the boy who leaves school at 10 soon forgets unless the evening school keeps him in mind of what he has learnt. The difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school are the want of co-operation of the farmers, the distance of the school from many of the homes, and the general inefficiency of the paid schoolmasters to adapt their manner, &c. to boys who look upon themselves as almost men.

Girls of 16 years of age who go to field work get such a love of "liberty" that they will not go to domestic service.

Some families go to the hop-picking from this parish; they go together, and generally work for the same employer from year to year.

MATTINGLEY GREEN.

33. *Goodchild*, labourer.—Some of my family are at work, some at school. The farmers will have the boys, master has asked for my boy of 9 years now at school. The children's wages are 2*s*. 6*d*. and 3*s*. a week, and 6*d*. a week is put by for them by the employer, to be given at Michaelmas. They go *from* home to their daily work.

My cottage has two bedrooms and a little place upstairs.

HASELEY HEATH.

34. *Mrs. Nevill.*—My children are out at service. Husband is a carter, earning 10*s*. a week. House rent, 4*l*. a year. I used to work in the fields. I would never send a girl of mine there. I got no good by it, as I had to pay some one to look after the house and children, and things wasn't done, and the wear of clothes was great. I used to get 8*d*. a day weeding corn, spudding thistles, and cutting turnips.

Some girls of 16 years of age now go to field work, but not necessarily those who have been in trouble.

HARTLEY WINTNEY.

Population - 1,746; acreage - 2,405.

35. *Rev. F. O. Giffard.*—The cultivation is almost altogether arable, unless the commons or waste land be considered. No private gangs exist in this parish. Children, young persons, and women are employed here in spring in minding birds, bean-dibbing, pig-minding, copsing, and stripping off oak bark; in summer in weeding and hay-making; in autumn in harvest and gathering acorns; in winter in pig-minding.

There are so employed—

Males:		
Between 10 and 13 - -	perhaps	12
„ 13 and 18 - -	from	30 to 40
Total - - -	from	42 to 52
Females:		
Between 10 and 13 - -	perhaps	10
„ 13 and 18 - -	about	30
Over 18:		
Married - - -	about	24
Unmarried - - -		20
Total - - -	about	84

I wish it to be borne in mind that this village is almost a town, and that a considerable number of boys are employed by the builders and tradespeople as helpers to the workmen and as errand boys, and in other capacities. There is no opening for girls except as domestic servants or nurse girls; their only occupation is agricultural. In the acorn season the poor live *al fresco*, old, young, and middle aged, even toddlers of two or three years old, all work at it. Most of the labourers live near the farms. Their hours vary with the season, but they are not excessive, from 8 to 4 or thereabouts. About an hour is allowed for meals. I think the demand upon their physical powers does not injuriously affect their health, excepting bad weather and its effects. There are no special employments in this parish that I know of, which injuriously affect females or the young. I think that the less employment of women and female children in field labour the better. The older and worse conducted women injure the younger and purer. The moral scabies has thus opportunity to do mischief. I should not recommend that any restriction be placed on the employment of females in field work, unless great restriction were put on the beershop, which, from lengthened experience and great opportunities for observation as prison chaplain, as workhouse chaplain, and parochial minister, I believe to be at the bottom of more than two-thirds of the crime, ignorance, and pauperism of the rural districts in the south of England. Shut up two-thirds of the beershops, and the thing will right itself. *These* lessen the available wages, lower the rate of wages, and make children's wages indispensable. I think boys younger than 10 years should not be employed, and these only at certain times. I would not restrict the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work according to age; it may sentence them to the union or starvation.

Cottages superabound in this parish; it is not so in the neighbourhood. I do not think the hours of work excessive. I think our employers are fair and humane in their treatment of the poor. I would not, therefore, place any restriction upon the hours of work. We have three schools in this parish subject to my superintendence. No child need go more than a mile to one or other of them. The school attendance is very slightly, if at all, affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The children are affected very greatly by their parents' habits. Our schools are good, and well attended. If you could force our absentees to go to school, it is questionable whether you would do them good, such is the influence of a vicious home. Girls are trained here in plain needlework. The practice of allowing young men lodgers where there are young girls in the family, is attended with great danger to morality.

We have more than 300 cottages in a parish of 1,900. They are conveniently situated. Nearly all have at least two bedrooms. There are too many lodgers. The cottages are of various ages and size, but, speaking generally, there are two bedrooms, a good front room on the ground floor, a small back room on the same, wash-house, coal-hole or wood-house, &c. The ventilation is fair. The water supply is variable; the drainage fair. The gardens are so different that I can give no general description; some are very good, some moderately so, some very poor; a few cottages have scarcely any. Our parish, from the good schools and general liberality of residents, is very popular; the people flock here in great numbers. I cannot too often repeat that the beershops are our greatest curse. There are cottages in this parish which return close upon 25 per cent. for the

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first 12 years of their existence; afterwards the rate of interest is lowered from the necessity of repairs, but I think that in this, as in other things, our parish is exceptional.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	74	63
Between 10 and 13 -	48	40
Total - -	122	103
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	83	63
Between 10 and 13 -	28	19
Total - -	111	82

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	83	74
Between 10 and 13 -	48	41
Total - -	131	115
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	91	86
Between 10 and 13 -	39	32
Total - -	130	118

36. BRAMLEY SCHOOL.

Population about 500.

Mixed. On books, 86.

Average attendance:—

Lowest, 23, autumn.

Highest, 77, between November and Christmas.

In the school on November 12 - 54.

The attendance is rather irregular, and some of the parents are indifferent about their children. Acorn picking this year has kept many away.

Boys leave school about 11 years old.

Two of the girls in the school had been out peas-hacking with their father and mother; were paid by the acre, and worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Payment to school, 1*d.* a week for one.
„ 2*d.* for three children.
„ 3*d.* for four „

Greatest distance to school for any child, one mile and a half. The attendance in proportion to population is very fair.

37. *Samuel Clift.*—Father farms 300 acres. Carter-boys of 16 years of age get 5*s.* a week, find their own food and clothes, but lodge in the farmhouse.

WOODMANCOTE AND POPHAM.

38. *Rev. F. W. Mant.*—The effect of field work upon young girls, especially between the ages of 12 and 20, is very demoralising; it frequently makes them coarse in manners and loose in behaviour; no mother in the parishes will, if possible, keep her girls at home after 12. They try to get them little places, in order to keep them out of the fields, or, if they are at home, will take the out-door work themselves in order to save them. The married women, as a rule, are not injured by out-door labour; some of the most respectable females in the parish who keep their houses the neatest and manage their families best, are employed as occasion requires in the different occupations of field work.

In my two small parishes no restriction on female labour is necessary; the women with large families are glad to allow all their young children to make a little as soon as they can. The girls go to weeding early until they can be got away from home.

Boys are seldom employed before they are 10 years old. In large families they must begin to earn something for themselves, and unless they go to the plough early they never make good carters. Their first employment is generally "pig" or "crow keeping." In the case of small village schools like mine, conducted by a mistress, they are just as well at work as at school, as there are not a sufficient number of their own age to keep them orderly and diligent. There is no difficulty about "distance" with us.

The subject of cottage accommodation is a very serious one. It is perfectly impossible that young people can grow up untainted if they are all mixed up together without regard to sex or age. In some cottages, consisting of two sleeping rooms only, there will be found a man and his wife, two or three grown-up boys, and two or three growing-up girls. On the other hand, very often, if you give them another room, they will take in lodgers. The evil cannot be corrected by legislation, but only by the supervision of the landlord or his agent.

I have an evening school twice a week for two hours each night; there is no difficulty as long as I attend and my family can help; a hired teacher would be a failure.

NORTH WALTHAM.

Population - 484; acreage - 1,938.

39. *Rev. W. L. Blackley.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. About eight males are employed here between the ages of 13 and 18. No boys under 12 are employed. In the winter, numbers of men with their boys are employed in cutting wood and making it up into hurdles, hoops, &c. In the summer they are employed in hay and corn harvest, hoeing turnips, &c. Some few females are employed. The usual hours of work upon the land are from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. in summer, and from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. in winter. Sufficient time is allowed for meals; 30 minutes for breakfast, and one hour for dinner. All the labourers live close to their work. The demand on their physical powers does not injuriously affect their health. Females and the young are not ill-treated. There are no special employments injuriously affecting females or the young generally. Nearly all the females employed are married women; all young females obtaining situations as domestic servants, provided they are of good character. I am not prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work. Boys under 12 should not be permitted to be employed in farmwork. As far as this parish is concerned there is no reason for restricting the hours of work of young persons employed in agriculture. In this parish the school attendance is not at all affected by the distance the children have to go to school, and scarcely at all by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

The cottage accommodation is on the average very bad. Large families frequently have but a single bedroom. There is a sufficient number of cottages for the families, and they are conveniently situated. They are for the most part old-fashioned, rooms very small, chimneys very wide, ventilation of dwelling rooms enormous and involuntary, of bedrooms practically nil, except when a square of glass has fallen out. A number of the cottages here were run up on speculation for railway excavators. They are now falling to pieces, and some are in a dangerous condition. The drainage is, in many cases, bad, but the occupiers are most to blame for this. Nothing better than surface drainage exists. The accommodation is very insufficient in bedrooms. The water supply is from deep wells. The gardens are for the most part small, but all cottagers requiring it can obtain allotment gardens. The ownership used to be divided among a number of petty landlords. This is now

chiefly in the hands of a few, and there is a fair prospect of some of the worst cottages being replaced by new ones. No progress is as yet being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	17	12
Between 10 and 13 -	12	10
Total - -	29	22
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	26	24
Between 10 and 13 -	19	16
Total - -	45	40

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	21	18
Between 10 and 13 -	19	17
Total - -	40	35
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	26	24
Between 10 and 13 -	20	18
Total - -	46	42

About five males and three females are growing up with insufficient education. An evening school is open 15 weeks during the winter season. It is open three nights a week, one hour and a half each night. The number of scholars is,—

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	4	3
Above 12 - - -	18	14

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

MICHELDEVER.

Population - 1,150; acreage - 9,000.

40. *C. Pain.*—The cultivation is arable. There are employed here,—

Males:	
Between 8 and 10 - - -	4
„ 10 and 13 - - -	3
„ 13 and 18 - - -	4
Total - - - -	11
Females:	
Between 13 and 18 - - -	2
Over 18, married - - -	8
Total - - - -	10

The males are employed with horses and sheep. In spring the females are employed in weeding; in summer in hay-making and harvesting; in autumn and winter one or two help in the barn. They live near the farm on which they work. They usually work nine hours; reckoning from the time of leaving home to the time of returning their hours are 10. An hour is allowed for meals. Their work does not injuriously affect their health. Females are not ill treated, and are not injuriously affected by any special employments. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field work. No boys below 10 years of age should be permitted to be employed in farm labour. I see no reason for restricting the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work. I would not restrict their hours of work. I think the mode of enforcing some amount of school attendance most applicable to the circumstances of this parish is by attendance at a night school. The school attendance here is not affected by the distance that the children have to go to school, nor by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

I think every cottage should have three bedrooms. One cottage and a half per hundred acres is a sufficient proportion for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in this parish. There is that proportion here. The cottages are conveniently situated with respect to the farms on which the work is to be done. There is not a sufficient number of cottages containing two or three bedrooms and a sitting room. The cottages are crowded. The accommodation of the cottages is generally very good. They belong to landowners. The rent ranges from 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* Cottage accommodation is being increased.

There are in this parish—

In Summer and Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	57	40
Between 10 and 13 -	1	1
Total - -	58	41
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	60	50
Between 10 and 13 -	5	3
Total - -	65	53

There is an evening school in this parish, which is opened in the winter for 18 weeks. It is opened three nights a week, one hour and a half each night. There are—

In Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	6	4
Above 12 - - -	42	30

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, arithmetic, and English history. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. There are no difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school.

Girls' School.

41. *Miss Strickland*, mistress.—Nearly half the girls are absent from school now (Nov. 17), some for dock-picking, some for getting up the potatoes. Some have been absent since the beginning of harvest. Children who go to field work lose much of the knowledge previously acquired, and in some instances do not regain their former place in the school for nearly six months.

Girls of 16 years of age go to field work at 9*d.* or 1*s.* a day for stone-picking, or are employed in the barns untying sheaves for the thrashing with a flail, in which case they usually work with and for their parents. In the case of stone-picking, the children

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get their money individually, though sometimes a "company" takes a field and divides the money.

42. *Mr. James*, boys' schoolmaster.—The boys go out at an early age for dung-cart work. I know a case of one under 7 years of age who never comes to day school, but attends night school. They get 6*d.* a day for job work.

I have been master here for six years. The school is fullest in the winter. If regular attendance at school could be secured up to 10 years, even up to 9 years, the children would be able to read fluently, write a letter, and gain some knowledge of arithmetic, and if such school attendance could be supplemented by a night school, they would get an education sufficient for their position.

The under-carters, of ages from 16 to 20, do not come to night school on account of "racking up" the horses between 7 and 8 p.m. The head carters don't like to spare them or do their work for them.

I think that if children were prevented from working before 10 years, the loss of earnings would be serious to many families in this parish.

STRATTON.

43. *Mr. Adnam* (an old man holding a few acres of land).—I began life as a shepherd lad at 7 years old, when I could hardly drag a hurdle. I have seen girls and women working in the fields, and never knew it do them much good, but girls are not much employed now.

I think 10 years would be a good age at which to fix the limit for work, and the loss of earnings under that age would not be serious to the parents. The labourers *might* object to such a regulation at first.

When I was young not 1 in 10 could read or write, now almost all the young people can do both.

44. *Mr. Potter*, schoolmaster.—Boys leave the day school at 8 years, and do not return during any part of the year, but attend night school. If they would come to school for five months in winter, it would be a great gain.

Small boys are employed in bird-keeping, cow-keeping, sometimes in ploughing, the highest wages being 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

The question of a restriction as the age for commencing work is really a question of earnings,—"the "1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week against the schooling." I do not think the parents would lose as much as they think by the stoppage of the children's earnings. The labourers *might* object to the Government controlling their children.

I have kept a night school for 58 years, 52 years of which have been in Stratton. I have generally had all the lads from 12 years to 21 or 22 years in attendance, and several married men; 29 have been in attendance this winter.

I should like boys earning wages to be made to attend day school from October to March. I think that is the best method of securing some school attendance, though a general system of compulsory education would, in my opinion, be very difficult to carry out.

Girls should never be sent to field work.

Friendly societies and clubs, if on a proper footing, do much good in a village. The poor people like to manage their own affairs, and would not like the control of the funds of their clubs to be taken by Government.

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45. Potatoe picking in a field belonging to Mr. Longstaff of Micheldever.

The crop is sold to a stranger, who sends down two men and horses for getting it up. The man in charge hires the necessary amount of labour, but makes no profit out of the wages given. Women and children of both sexes are employed. The women earn 1*s.* a day, girls and boys from 6*d.* to 9*d.*, according to age.

The foreman who overlooks the workers gets 16*s.* a week, and two men who stack the potatoes get 13*s.* a week, and lose wet days.

There were many women and eleven girls at work, the youngest being 9 years old. They were paid every week by the owner of the crop.

STRATTON AND MICHELDEVER.

46. (*Lord Northbrook.*) There is sufficient cottage accommodation and a sufficient number of cottages with three bedrooms, much attention having been paid to the comfort of the labourers by the late Lord Northbrook. The cottages have gardens attached to them and the rent is usually 1*s.* a week including garden. Almost all the cottages are my property and most of them are in hand, a certain number only being left with the farms. Most of the cottages have allotments of one-eighth of an acre each for which they pay 5*s.* a year.

The question of the provision of good cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms is a very difficult one. The rent of 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, which is the usual rent charged by landowners and farmers in my neighbourhood is in itself quite unremunerative. The greater part of the money invested in the building and spent in the maintenance of cottages is really paid in aid of wages, and so should and probably does, when spent by the landlord, raise the value of farms and tend to increase rents.

The system therefore is an artificial one; and, as regards labourers living in cottages let at an unremunerative rent, it nominally lowers the rate of wages. For example, if a labourer gets 10*s.* a week wages and pays a 1*s.* a week for a cottage, the remunerative rent of which is, say 3*s.*, he receives the same real wages as if he had 12*s.* a week and paid the remunerative rent of 3*s.* for his cottage.

If all the cottages were the property of the landowners and the artificial rate of rent was the same over considerable districts so that every labourer could rely on obtaining a cottage at that rent this system would not be open to much practical objection, but this is not so. Many cottages are held by persons who are not landowners and who cannot let them at unremunerative rents; and, moreover, the rent charged by landowners is not always the same. The rate of weekly wages is practically fixed by the large farmers who usually have the advantage of employing labourers who live in cottages let at an unremunerative rent, and consequently it is fixed at a sum below that which would have to be given if a remunerative rent was charged for the cottages. To take the example given above if the rate of wages is 10*s.* with cottages at 1*s.* it would be 12*s.* with cottages at 3*s.*

The effect of this system seems to me to be injurious to those labourers who cannot find accommodation in the landlords or farmers cottages, for they receive the same wages as the others and have to pay more rent for their cottages. It must also tend to discourage the building of cottages as an investment by persons other than landowners or farmers; for only those labourers who cannot find accommodation in the low rented cottages and who are usually the worst tenants, can be expected to take those for which a remunerative rent is charged.

My strong impression is that the condition of the agricultural labourer as regards cottage accommodation will not be put upon a sound footing so long as this artificial system continues; at the same time it would be a work of extreme difficulty to change it, for it would require the co-operation of landowners and farmers over a large extent of country.

47. *Mr. Lancashire*, farmer.—I have no females at work. Those females who work much in the field never seem to keep their cottages so tidy and clean as those who stay at home.

Most parents are wishful that their children should have education; they are quite willing to pay a small acknowledgement, say 2*d.* a week. The great consideration of the parents is to provide for their families; if education was enforced and children

obliged to devote half the day to it it, would seriously cripple the labourer's means; ample time may be found for the instruction to be given, say from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. or later.

When in Derbyshire I built six cottages and found that good dwellings had a beneficial effect on the labourers. Give them a comfortable home and let them see that if they leave they cannot better themselves.

KIMPTON.

PRESENT:

48. Mr. Fowler, Kimpton.
Mr. Fowler, Wallop.
Rev. A. H. Ashworth, Lower Wallop.
Mr. Childs, Weyhill.
Rev. E. Randolph, Kimpton.

Girls are not employed in the fields, except in very rare instances. Women chiefly do the weeding of the corn.

Mr. J. Fowler pays women 1*d.* an hour; the supposed hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but they take as much time as they like to go home in the middle of the day. Mr. Fowler of Wallop pays them 8*d.* a day.

Mr. J. Fowler.—Wages, spring 1868—

Foreman -	14*s.* a week, cottage and fuel.
Carters -	12*s.* 6*d.* each, and cottage.
Boys - -	3*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* 6*d.*
Shepherd -	11*s.* to 12*s.* 6*d.*, and cottage.

Day labourer, 10*s.* a week, pays 1*s.* for cottage.
Machine work, 6*d.* a day extra.

[Mr. Fowler has 15 cottages, and allows the people to live rent free from Michaelmas to Lady-day.]

In the harvest month a carter and boy earned above regular pay 7*l.* 16*s.* Another by himself earned 6*l.* 10*s.* extra. The foreman, his wife, and boy, had double pay to the amount of 2*l.*, 16*s.*, 10*s.*, and 12*s.* respectively. The carter boys here all live at home with their parents.

The women earn in long days from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week. Sometimes at hay cart they work till 9 p.m. at 1*d.* an hour overtime.

Total of wages paid on a farm of 1,000 acres (900 arable), 812*l.* 16*s.*, about 16*s.* 3*d.* an acre. On a farm of 500 acres, 420*l.* a year. A rise of 1*s.* a week in wages is equal to nearly 100*l.* a year.

One cottage per 100 acres was thought to be sufficient on the light lands.

It was thought that one good school for two or three small parishes, if conveniently placed, would be sufficient for the educational wants of the district; that a restriction might be put on the work of children under 10 years of age; that night schools would be the best mode of continuing the lad's education; and that it is very desirable that grants in aid of schools should be given to rural parishes for results, and independently of the question of the teacher being certificated or otherwise.

The requirement of any certificate of school attendance or attainment before hiring was not thought advisable; and a compulsory system of education was deprecated.

49. *John Matthews*, carter.—I think it would be hard to keep children from work till they were 10 years of age. Though the earnings are hardly more than the wear of clothes, still they are glad of the money. My eldest boy began work at 6 years of age; he cannot write, and can only read a little.

I once worked for 6*s.* a week, 18 years ago. The price of provisions was then much lower. My house rent is 1*s.* a week.

50. Dame's School.

Boys and girls present, 21.
Eldest boy, 8 years old.
Eldest girl, 9 years old.
The payment is 2*d.* a week for each child.

[The writing and reading were both very fairly good.]

[The cottages in Kimpton and Tedworth are many of them built of mud, and have one room and pantry downstairs; generally two bedrooms upstairs, and are warm and dry. Estimate for double cottage, three bedrooms to each, 200*l.*—E.B.P.]

51. *J. P. Fowler.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There is no system of gangs known about here. There are 19 boys, 2 girls, and 10 married women employed in this parish; 9 boys and 6 married women are employed on my farm. The particulars of their age are—

Males:	
Between 8 and 10 - - -	1
„ 10 and 13 - - -	4
„ 13 and 18 - - -	14
Total - - - -	19
Females:	
Over 18:	
Married - - - -	10
Unmarried - - - -	2
Total - - - -	12

I have on my farm one shepherd boy, three ploughboys, who only drive, four under-carters, who hold the plough, and one learning to make hurdles. The women are employed, in spring, in weeding corn and spreading manure; in summer, in hay and corn harvest; in autumn, in making thatch and spreading manure; in winter, in cleaning corn and seeds in barns, not in much out-door work. They are employed on my neighbours' farms in much the same way as on my own. They all live within a quarter of a mile of their work. The usual hours of work for women are seven hours, and for boys nine hours, except in hay and corn harvest, when they work overtime, and are paid by the hour. The women go to work at 8 a.m., and stop at 11 a.m. for two hours, and then work on until 5 p.m. The boys work from 7 until 4, and are allowed half an hour in the middle of the day. All have their breakfast before they go to work. Their work does not injuriously affect their health. I and my neighbours take care that the young and the females are not subject to ill-treatment. There are no special employments which injuriously affect the young or females. I consider if girls are fit for domestic service they ought not to be encouraged to work in the fields, but I always find in the parish some not so suited, and if such are prevented from working in the fields they would be driven to the workhouse. I would not allow girls under the age of 13 to work in the fields, except when helping their parents in harvest time. I would not place any other restriction upon the employment of females in field work. I, as a farmer, could not do without some married women, and it would be a great hardship to debar widow women with families and women who are not fit for domestic service from working in the fields. I often find a man or a widow with a family of four or five children from the age of 5 to 13 years, mostly girls. It would be hard to say they should not go into the fields to work in the spring, weeding corn even, if suitable work can be found them. I know instances in which it would be impossible for the parents to support them without it. I think boys should not be employed under 9 years of age. I do not want them before 10. The parents would rather they went to work younger. If they do not go to work before they are 12 years of age it would be injurious to the master, the parents, and the boys, because after that age you cannot well train them. No boy or girl ought to live more than a mile from the farm on which they work. I think that every farm should have cottages situated on it, which should be let with the farm to the tenant. I let my carters and shepherds and some of my other labourers, such as have large families, live rent free; by this means I am provided with boys on my farm. Many of my neighbours have not sufficient cottage accommodation; some none at all. I consider that educa-

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tion amongst our labourers has, during the last few years, made much progress. We ought to have schools in every small village for children before they go out to work, and night schools for the working boys and young men during the winter months. I hope Government will give grants to other than certificated masters. I do not think the principles of the Factory Act would apply to agriculture. I think the subject of cottage accommodation is a most important one. Very much is done to improve the cottages of the poor, but very much more is required. I am sure if good cottages are built on the farms, each having three good bedrooms, and then let to the farmers, gentlemen would find them most ready to pay five per cent. on the outlay. The farmers would feel a greater interest in the labourers, both as to their moral character and as to the education of their children. There is not in general a sufficient number of cottages with two or three bedrooms and a sitting room. My cottages are not crowded, as I never allow a lodger to be taken without my sanction. Many of my cottages are old, but large, and well suited for a labouring man; some have three, others only two bedrooms; few of the rooms are less than 12 feet square; many of them are much larger. I arrange the cottages (having the entire control) to suit the size of families. As to ventilation and drainage, no village can be more healthy; there is good water, and the cottages have good gardens. Most of the cottages in the parish are owned by the proprietors of the farms; a few by tradesmen; but no compulsion is used to induce them to deal. The rent is 1*s.* a week. I have 16 cottages for 1,000 acres. Many of my neighbours are badly off for cottages. I think there should be, for the accommodation of persons employed on the land, one cottage to 100 acres, if the land is light; two, if heavy. The Union Chargeability Act is not causing an increase of cottage accommodation. I think many landlords might avail themselves of the power given to the Enclosure Commissioners by the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, to advance money for the improvement of land, &c., very much to the benefit of the labourer. If gentlemen would build good cottages on their estates, and let them to their tenants, they would find it add so much to the value of their property that farmers would pay a good per-centage on the outlay. It would give the farmer more interest in the labourer, for instead of finding, as they often do now, bad cottages occupied by men who have no interest in the farmer's welfare, or the farmer in theirs, a much better feeling would exist. Nothing concerns a good tenant in taking a farm so much as having a good class of labourers to contend with. A good labourer will always command a consistent tenant's kind consideration. Good cottage accommodation will always be self-supporting; it is a great advantage to the farmer, and tends more to improve our class of labourers than any Government legislation. The parish of Kimpton is divided into three villages, the village of Kimpton and Upper and Lower Sheddeston, about a mile from the village of Kimpton. The village and parish of Tyfield is about a mile from the village of Kimpton. About midway is a school for boys and girls, kept by a schoolmistress, to which *all* the children who are not at work and are old enough go. We have a dame's school in one of my own cottages, kept by the wife of one of my labourers; 25 children under 7 go to this. I get a night school as often as I can attend to it for the working boys. I consider it would be a great advantage if we had a master to take a night school two nights a week in each of these small villages during the winter months. Our Sunday schools are well attended to by our most worthy clergyman and his sisters; he lives at a distance from us, or I am sure he would help us still more. I am fully satisfied all my labourers (many of whom, I am sorry to say, cannot read) are most anxious that their children should go to school. I do not know a single instance to the contrary. I, as an employer of labour, am most anxious for it.

ABBOTT'S ANN.

PRESENT:

52. Hon. and Rev. S. Best.
Rev. Mr. Monkhouse, Oakley.
Rev. Dr. Parker.
Mr. Canning, farmer.
Mr. Parsons, farmer.

It was thought that no child should be employed in field work before 10 years, such an age not affecting the hiring of carter-boys. Night schools were thought to be the only mode of continuing education after that age. Boys being then hired by the year could not attend day school a quarter of the year. A system of half-day or alternate days is not applicable to agricultural districts; the population is not sufficient to supply the requisite number of boys for the purpose.

Children under 10 years of age are very rarely employed; if so, their wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week, hardly enough to balance the wear and tear of clothes.

There *is* a need of boys just above 10 years for farm work. More are required on a clay farm belonging to Mr. Canning, at Ramsbury, than on the light land at Wallop.

There are no gangs in Hants; women do the weeding; their health does not suffer, nor are they employed as much as they were a few years ago.

If an Act was passed to prevent children's work before 10 years, two years should be allowed before it came into operation. Any such restriction would be disliked at first by the labourers.

Night Schools.

The attendance should be regular for three nights a week during the winter months, between the ages of 10 and 13.

Mr. Parsons. — It would be difficult to get the farmers to give energy to it. Boys who had attended such school regularly would be better in their work for the farmers.

Mr. Canning. — Educated labourers are, in my experience, more contented with their lot than "the clod."

Mr. Parsons. — Farmers in Abbott's Ann cannot get carter-lads in the parish, and are forced to seek them elsewhere, as those in Abbott's Ann are too highly educated for agricultural labour, and go away from the parish. There is a prejudice existing in the minds of the farmers against extended education. A certificate showing too much knowledge on the part of the lad would be rather an objection than an inducement to the farmer to employ him. "Though he has been to school, yet he has good moral character," would be the words of a large class of farmers. The education of the labouring class should be partly technical, partly moral, and partly religious. At present the moral education is very defective when the children are out of school. If a certificate is required from a lad seeking employment it should comprise:—

1. School attendance.
2. Moral character.
3. Proficiency in work.

53. *Joseph Parsons.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There are no private gangs in this parish. I employ on my farm of 500 acres one male between 10 and 13, four males between 13 and 18, one married female and one unmarried female, both over 18. The males are employed with horses. The females are employed in spring in weeding corn principally; in summer in haymaking, thinning turnips, &c.; in autumn in harvest work; and in winter in picking turnips. They live near the farm at which they work. The usual hours of work upon the land are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

From the time of leaving home in the morning to the time of return in the evening their hours are about nine and a half. One hour is allowed for meals. Their health is certainly not injuriously affected by their work. The young and females are not subject to any ill-treatment. On my farm there are no special employments which injuriously affect females or the young. I have observed that well-trained domestic servants generally make better labourers' wives (*i.e.*, more cleanly and thrifty) than those who have been brought up to work entirely in the fields. I think no restriction should be placed upon the employment of females in field work. I should not object to the age at which boys should be employed in farm labour being restricted to above 10 years. It is only during hay and corn harvest that young persons work longer than from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I think that half day at school and half day at work, alternate whole days at school and whole days at work, and school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months, are all inapplicable to agricultural labour. If compulsory school attendance be enforced, let it be from the age of 7 till 10, and after that age let encouragement be given to their attendance at night schools in winter, and Sunday schools throughout the year. Our parish is favourably circumstanced in respect of cottage accommodation, still exceptional cases exist in which it is believed that defective cottage accommodation has led to unhealthiness and to immorality also. I think one cottage on large farms and two on smaller ones sufficient for the accommodation of the labourers in this parish. The cottages here are conveniently situated, but the proximity of a large foundry interferes, I think, with cottage accommodation. Several new cottages have been recently built. The Union Chargeability Act is not having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation here.

I give you the rate of wages on my own farm.

Head carter, 11*s.* a week, with cottage and garden rent free, 3*l.* at Michaelmas, 1*s.* each journey from home, beer when drilling and during hay and corn harvest.

Head shepherd, 11*s.* a week and cottage, 5*l.* at Michaelmas, and 1*d.* a head for all lambs bred from 400 ewes.

All labourers have fuel carted free. Carter, shepherd, and one cottager have 100 faggots.

Under shepherds and carters receive from 6*s.* to 9*s.* a week, with their lodgings paid, and sums varying from 30*s.* to 3*l.* at Michaelmas.

Day labourers at present have 10*s.* a week at day work, but average more than 11*s.* at piecework.

Women have now 9*d.* a day.

COTTAGES.

Little Ann.

54. *Rev. T. Best.*

(1.) Large; two rooms and pantries, down.
Four bedrooms.
With garden. 10*l.* a year.
Lodgers taken in at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

(2.) Property of small owner.
Down—1 room and pantry.
Up—2 bedrooms.
Very comfortable.
Small garden. 5*l.* 10*s.* a year.

(3.) Double cottage (small owner).
Cost about 300*l.*; mud walls, slate roof, with chimney in centre.
Down—1 sitting room, pantry, and woodhouse.
Up—2 bedrooms.
Small garden. 5*l.* a year. No rates.

Allotment fields, adjoining.

(1.) Property of Mr. Fowler, let at 6*d.* a lug.
(2.) Property of Hon. and Rev. S. Best, let at 2½*d.* a lug.

Abbott's Ann.

55. Cottages the property of Mr. Best, of Red Rice, let at 1*s.* 3*d.* a week, with garden. All have two bedrooms.

Stonehanger Cottages.

56. Double cottages; mud walls and slate roof.
Down—1 room and pantry } in each.
Up—2 bedrooms }
Outhouse and garden.
Rent, 3*l.* 5*s.* a year.
Very dry and comfortable.

Down Farm Cottages.

57. (1.) Double cottage; new.
Down—1 room and pantry.
Up—3 bedrooms.
20 lug garden.
Rent, 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, and 6*d.* a week deducted for lodging of carter-boys.

(2.) Double cottage; old. Mud and slate roof.
Down—1 room and pantry.
Up—2 bedrooms.
Garden.
Inhabited by the carter rent free, reckoned at 1*s.* a week.

Both these set are attached to a farm.

On the estate of Mr. T. Best, of Red Rice, many new cottages are being built *on* the farms at some distance from the villages, in all cases *double*, in some, two or three double cottages close to each other. The old cottages are not so bad inside as the outside appearance would lead one to believe.

AMPORT.

Population - 706; acreage - 3,933.

58. *William Richard Poore.*—The greater part of the cultivation is arable. There are no private gangs in this parish. There are 85 children, young persons, and women employed in agriculture in this parish. 14 are employed on my farm.

The particulars as to number and age are,—

Males:	
Under 8 - - - -	3
Between 8 and 10 - - -	3
„ 10 and 13 - - -	19
„ 13 and 18 - - -	24
Total - - - -	49
Females:	
Between 13 and 18 - - -	7
Over 18:	
Married - - - -	23
Unmarried - - - -	6
Total - - - -	36

Their employment in spring is bird-keeping, weeding, and general farm work; the boys as carter-boys; in summer, spreading dung and haymaking; in autumn, corn harvest and cleaning roots; in winter, assisting shepherds, raking up leaves, and general work. They live on the farms at which they work. As a general rule the hours for females are seven and a half, for males from nine to nine and a half. Reckoning from the time of leaving home to the time of returning, the females are employed from 8 to 5, and the males from 6 or 7 to 5.30 and 6. Half an hour is allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. Females are not ill treated. I do not think their health is affected by their work generally, or by any special employments. I think the employment of females in agriculture is decidedly injurious to their morals and their proper training for domestic duties. This is especially the case with young and unmarried females. I would prohibit all females under the age of 18 from being employed in field work, and I do not recommend that they should be employed even at hay and corn harvest. If it were practicable I should like to prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at harvest time, and the majority of the

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farmers in this parish concur in this remark, believing that in the long run the families are no particular gainers, all things considered. Females could, however, be employed at sundry work under cover of the homesteads. I would not allow boys under 10 to be employed in farm labour. The work lies pretty close to the cottages in this neighbourhood. The mode of enforcing school attendance most applicable to the circumstances of this parish is, I think, by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work. In my opinion this mode interferes less than any other with the children's duties. The attendance at the parish school is affected by the distance the children have to come, as Amport is a wide spreading parish, and has cottages at three extreme points; but the schools of the neighbouring parishes provide the children with instruction. I should say the school attendance was very little affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. No efforts, that I am aware of, are being made for the industrial training of the girls. The greater number of the cottages is owned by the Marquis of Winchester, who has done everything in his power of late years to improve them, and render them comfortable for the occupiers; nevertheless, there are too many with only two bedrooms. I consider the proportion of cottages here, which is three to 100 acres, sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. The cottages are conveniently situated. Cottages have lately been erected by the Marquis of Winchester on most of his farms. The cottages are not overcrowded. Lodgers are not permitted without the consent of the owner. 25 cottages are modern, some brick, some mud built, and slated or tiled. The remainder of the 94 are old ones, but well sustained, 21 being of flint and brick, and 48 mud built; all are thatched. They all have a kitchen (or living room) and a pantry, with outhouse; 30 have three bedrooms; 57 have two bedrooms; and seven but one bedroom. Rents are as follows:—nine from 70*s.* to 80*s.* per annum; 35 from 60*s.* to 65*s.*; 40 at 52*s.*; and 10 from 20*s.* to 40*s.* As regards ventilation, the cottages are built high and dry, but there is no regular system of drainage. There are casements to most of the windows, and the windows are kept in good repair. The cottages are periodically whitewashed. The water is invariably supplied from wells. The gardens to the cottages belonging to the Marquis of Winchester average 24 perches each, and to those belonging to the other owners 16 perches, but this includes the site of the cottages. There is also a field in the centre of the village let out as garden allotments. It contains 6 acres 1 rod 29 perches, and furnishes as much garden ground as there is a demand for. Since the year 1845 the Marquis of Winchester has expended in building and repairing his cottages (30 new ones, including those for mechanics, have been built) over 6,000*l.*; he found them all in so dilapidated a state. Now they are in good repair. It would be feasible in a few cases to increase the bedroom accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	22	19
Between 10 and 13 -	7	4
Total - -	29	23
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	19	14
Between 10 and 13 -	20	15
Total - -	39	29

In Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	24	18
Between 10 and 13 -	9	6
Total - -	33	24
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	19	15
Between 10 and 13 -	20	17
Total - -	39	32

There are here two boys between 8 and 10, and one girl between 10 and 13, of the agricultural labouring class, who are neither at school nor at work. There are about 21 males and 11 females growing up with insufficient education. The greater part of these can read and write, but imperfectly only. An evening school is open 16 weeks in the year, from November to February. It is opened for one hour and a half or two hours, two nights a week. There are about 35 scholars, 20 under 12, 15 above 12. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and ciphering. The evening school only in a measure supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulty in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school is to be found in the proper want of support of the better classes.

GOODWORTH CLATFORD, ANDOVER.

59. *Letter from F. R. Loscombe to Hon. E. B. Portman.*

"Dear Sir, November 16, 1868.

"With reference to the subject of your inquiries, I only feel competent to speak of this immediate neighbourhood.

"1. As to the age at which children are usually employed. Boys are seldom put to constant work till 10 years or more, often 11 years old. Younger boys are sometimes employed in the harvest, which I consider preferable to their being engaged in gleaning, which often conduces to much lawlessness. My experience leads me to believe that if boys are not put to agricultural work early they never take an interest in it, and they become idlers and lawless.

"2nd. Few girls are employed in field work, except in haymaking and harvest. Married women do light work, such as weeding, haymaking, and harvest work. They are rarely exposed to bad weather, and always expect to be allowed to remain at home on such days as they may wish to do so. The hours of work are from 8 to 5, and one hour is allowed for dinner. Many are the wives of the labourers on the farm, and their earnings are a great assistance to their families. The average distance they have to go to their work would rarely exceed a mile, and they generally consider their health improved by employment in the fields.

"Nearly all the boys in this neighbourhood can read, write, and spell fairly well, and also do the common rules of arithmetic. The women employed in the field are generally circumspect in their conduct.

"Yours truly,

"F. R. Loscombe."

60. Extract from Letter from H. Thompson, Esq., of Andover, to Hon. E. B. Portman.

"Sir, Andover, December 16, 1868.

"I beg to acknowledge your note and the accompanying papers. * * * * *

I will, as far as my imperfect ability to do so will permit, give you a general outline of the inhabitants

of our town. The population of the borough is about 5,000, one-fifth of which is rural, and I would leave that part out of the question. The town is inhabited by 200 to 250 tradesmen, shopkeepers, and a few professional men; a portion of the rest are mechanics, and the residue, a very large bulk, labouring poor, some respectable, some the contrary.

"The schools are—*National*, boys, girls, and infants, 210 on the books; *British*, mixed, about the same number; two other infant schools, say 100. So there must be a long lot uneducated, and the general attendance, as a whole, is irregular. The difficulty as regards attendance lies with the parents, not with the children. Children are, as a rule, sent to work at whatever age they may be if any employment is offered them. Boys are taken as errand boys, shop-helpers, &c.; they are also employed as plough-boys, cow-boys; for instance, I have one of the latter, say 10 years old, if I were to turn him adrift he would go somewhere else, but *not to school*, if work could be got.

"Women, from girlhood to old age, are employed in the fields in a desultory way; few are in regular farm employ; this, I fear, has a degrading influence on morals, but perhaps not more so than many other employments. The great evil on that point is the wretched and unhuman way in which the poor are lodged, and the dreadful and promiscuous crowding in their miserable dwellings. My opinion is that a Building Act would obviate much of this. There is no actual system of ganging here; the nearest approach to it is in the work of bark-cleaning. A man undertakes this sort of work, and employs women and children under him to clean the bark by scraping from it the moss, &c.; they are paid so much per cwt., a very small pittance. A good 'woman-hand' may earn 8*d.* a day; a child (doing the work badly) perhaps 3*d.* a day; they work in a desultory way, coming and going just as they please, leave for a week, and come on again; there is no regularity in the employment; sometimes a dozen are at work, sometimes two or three; only the lowest class undertake it. This sort of people go out hop-picking in the season, and migrate to that employment; in winter some of them pick up a precarious penny gathering watercresses and such like. They are a sort of local and parochial gipsies, getting through life anyhow. I have come to the conclusion that the remedy necessary for these evils (and very necessary it is) is to frame enactments restricting both the employers and the employed, and attach no light penalty to the contravention of those enactments. I hold the idea that this would have the effect of keeping the children at school to a proper and sufficient age from lack of other employment, and thereby fit them better for work. At any rate I would try it, and if the plan should not succeed, then have recourse to compulsory education.

"Yours, &c.
"H. Thompson."

TUFTON.

Population - 142; acreage - 1,552.

61. *George Butler.*—The cultivation is mixed. Boys are employed in agriculture here from 11 to 13 years of age; some are employed yearly, others of them occasionally during the hay gathering and harvest. No girls are employed. Women are employed in weeding, haymaking, and in the harvest, commencing in April or May. The young persons and women employed here go to work to a distance of a quarter of a mile or half a mile, as the fields may be situated; they work from 8 until 5. In a small village like this I would not place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. The agricultural labouring class avail themselves of a day school in this parish, and also of a school supported by the Countess of Portsmouth in an adjacent village. The cottages in this neighbourhood are good and sufficient; they are well ventilated, and well supplied with water; they have good gardens, and likewise convenient allotments of land.

OVER WALLOP.

Population - 508; acreage - 4,632.

62. *Rev. H. Fellowes.*—The cultivation is arable. 78 children, young persons, and women are employed in agricultural labour in this parish. The particulars as to number and age are—

Males:	
Between 8 and 10	2
„ 10 and 13	18
„ 13 and 18	8
Total	28
Females:	
Between 8 and 10	6
„ 10 and 13	3
„ 13 and 18	1
Over 18—Married	40
Total	50

They are employed, in spring, in weeding, minding horses, &c.; in summer in haymaking; in autumn in harvesting and pig-keeping; in winter in stone-picking and machining; they live on the farms at which they work; their hours of work are 6 to 5 in summer, 7 to 5 in winter; they are allowed half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner; their work does not injuriously affect their health. The females are not subject to ill-treatment. Exposure to the weather in weeding and pig-keeping acts injuriously upon females and the young generally. The employment of females in agriculture is decidedly injurious to their morals and their proper training for domestic service. I would not permit females to be employed in the fields *when men are to be had.* I would not allow boys under 10 to be employed in farm labour. I think it advisable to restrict the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour. I think that no boy between the ages of 10 and 13 should be taken to work beyond a distance of two miles; that no young person between the ages of 13 and 15 should be taken beyond three miles; and that none between the ages of 15 and 18 should be taken more than four miles. I think boys under 12 should not be allowed to conduct horses and waggons. As long as wages are at the present rate neither the half-day at school and half-day at work, nor alternate whole days at school and whole days at work, nor school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months, would be satisfactory to the farmer or beneficial to the children. Very few of the children live beyond a quarter of a mile of the school. The school attendance is not at all affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as all can afford 1*d.* a week. No efforts are being made here for the industrial training of girls. The immorality consequent on the crowding of bedrooms is notorious. There are in this parish two cottages to 100 acres; this is not sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. There should be $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 100 acres. The cottages are conveniently situated, but there is not a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms. The cottages here mostly have a sitting room and one or two bedrooms; some have a back kitchen. The ventilation and drainage are fair. There is a good water supply. The cottages have gardens or allotments. They are owned by landowners and tenant farmers. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* Some of the cottages are *lifehold*, which is very injurious, neither the lessee nor the

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landlord being interested in repairing them. The Union Chargeability Act is working most mischievously; it causes a decrease of cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	51	39
Between 10 and 13 -	2	1
Total - -	53	40
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	36	25
Between 10 and 13 -	10	10
Total - -	46	35

There is nearly the same number in summer as in winter. There are about 10 girls between the ages of 10 and 13 who are neither at school nor at work. There are about 6 young persons growing up with insufficient education. There is an evening school in the parish, open 16 weeks in the year, two nights a week, two hours each night. The number of scholars is—

In Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	3	3
Above 12 - - -	39	25

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school are that some boys work late, and that in some seasons there is a deficiency of teachers.

SOUTH TEDWORTH.

Population - 240.

63. *Rev. H. Delme Radcliffe.*—The cultivation is mixed. 4 males between the ages of 10 and 13, and 6 between 13 and 18 are employed here, and also 12 married and 3 unmarried females, all over 18. They work 9 hours a day, and are allowed an hour for each meal. Their health is not injuriously affected by their work, and they are not subject to ill-treatment. I find that the employment of females in agriculture is very much on the decrease in this parish. As a rule, the girls all go out to domestic service. It is only some few girls who have not done well at service, or married women without incumbrance, who wish for employment in field work. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field work, as I consider the evil is curing itself as fast as possible. Boys under 10 should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour. I see no reason, in this parish, for recommending any restriction as to the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour. I think that no child should be employed in agriculture until he has learnt to read and write fairly. The school attendance is not affected by the distance the children have to go to school; at the present time the children who have farthest to go to school (about two miles) are most regular. I think that none find the weekly payment a serious impediment to sending their children to school. The cottages here are very much improved of late; most are provided with three bedrooms. One or two more, with three bedrooms, might be added with advantage. The cottages are conveniently situated, and are not overcrowded; they are well supplied with water and other necessaries; they all belong to one landowner; and the rent charged is 1*s.* a week.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	15	12
Between 10 and 13 -	3	2
Total - -	18	14
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	15	13
Between 10 and 13 -	5	4
Total - -	20	17

An evening school is held from October to March; it is opened four nights a week, 2½ hours each night; about 20 scholars attend, 10 under 12, and 10 above 12. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. As a rule, the boys are very willing to come during the winter, and are very attentive. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

WEST TYTHERLEY.

Population, 461 - acreage, 2,270.

64. *Rev. J. A. Scott.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. 35 males (13 between the ages of 10 and 13, and 22 between the ages of 13 and 18), and two unmarried females over 18, are employed in this parish. Their work in spring is ploughing, sowing, &c.; in summer, haymaking and harvest; in autumn and winter, ploughing, sowing, keeping sheep, &c. They live on or near the farms on which they work. Their usual hours of work are 9 or 10 hours a day, with half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. Their health is not injuriously affected by the demand upon their physical powers, or by any special employments. They are not subject to ill-treatment. I would not allow a boy under 10 to be employed in field work. The only way in which it seems practicable for lads employed in agricultural districts to attend schools, is by attending night schools during the winter months. The school attendance here is not at all affected by the distance the children have to go to school, or by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The cottage accommodation is good. The proportion of cottages here is rather more than three to every 100 acres. Two cottages per 100 acres is fully sufficient for the accommodation of the labourers. The cottages are conveniently situated, and are not overcrowded. They have good sized rooms, good ventilation and drainage, good gardens, outhouses, and water supply. They all have two rooms downstairs, and two bedrooms. Very many have three rooms below and three above. They are owned by the landlord. The rents are from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* per annum.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	22	12
Between 10 and 13	23	17
Total	45	29
Girls:		
Under 10	23	18
Between 10 and 13	21	20
Total	44	38

In Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	21	10
Between 10 and 13	26	18
Total	47	28
Girls:		
Under 10	24	20
Between 10 and 13	22	24
Total	46	44

Nearly all the children that can do, attend school. An evening school is open about 18 weeks in the year, from October to March inclusive. The hours are two for each of three nights a week. The number of scholars is—

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12	7	6·1
Above 12	26	19

They are instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and Scripture. I think that the evening school very fairly supplies the deficiencies of the day school. There is no difficulty in maintaining an efficient evening school.

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65. *Rev. Geo. J. Davis*, Hall Place, near Romsey.—We are a simple village here, with ordinary schools day and night. All my labourers live in my own cottages on the farm, four cottages to 250 acres. I only employ women a few days in the spring, weeding corn with long-handled spuds, and very seldom except at these times and in hay time. In harvest they tie up sheaves for their husbands.

Boys under 13 are sometimes used to drive plough or keep off birds, but we like not to have too many together, on the principle "that one is a boy, two "boys is half a boy, and three boys is no boy at all."

Two cottages to 100 acres would no doubt be good. * * * * There are, I suppose, counties in which gangs of children are employed, and where inquiry may be necessary; but as far as my personal knowledge goes, it seems to me unnecessary.

HEADLEY INCORPORATION.

	Acreage.	Population.
Bramshott	6,486	1,366
Headley	7,090	1,319
Kingsley	1,752	441

66. *C. Bridger*, clerk.—The population of the three parishes is almost entirely employed in agricultural pursuits.

Children are employed at about 12 years of age.

Women and girls are employed in harvesting, hopping, &c. The hours of work are about eight; the distance to work about a mile on an average.

There are available means of education in each parish.

OLD ALRESFORD.

Population, 526. - Acreage, 3,608.

67. *Rev. George Henry Sumner.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There are no private gangs in the parish. About 37 children, young persons, and women are employed here in agricultural labour.

Males:	
Between 8 and 10	3
„ 10 and 13	6
„ 13 and 18	12
Total	21
Females:	
Over 18, married	16
Unmarried	—
Total	16

In spring they are employed in weeding, &c.; in summer in turnip hoeing with their husbands; in autumn in mangold cutting and stone picking; and in winter in leafing and stone picking. They live near the farms on which they work. The usual hours of work are from 9 to 5 in summer, 9 to 4 in winter. From the time of leaving home in the morning, their hours are about eight and a half. An hour is allowed for dinner. I think exposure to all weathers makes them prematurely old. The females are not subject to ill-treatment, and are not injuriously affected by any special employments. In this parish those who are going out to domestic service rarely go into the fields except at hay time; it is the married women who go. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in field work. If a woman is left a widow, and is in fair health, the Board of Guardians allow for the children, but suppose that she will earn her livelihood. Unless she can take in washing, she can earn it only in the fields. I would restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour to 10 years. I think it is impossible to restrict the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work according to age. I do not think in practice you would get so complicated a machinery as the plan proposed, constantly fluctuating in individual cases, to work well. A month or two might make the difference legally, but a parent making the objection might very likely receive warning himself from the employer. Speaking for this parish, there are no reasons for placing any restrictions upon the hours of work of children and young persons. I do not myself think that the half-time system of enforcing school attendance could for many reasons be worked in *ordinary* agricultural parishes. The only chance of retaining the lads under education is by night schools. The school attendance is very much affected here by the distance to which the children have to go to school, but not at all by the pecuniary resources of the parents because no fees are paid. There is an industrial home in the parish for training girls with especial reference to domestic duties. The cottage accommodation in this village is inadequate. Undoubtedly the way in which grown-up members of a family occupy the same room gradually lowers their sense of decency and propriety. I do not see that in this parish their health is affected by overcrowding. In addition to the 3,600 acres, there are 490 acres of grass fields, extra-parochial, worked by the labourers of this parish. In these 4,000 acres we have about 90 cottages; these are not sufficient. Generally

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speaking the cottages are conveniently situated; they are too small, and some are overcrowded. The cottages in this village, with the exception of four built by one of the landed proprietors, are not good. They are thatched and low; many of them have only one sleeping apartment. A non-resident propietor owns the larger number. The parish some years ago raised a loan on the security of the rates, and built some to provide more accommodation, and to these in the spring, I hope, unless anything unforeseen occurs, to add an extra sleeping apartment. The rent is in many cases 1*s.* a week, in others 1*s.* 3*d.*, in a few instances 2*s.* Almost all have fair gardens. Several cottages have been built here within the last few years. The Union Chargeability Act is not causing an increase of cottage accommodation. When three sleeping apartments are provided, and no lodgers allowed to be taken in, you often find one of the bedrooms used as a lumber room. Building is dear in this neighbourhood, and I do not think good cottage building would ever pay as a speculation.

We have about 140 on the books of our school here, and one at Armsworth. There being no school fee, all our children come to school, and leave only when they are fit for service. We take them at 18 months old at the school. About 15 males and 10 females of the agricultural labouring class are growing up with insufficient education. I find that those who live at a distance from the school, say one mile and a half, are not properly educated; and then lads come at Michaelmas from their places who are ill educated. There is an evening school.

68. *Mrs. Parris.*—I used to work in the fields, turnip hoeing, couch pulling, dung spreading, and topping mangel. I never did any piecework except at harvest.

Wages for women are 8*d.* a day.

I would never let my little girls go to field work; it ruins them and makes them idle.

Boys earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week at 9 or 10 years of age. Men's wages are now 10*s.* a week. My husband is a shepherd, and gets 11*s.*, and 2*l.* at lambing time.

Mrs. Parris' Cottage.

Downstairs, one room and back house; two bedrooms, inhabited by man and wife, three lads of the ages of 17, 14, and 11, and one girl of 14 years. Rent, with garden, 3*l.* 3*s.* a year; repairs done by tenant.

Miss Onslow's Cottages.

69. Row of four.

1. Two end cottages, rent 5*l.* a year. Downstairs, one room and pantry; upstairs, three bedrooms; pigstye and large garden.

2. Middle two. One room and pantry downstairs; three small bedrooms upstairs; pigstye and fair-sized garden; 4*l.* a year.

The inhabitants have allotments also.

70. *Mrs. Merrit*, wife of a labourer.—My cottage is a "parish one," with garden, rented at 1*s.* a week. One room downstairs and one upstairs, man and wife and four children living in it; the two eldest boys are 13 years and 12 years of age, *the boy of 13 years* is a shepherd boy, earning 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, and lives at home. The hours of work in summer are very long. The one of 12 years drives plough, 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, lives at home, attends night school.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, WINCHESTER.

71. *Mrs. Horniblow*, matron.—There are 12 girls in the school, of ages varying from 12 to 15 years. They remain generally for two years. They are allowed to go out for a job of work. There is no schoolmistress; the teaching is done by ladies. Five of the girls go out for school.

Some of them have gone out to good places.

Girls are taken from all places. The school is not exclusively for Winchester.

There was one girl of 9 years, one of 10 years, one of 11 years.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, OLD ALRESFORD.

72. Built and supported by Miss Onslow (under Industrial Schools Act).

There are 34 girls now in the house, of ages varying from 11 to 19 or 20. They are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic under a schoolmistress.

Payment, 12*l.* a year.

Eight girls are taken every fortnight for the work of the laundry. They go to lessons every evening and on Saturday morning. There are two girls employed in the kitchen who are changed every fortnight, and one kept regularly. These go to school in the evening.

The house work is done by two girls working all the morning, and three others who are only employed till school time, *i.e.*, 11 o'clock. These also are changed every fortnight.

Washing is done for 113 people.

The officers are a matron, a governess, and a laundress. The building is excellently arranged, and there is a good garden attached.

CHILCOMB.

73. *J. Stratton.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. No gangs, public or private, exist in this county. Ten males between 10 and 13, and 10 between 13 and 18, and six married females are employed here in spring in weeding and hoeing corn, in summer also in hoeing turnips and haymaking, in autumn in turnip hoeing and harvesting, and in winter in threshing, hedging, &c. They live mostly near the farms at which they work. The usual hours of work are 10 hours in summer and eight in winter, enclusive of meal times. I do not think their work injuriously affects their health, nor do I think there are any special employments injuriously affecting females or the young. I think any restriction placed on the liberty of females to work in agriculture would be unnecessary and prejudicial, for I consider that they are the best judges of what is best for themselves; they do not work at any other time except hay time and harvest time, unless in exceptional cases necessity drives them to do so. In fine weather farm work is healthy; it is this alone that counteracts the evil influence of their unhealthy and demoralising cottages. I see no reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age. Boys under 10 and girls under 13 are of no use in agriculture, and they are so seldom employed that it is not worth the consideration of the legislature. I would not place any restriction upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture.

The inhabitants of off-lying cottages are often prevented from attending school by reason of the distance. No efforts are made for training girls with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties. The bad cottage accommodation is the root of nearly all the evils which affect the farm labourer and his family. It is absurd to spend so much money in schools when the evil influence of a disgusting home more than counterbalances the good that can be instilled at school. I think that the first expenditure under the head of education should be laid out in improving the cottages. The present system seems to me like building the roof of a house before the foundation. The proportion of cottages in the parish is one and a half per 100 acres. This is sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. The cottages are conveniently situated. Many of them have only one bedroom, and they are overcrowded. The cottages which are inhabited by farm labourers have from one to three bedrooms. The few new ones are good, containing two downstair rooms and three bedrooms, with enough garden for growing vegetables for an ordinary family. The old cottages are as bad as any I have ever heard described. They are slowly being replaced by good new ones. The Union Chargeability Act is having no effect in causing

an increase of cottage accommodation. I think that the present unjust law, which causes the poor rate to be levied from only land and houses, acts most prejudicially against cottage building, inasmuch as directly money is taken from the funds to build houses, or in any other way to improve an estate, it is burdened with a 10 per cent. tax.

Mr. Stratton's Farm.

Cottages.

Four very bad and old. Ground floor only. Rent, 1*s.* a week. No garden. One of these has only two rooms, with no pantry or other place.

Two together.

(1.) Ground floor only. 1*s.* a week.

(2.) 1 room down.
2 rooms upstairs.
With garden. Rent, 1*s.* a week.
No back doors to any of them.

The parish of Chilcomb has no school, the children go to Winchester.

Mr. Stratton holds 1,700 or 1,800 acres under the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, and had 15 cottages attached. They are all in want of repair.

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74. *Mr. Dear*, farmer.—Holds 900 acres.

The carter lads are hired at Michaelmas by year, formerly at fairs. They sign a written agreement, generally at the end of a week after entering service. A lad of 16 years to 18 years will get 7*s.* a week and 6*l.* or 7*l.* at Michaelmas; younger ones get 5*s.* a week and 3*l.* at Michaelmas. They are lodged in the carter's house and pay for their board. A carter with a team of six horses has two lads under him.

Women are employed, but not nearly so much as formerly; they earn 8*d.* a day.

I do not think that a restriction on the employment of children under 10 years of age would inflict any injury on the labourers or the employers.

I should like night schools more generally established. The carter lads attend pretty well when there is one near enough.

I do not know of the existence of any gang system in this county, or of any contract for weeding corn, or piecework being taken by one person and underlet.

More cottages are wanted for the farms, though I do not know of much overcrowding on Lord Ashburton's estate.

The cottagers generally have gardens or allotments.

Men's wages, 10*s.* a week, lately reduced according to price of bread.

BURITON, near PETERSFIELD.

Population - 1,050; acreage - 6,305.

75. *S. Seward.*—There are about 2,000 acres of down here; about two-thirds of the rest is arable, one-third pasture, and about 50 acres of hops. Boys begin to be employed in agriculture about 11 or 12 years old, and are employed all the year. Girls are not employed, they all go out to service. The labourers' circumstances have much improved in the last few years, and their wives in consequence will not work so much as before; they are employed in tying hops, weeding corn, haymaking, &c. Women will go no distance to work; children and young persons live mostly close to their work, but I have three boys of 13 years of age who live a mile off. I would place no restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. From 10 to 12 years old a boy could mind birds, sheep, or pigs, or do other light work, and earn the rent of the cottage and garden, and be kept out of mischief himself. When a man has piecework in hop-ground, dibbling corn, harvest, &c., his young girls would be safe and a great help to him. But there are very grave objections to their working with other men and boys, or where they have far to go home afterwards. There are infant and Sunday schools as well as National and British schools. The children all go to school. The cottages are generally very good and conveniently situated, well supplied with water and ventilated. They are not quite sufficient for the demand from labour, but there is not much overcrowding. The cottages have all good gardens or allotments close at home. A well-built brick double cottage was put up in the parish 10 years ago. The family in the south end was never free from fever, and two children died. Four years ago the south end wall was weather tiled, and there has not been a single case of illness since.

BOTLEY.

Population - 860; acreage - 1,817.

76. *William Warner.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There are no private gangs in this parish. I employ on my farm 17 young persons and women, three males between 10 and 13, 10 between 13 and 18, and four married women over 18. The boys are employed all the year with horses and in minding sheep. The women are rarely employed in the winter, but the rest of the year they are engaged in weeding. They live on or near the farms on which they work. The males work from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.; the females from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are allowed half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. Their health is not affected by their work; they are not subject to ill-treatment, nor are they injuriously affected by any special employments. I think it highly objectionable that unmarried females should work in the fields at all, as it is highly injurious to their morals, and unfits them for domestic duties. I am not prepared at present to go so far as to recommend legislative restriction. I should recommend that boys under 10 years of age should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour. I think it very injurious that not only children, but also able-bodied men, should have a long distance to and from their work. I would not place any restriction upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture. I think that neither of the modes of obtaining school attendance provided by the Factory Act and the Printworks Act would be applicable to the circumstances of this parish. The school attendance here is not at all affected by the distance that the children have to go to school, there being two night schools in the parish, one at each end. It is scarcely at all affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. The girls are taught needlework in the school.

Generally speaking the bedroom accommodation of the cottages is insufficient. There are not enough cottages with three bedrooms. Some are overcrowded with families, some with lodgers. The proportion of cottages in the parish is three to 100 acres; this is sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. They are conveniently situated with respect to the farms on which the work is to be done. If landlords would be content to receive the same interest for their money on cottages as on the land, it would be an advantage to both landlord and tenant, as cottages might be built to pay 3½ to 4 per cent. interest.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	47	38
Between 10 and 13 -	3	2
Total - -	50	40
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	53	44
Between 10 and 13 -	12	9
Total - -	65	53

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In winter the attendance is much the same as in summer. There are very few indeed who are neither at school nor at work. It is impossible to ascertain the number of young persons growing up with insufficient education. Some can read imperfectly, but do not appear to have much understanding of what they read. This number, however, is diminishing year by year. There are two evening schools in the parish. They are open about 20 weeks in the winter. They are open three nights a week for an hour and a half each night. There are 25 scholars above 12 on the register, and 20 in average attendance. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. The school by no means supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school are (1) that men will not attend with boys, (2) an insufficient staff of teachers of a grade above that of the scholars, (3) the difficulty of maintaining discipline when the attendance is voluntary.

77. Capt. Best, Chairman of Stoneham Board of Guardians, W. Warner, Esq.

Mr. Warner's wages paid on a farm of 700–800 acres, small enclosures :—

One boy, 11 years old, 3*s.* a week.

Two boys, 12 years old, 4*s.* 6*d.* a week each, carters.

Two boys, 13 years old, 5*s.* 6*d.* and 5*s.* a week each, carters.

One boy, 14 years old, 5*s.* a week, carter.

Four boys, 15 years old, two 5*s.*, two 5*s.* 6*d.* a week each, carters.

One boy, 16 years old, 5*s.* 6*d.* a week, carter.

Two boys, 17 years old, one at 6*s.*, and one at 7*s.* a week, who works on Sundays.

In the South Stoneham union house there is a separate place for girls of 14 years and upwards, where eight at a time are taught cooking and household work ; while at school they learn washing.

There is a school at each end of Botley parish, 1½ miles apart, both under Government inspection.

Mr. Warner has from 20 to 25 cottages ; he finds great difficulty in preventing the taking in of lodgers.

The inclosure of commons has led to the building of many more cottages than formerly existed on the same acreage.

The provisions of the Lands Improvement Acts are too expensive.

Wages for men, 11*s.* and 12*s.* a week ; they have also a great deal of task work.

Women earn 10*d.* a day.

Turnip hoeing is done by the piece by men.

Weeding of corn by the day by women.

There is no payment in kind.

Carter boys are hired by the year at Michaelmas, and are lodged in the house of the head carter. Mr. Warner pays the carter 1*s.* a week for "doing for" each lad ; they board themselves, and get vegetables in exchange for work done in the carter's garden.

There are no hiring fairs in this part of the county.

The cottages for the most part have gardens sufficiently large to supply the vegetables for the use of the family during the greater part of the year.

There are some holders of small pieces of land cultivated for market produce rented at 45*s.* an acre, worked by men and their children. These men work occasionally for the farmers.

Many of the cottages in Botley are owned by speculators and small shopkeepers, are let at 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a week, and are much crowded.

There are several benefit clubs in the place ; we think the labourers would be very jealous of any interference by Government in the management of their money.

There are two brickyards.

SOPLEY.

78. *Rev. W. H. Lucas.*—Nearly all the cottages in this parish have been in the hands of two proprietors, one of whom, the late Colonel Fane, made it a condition in letting a cottage that the children should be sent to school, and the other has had education still more at heart, consequently we have had exceptionally good attendance at the two schools here. Nor are the farmers at all anxious to take the boys away from school at an early age. We have no agricultural gangs, nor is the employment of women in farm work, except at harvest, at all prevalent.

The difficulty we meet with is what I am afraid no legislation can reach, the total indifference shown by the ordinary farm labourer to any knowledge beyond the bare mechanical act of writing.

I have had during this winter a night school of about 30 lads of all ages, from 18 to 21. They delight to come and write copies, but I have the greatest difficulty in coaxing many of them to attempt the simple rules of arithmetic. Some who have been fair cipherers at day school have nearly forgotten addition, and don't care to renew their acquaintance with it. They meet with very little encouragement from the farmers to improve their minds, and "they don't see "the good of it."

NEW FOREST BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

January 4, 1869.

79. A committee of nine gave the following evidence :—

Boys are employed in bird and sheep keeping at 8 years of age, at a wage beginning at 3*d.* a day, rising to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week at 10 years, when they go to plough. It was thought that 8 years would be a good age to fix as the limit below which no child should be employed in field work. If boys were not allowed to work before 10 years they would hereafter be bad labourers ; the labouring parents would suffer more loss than the employer by the limit being placed at 10 years.

Girls are not employed in the fields. Women weed the corn. Men hoe the turnip crop by the piece, sometimes taking children with them. Hedging and draining are also done by the piece. Carter boys are not hired by the year, nor do they live in the farmhouses, but at home.

Wages.—Ordinary labourer, 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week throughout the union.

Carter gets 1*s.* a week more, and house and garden rent free.

The average weekly earnings throughout the year were said to be 14*s.* or 15*s.* a week.

Farms vary in size from 100 to 600 acres. There are also some small holders working their own land, and rarely employing a labourer, except in summer, these men are too often worse off than many a man who comes for parish relief.

Cottages in Fawley are rented at 1*s.* a week, with a garden ; they are dearer in other parts of the union. Gardens are usually attached to the cottages, the allotment system is not much in vogue.

Fuel on the borders of the new forest is cheap, cottagers having rights of cutting turf, &c.

The union is well supplied with schools, and people are beginning to take advantage of them, and to be more careful for the education of their children.

A system of half-day or alternate days for work and school is impracticable in agricultural districts. Night schools are popular as a means of supplementing the day school.

The inclosure of commons is beneficial to the poor ; more land being put under cultivation, more dwellings built for the labouring class, and a more civilized mode of life introduced.

Many people in the New Forest live entirely on forest rights, they keep pigs and cows running on the forest.

FAWLEY DISTRICT.

80. *Fredk. Fry*, relieving officer.—The district is very thinly populated. About 4,500 inhabitants in the Fawley division, which is nearly one-half of the union. There are schools at Dibden, Hythe, Fawley, Beaulieu, and Exbury.

The cottages are pretty good, though scant in number in Dibden and Exbury; where they are crowded there is much demoralization. A few children begin work at 7 years of age. Men's wages, 10*s.* a week.

Women do not work in winter, except occasionally for turnip pulling at 6*d.* or 8*d.* a day. They do not hoe turnips in the spring, sometimes they weed corn; the children do not weed.

BRAMSHAW.

	A.	R.	P.
Population - 746; acreage -	1,720	3	9

81. *Isaac Fielder*, relieving officer.—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs in this parish. About 13 males between the ages of 13 and 18 are employed on the farms all the year round, as carter boys, and also in other light work suitable to their ages and strength. Single and married women are employed "individually" in hay and harvest seasons. They live on or near the farms on which they work. Their usual hours of work upon the land are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. from November to February; from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the rest of the year. Half an hour is allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. The demand upon their physical powers does not at all injuriously affect their health and constitution. I never heard a single complaint made by any one as to ill-treatment. There are no *special* employments on the farms in this parish; there is one usual routine of work of a healthy character. I would not place any restriction on the employment of females in field work. I would not allow boys under 10 years of age to be employed in farm labour. I think that no labourer ought to reside at a greater distance than one mile and a half from his work. Taking into consideration the ages of the young persons employed here (between 13 and 18), the hours they work, and the easy distances they have to go, I do not recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons. I think no alteration is required for this parish in the present system of obtaining school attendance of the children. The school attendance is not at all affected by the distance the children have to go to school. Gentlemen and ladies who live in the neighbourhood, and who study the interests of the poor, assist the parents of large families in their school payments. No efforts are being made here for the industrial training of girls in connexion with elementary education. The cottages of the labouring class are, on the whole, good and sufficient. I think *here*, where the land is "mixed," one cottage per hundred acres is sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. There is that proportion here. The cottages are conveniently situated. Those occupied by large families have two bedrooms, and in some cases three. They are not overcrowded. They are constructed of brick, with rooms 11 feet by 10 feet. The ventilation and drainage is sufficient. They have two rooms, with a back room for washing purposes; sufficient supply of good water; large gardens (adjoining in most cases) or allotments of garden land near. The cottages on the farms are the property of the landlord. Other cottages in the parish, occupied by farm labourers, belong to gentlemen and others living in the parish. The average of cottage rent is 4*l.* a year.

The boys' schoolroom is new, lofty, dry, and well ventilated, 40 feet by 18 feet. The girls' schoolroom is attached to the teacher's residence, and is 40 feet by 16 feet. There is a suitably sized room adjoining for "infants." All are in good condition. There are—

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	21	
Between 10 and 13 -	13	
Over 13 - - -	2	30
Total - -	36	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	36 (20 in infant school.)	
Between 10 and 13 -	14	64
Over 13 - -	5	
Total - -	75	

There is a night school open 13 weeks in the year. It is open two hours a night for two nights a week, and is attended by 32 scholars, 10 under 12, and 22 above 12. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. This school supplements the other by giving boys who have left the day school an opportunity of retaining what they know. I find no difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient night school.

BEAULIEU.

Population - 1,300; acreage - 8,888.

82. *George Richardson.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. 100 boys and 75 women are employed in agricultural labour in this parish. I employ on my farm four boys and three women.

The following are the particulars as to age, &c.:—

Males:	
Between 10 and 13 - - -	80
„ 13 and 18 - - -	20
Total -	100
Females:	
Over 18, married - -	60
„ unmarried - -	15
Total -	75

In spring they are employed in weeding; in summer in weeding, haymaking, and harvest; in autumn in turnip cleaning; and in winter in threshing. They live on or near the farms at which they work. Those who do not live on the farm leave home at a quarter to 8 and return at a quarter past 5. Their hours of work upon the land are from 8 to 5. They are allowed one hour for meals. I do not think their health is affected by their work. I do not think any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally. Females are not subject to ill-treatment. No encouragement is given to young females going to farm work in this parish, as it has a tendency to lower their morals. I think it desirable that no female under 18 should be allowed to go to farm work. I would not allow boys under 10 to be employed in farm labour. Young persons should be employed from 8 to 5, with one hour for meals. Some of the children have to go two miles to school. The school attendance is not in any way affected here by the pecuniary resources of the parents, because when the parents cannot afford to send their children Lady Henry Scott pays for them. Efforts are being made here for the industrial training of girls. Two cottages to 100 acres are sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in this parish. There is that proportion here. The cottages are conveniently

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situated and are not overcrowded. Every cottage in this parish belongs to Lord Henry Scott, and has a living room 12 feet square, scullery 9 feet by 12 feet, pantry and porch 12 feet by 9 feet; three bedrooms. Every two cottages have a water supply and thorough drainage. Every cottage has at least 20 perches of garden, with pigstye, privy, and turf-house. The rent is 1*s.* a week, and is paid direct to the landlord. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase of cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	34	34
Between 10 and 13 -	6	6
Total - - -	40	40
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	40	40
Between 10 and 13 -	35	35
Total - -	75	75

There is no evening school in the parish.

PUBLIC MEETING AT FORDINGBRIDGE, January 14, 1869.

83. Sir Edward Hulse, Bart., the High Sheriff of the county, occupied the chair, and the following other gentlemen were also amongst those present:—The Hon. and Rev. S. Best, the Rev. W. J. Yonge, the Rev. R. P. Warren, the Rev. H. W. G. Awbrey, the Rev. E. Dew, the Rev. S. Harvey, Messrs. J. Egremont, W. J. Jeans, J. Ridley, Major Absalom, R. M. Davy, J. Stanford, C. Pinniger, J. Lewis, W. T. Chubb, H. Hall, J. Morrice, J. Coombs, W. F. Haydon, H. Hayter, &c.

Mr. John Ridley, of Damerham, thought the employment of girls in that neighbourhood was so very little that they could form no opinion of it. They hardly ever saw young girls at work, and as to young boys, it was only for about four months of the year that they were of use on the arable lands, in weeding and cleaning turnips, so that they had eight months of the year left for their education.

Mr. Portman.—Between what ages?

Mr. Ridley replied, between the ages of 8 and 12. It was not only his own opinion, but that of many others whom he had asked about it, that it would be undesirable to make any legal restrictions as to the employment of those young children in agriculture, because, as he had said, the comparatively short period of the year during which they were employed left ample time for them to learn reading and writing, and a moderate amount of arithmetic. He had had some experience in the employment of girls, though not there, and he had always found that girls of from 10 to 13 were serviceable, and the work had no bad effect upon their after-life, though it had upon girls above that age. In a place with which he was connected in another county they had a private gang. Now they were told that the gang was a very bad system, but his personal experience was to the contrary. They had a gang for about eight or ten weeks in the year, of boys and girls promiscuously, and varying from 8 years old to 12. They met at the farmhouse at 8 o'clock in the morning to go upon the lands to work. They had an interval for dinner, and they were bound to be back at the farm at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They were put under the care of a respectable man, and they had generally found, during the last four or five years, that a man of about 25 years of age was by far the best hand to manage those children. The clergyman of the parish in which the place was, had never raised the slightest objection to the system there. It was in Essex, on the estate of Lord Bristol.

Mr. Ridley proceeded to say that he did not think parents could do without the earnings of their children; and as to the children themselves, he thought their health was not only not injured, but actually benefited by being in the fresh air so many hours of the day. The question of education was certainly a most open one, and his own opinion was that in a very great degree education must be forwarded by voluntary efforts, assisted by Government grants. Certainly with regard to agricultural labourers, he should advocate that it be to a great extent voluntary, and under local management. He thought the employers of labour were quite alive to the benefit of education amongst their labourers, and they were the most fit persons to have the management of the schools, though of course they might be duly under Government inspection.

The *Chairman* asked Mr. Ridley if he thought it was really necessary that there should be a certificated master, which of course meant a higher style of education than they had in their neighbourhood—a dame's school, as it was called?

Mr. Ridley said that was a very different question, but in many parishes where there was a small school it didn't pay to get the Government grant. If they had only 30 children they were best without the Government aid and interference; it didn't pay unless they had 40 or 50 children.

The Hon. and Rev. S. Best.—Because you would require to have a certificated master?

Mr. Ridley said yes; it would be more expensive to have the grant, which paid so much better when they had over 50 children than it did with a smaller number. With regard to cottages, there was no doubt that as an investment they didn't pay; but as an employer, for the sake of getting good men under him, he would give 5*l.* a year for a cottage for a man, whereas he knew the man himself could only pay 4*l.* a year. He had several for which he paid 5*l.* a year, and let out at less, besides giving each a piece of land. As to the number of cottages, he considered that on light land the farmer ought to have two good cottages for every 100 acres of plough land, and two-thirds of the cottages should have three bedrooms. (Hear, hear.) The price of labour was a most difficult question to deal with. Some people reckoned it by the nominal weekly wages, and others by piece-work. His experience in that district was that the men he employed averaged 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week, or in the year 35*l.* to 40*l.*, though the nominal wages were 10*s.* a week. The skilled men, including, of course, the head shepherd, earned 16*s.* to 18*s.* a week. In reply to Mr. Portman, Mr. Ridley said his farm was in South Wiltshire, adjoining Hampshire on the one side and South Wilts on the other. He would remark in reply to Mr. Jeans's observations about the parishes which had no grants, that it did not at all follow that those parishes were not properly supplied with the means of education.

Mr. Jeans.—No, certainly not. In all probability they were doing well, and preferred being without the grant.

Mr. Ridley said in another district in which he was concerned he lent part of a malthouse for a school, and it was most successfully carried on by the ladies of the neighbourhood. There were about 80 children there, but they had not the Government grant, the building not being good enough for them to get it. The general feeling of the country, amongst all classes of farmers, he thought, was in favour of schools. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. W. J. Yonge said the tone had very much altered on the subject, for they used to be asked, "What's the use of teaching the children? The "result will be that they won't work."

Mr. Jeans then moved the following resolution:—"That preferring voluntary action to compulsory legislation on the subject of the employment of children

in agriculture, inasmuch as such legislation would be regarded as an undue interference between farmers and agricultural labourers, this meeting expresses a strong opinion that children should not be employed generally in agricultural labour before 10 years old, or unless they can read and write sufficiently, which should be certified by a certificate from the clergyman, or some other authority of the parish where the child lives, and this meeting pledges itself to use its influence in all legitimate ways to secure this rule being acted upon."

The Rev. R. P. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Portman said he should very much like to hear some expression of opinion upon that clause of Mr. Jeans's motion, which said that it was their opinion that children should not be generally employed in agriculture before they were 10 years of age, or unless they could read and write sufficiently, which should be certified by a certificate from the clergyman or some other competent authority of the parish in which the child lived. Supposing they established that system, unless the farmer would carry it out it would be like the law now in force, which said that no child under 13 years of age should be allowed to lead a horse, but they knew well enough that much younger children did do so. Would farmers help to carry out such a system if it were adopted?

Mr. Jeans thought such a plan as he had suggested would induce parents to keep young children at school, and to endeavour to push them on in their education, so that they might attain the necessary state of efficiency.

Mr. George Kent and others said they employed young boys, and the parents could not do without such assistance.

The Rev. W. J. Yonge said unless the wages of the labourers were increased, he did not see how they could support their families without the wages of the children.

Mr. Portman asked if they really thought the earnings of a boy under 12 years of age anything like met the wear and tear of the clothes with which he went to work? (Cries of "Yes.")

Mr. Jeans explained that there were clothes clubs established in the various districts, from which, by a weekly payment of from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a week, the children obtained nearly all the clothes they wanted, so that the 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week which they earned left a balance towards the support of the family after the clothes were paid for.

Mr. Portman urged, however, that as the clothes clubs were supported by charitable contributions of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, it was hardly fair to take those into consideration.

The Rev. S. Harvey did not see how it was possible that some of the boys could live unless they went to work in the fields as early as possible. If they were not sent into the fields under 10 years of age, they would go into the factory.

Mr. George Morrice said he had a labourer working for him who had a family of six, and he had repeatedly offered to send those children to school, but the parents had refused, saying they could not do without the earnings of the children. The man said, "I am in "your service, and you must employ my boys," the consequence being that they received 5*s.* a week more towards the support of the family. He knew very well that that man would not like any interference to prevent his putting his sons to work. As to the rate of wages, he found that his best men earned 13*s.* 6*d.* a week all the year round. He had not an able-bodied man who earned less than 13*s.* a week, taking everything into account. There might be about two who were not able-bodied men, and who were not capable of reaping and mowing, who did not earn so much. He spoke of well-ordered men who could go to work all the year round. That did not include the "taskers" that he brought up from Shaftesbury every year to do the harvest work. His men paid 1*s.* a week for their cottages; he had got none who paid over that, and they had potato land quite free. On Lord Shaftesbury's estate he had several cottages for which the tenants did not pay a penny rent. In addition to the wages the men had beer and as many potatoes pretty well as they could use.

The Rev. H. W. G. Aubrey said the clothes clubs which had been referred to were only a second-hand way of supplying the poor with what they did not get by their wages. (Hear, hear.) The wages were so low that for the necessary wants the gentlemen of the district had to club together to meet the requirements. The disease was low wages, and the charities, clothing clubs, coal clubs, and poor rates were only ways by which those who were better off had to pay at last what they ought to pay in wages—(hear, hear)—and they ought not to look upon these things as permanent institutions on which to rest; but on the contrary, they ought to try to make the labourer an independent man, who could feel that what he had he had earned by the sweat of his brow. (Hear, hear, and applause.)

Mr. Ridley thought the plan of certificates for the children would not work with the employers and labourers.

The Rev. H. W. G. Aubrey said the question seemed to be whether they would make the attendance compulsory, or have a compulsory test of proficiency. A plan had been suggested by the vicar of Downton —a very practical shrewd man—which seemed to have the minimum of compulsion, and to be well worthy of consideration, and that was that when the children went to ask for employment they should produce a certificate that they had passed a certain examination. What that examination should be would be another question, and they might fix it at as low a standard as they pleased, so as to allow boys to pass it between the ages of 9 and 10, and so avoid the difficulty about fixing any specific age. He (Mr. Aubrey) had had an opportunity of discussing the matter with a very practical, intelligent man, Mr. Jeans, who agreed with him that there would be no opposition to it on the part of the farmer. He thought, too, the clergy would agree with him that up to that age a sufficient elementary education would be obtained to enable the child to carry on practical education at a night school. If they asked the views of the clergy as a class, they would like the boy to be kept at school till he was 13 years of age, but they were quite aware that that would be impracticable, and seeing the wants of the parents they were quite satisfied they could not live without the 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week which at that age the children were enabled to bring in.

Mr. John Hannen said a great many children went out bird-keeping and doing such like work at 7 years of age.

Mr. Ridley moved as an amendment, that in the opinion of the agriculturists of that neighbourhood, the last clause in Mr. Jeans's resolution, having reference to a certificate being obtained by a child before he went to farm work, was very undesirable, and in their opinion it could never be carried out. It would lead, he said, to a great deal of ill-feeling between men as to getting the certificate for their children, and it would be a most difficult matter satisfactorily to settle.

Mr. John Egremont seconded the amendment.

Mr. Jeans and the Rev. H. W. G. Aubrey explained that the clause did not interfere with the interest of the parent after the child was 10 years of age, being merely protective up to that age. Would the farmers, asked the rev. gentleman, concede that education of the children of the agricultural labourers was desirable, and then that it was necessary that the children should be allowed till 10 years of age to acquire that education?

Mr. Jeans next moved that the meeting was further of opinion that great encouragement would be given to the education of the agricultural population if the existing restrictions to grants in aid to small country schools and also to night schools were altogether removed.

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The Rev. H. G. W. Aubrey seconded the motion, which was also unanimously adopted.

DAMERHAM.

Population - 698 ; acreage - 4,310.

84. *Rev. William Owen.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There are no private gangs in this parish. 44 males and 10 females are employed in this parish, of the following ages :—

Males :			
Between 10 and 13	-	-	11
„ 13 and 18	-	-	33
	Total	-	44
Females :			
Between 13 and 18	-	-	3
Over 18, married	-	-	6
„ unmarried	-	-	1
	Total	-	10

The males are employed all the year round in general farm work. The females are employed in spring in weeding corn and grass, and in cleaning land for "lenten" corn, and turnips; in summer in haymaking, &c. ; in autumn in harvesting ; in winter they sometimes help with the threshing machines. They live at no great distance from the farms. The usual hours of work are for the males, in summer from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. ; in harvest, 5 a.m. to dark, and in winter from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. ; for the females, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. all the year round, except harvest time, and then from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. It takes them on the average about half an hour to go to and from their work. One hour is allowed for dinner ; in harvest time one hour and a half more are allowed for breakfast and lunch. The young and the females are not subject to ill-treatment, and their health is not injuriously affected by the demand upon their physical powers. I think weeding amidst the high corn, when wet, is injurious to the health. Young females are put to work in the fields with young and old men ; and they see and hear things which are likely to have a bad influence upon them. It is, moreover, a serious hindrance to their proper training for domestic duties. I would prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, except during hay and corn harvest. The demand for labour does not require female employment. The pecuniary resources of the labourers are small, but I do not consider they are improved by female labour. The females do that which men ought to do, and so depreciate the men's labour. The mothers ought not to leave home (except at harvest time), and the daughters should go out to domestic service. Boys under 11 years of age should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour. I think the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work should be restricted according to age. No person, as a rule, should be compelled to walk three or four miles to and from work. At the end of a hard day's work such a walk is exhausting, and takes too much out of the labourer. I think that children and young persons should not be employed before 7 a.m. or after 5 p.m., except in hay and corn harvest. I do not think that the Factory Act or the Printworks Act, separately or in combination, could be beneficially applied to children intended for agriculture. No child, in my opinion, ought to be employed before 11 years of age, and all below that age should be *compelled, if possible*, to attend school. I am satisfied that the observance of these rules would tend greatly to improve the condition of the labourer physically, intellectually, and morally. The school attendance is not at all affected by the distance the children have to go to school, except in very tempestuous weather, when a few of the more distant children might be detained at home ; nor is it much affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents, the charge being so low (1*d.* a week to the ordinary labourer), and that charge being defrayed in certain instances by the liberality of others. Efforts are not being made in a direct specific way for the industrial training of the girls. Sewing is carefully taught in the school in connexion with the parish working society, and deserving girls are occasionally employed to help an experienced cook before going to regular service. No cottage ought to have less than three bedrooms ; otherwise young persons of both sexes are compelled to sleep in the same room. Obviously this must have a very bad effect upon the morals of the people. The moral sense being impaired, progress in education is *sure* to be impeded. Of course the health and comfort of the poor are most seriously affected by the careless, injudicious, and painfully selfish spirit too often evinced in the construction of their dwellings. The proportion of cottages in this parish is about three to 200 acres. This is not sufficient. There should be from two to three per hundred acres. The cottages are conveniently situated, and as a rule not overcrowded. Most of the cottages have small rooms. A great number have only two bedrooms, with a kitchen and pantry. The average dimensions are—

Kitchen,	12 ft.	long,	13 ft.	wide,	6 ft. 4 in. high.
Pantry,	8	„	13	„	6 ft. 4 in. „
1 bedroom,	12	„	13	„	6 ft. high.
2 bedroom,	8	„	10½	„	6 ft. „

The rooms, especially the bedrooms, are distressingly low. Boys and girls often sleep in the same room, or some in the room with the parents. The ventilation is defective. The drainage generally pretty good. The water supply is good. There are good-sized gardens, and outhouses generally adequate to needs. There are various classes of owners. Some of the poor have cottages of their own ; some are rented from the landlord. The majority are rented from the occupiers of the farms. Some are rented as high as 5*l.* The rent generally is from 4*l.* to 5*l.* Very little progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. The Union Chargeability Act does not cause any increase of cottage accommodation. The fact that the principal estate in this parish is in the hands of trustees who reside far away is against hope of much improvement, and the owner of the remaining portion shows no interest in such matters.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	56	42
Between 10 and 13 -	9	5
Total - -	65	47
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	41	27
Between 10 and 13 -	21	11
Total - -	62	38

There is no material difference in the numbers in the winter. Some of the elder ones are away at spring, potato planting, and in the autumn, picking up potatoes. In winter some of the little ones are away, owing to the weather. There are very few indeed, if any, who are neither at school nor at work. About 20 males, but scarcely any females, are growing up with insufficient education ; they cannot read sufficiently well to *enjoy* a book ; they cannot write legibly, or spell well ; and they have not mastered the first four rules of arithmetic. An evening school is held in the parish about 16 weeks in the year, from the middle of October to the middle of February ;

it is opened four nights a week, 1¾ hours each night. There are—

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	9	4
Above 12 - - -	37	20

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are the subjects of instruction. The evening school most certainly does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. In spite of some serious obstacles we have been enabled to maintain a fairly efficient evening school. The attendance has been, on the whole, good; behaviour, excellent; examination, good and encouraging. The principal hindrances are (1), the direct or indirect opposition or the entire lack of sympathy shown by farmers; (2), the difficulty of getting a good staff of suitable teachers in a parish where there are no resident gentry; (3), the natural fatigue and disinclination for study to be looked for in farm lads at the end of a long day's work.

By way of summing up, I will venture to express my firm conviction that Government should aim at—1. The inhibition of all female labour in farm work except at *hay* and *corn harvest*. (I am prepared to prove that in the course of a few years a family loses *cash* as well as *credit* by the females engaging in field work.) 2. The inhibition of the employment of boys in farm work under 11 years of age. 3. The education of children in schools up to 11 years of age. 4. The construction of dwellings in which the health and morals of the poor shall be duly considered. 5. The raising the wages of the labouring man to a *minimum* of 12*s.* a week all the year round.

A *nation* is but an assemblage of *families;* to ensure the stability and prosperity of a *nation*, you must legislate and labour for the well-being and well-doing of each *family*, and of each *member* of the family. The Government is bound to give to all, specially to the *simple dependent poor*, every reasonable protection and opportunity of thriving.

The farmers, as a class, ought not to be intrusted with the oversight of the education and general treatment of the poor; even a kind-hearted farmer has a strong natural tendency to regard the *labourer* very much as he would regard a *horse*—as a machine out of which he is to get as much work as possible. He is too apt to forget the original design of the *Creator* in making the former, as shown in Genesis, first chapter.

Legislation is difficult, but surely attainable in so holy and just a cause. Government, I think, would do well to assist certain schools *other* than those under *certificated* teachers, if regularly inspected and approved by Her Majesty's inspectors. I am disposed to think that after a certain space of time allowed for the desires and intentions of Parliament to be promulgated, and weighed and prepared for, *laws* as to *female* labour, employment and education of *children*, and building of *decent* dwellings, should be *penal*. Inflict a small fine, and in case of a farmer, should he offend a *third* time, deprive him of his vote at elections and power to fill municipal offices. I would let public opinion permeate the country thoroughly, and the will of Government be known *first*, and *then* see that the *laws* were *strictly* and *invariably* enforced.

85. *John Egremont.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable; there is some down and pasture. Boys are very seldom employed under 12 years of age. No girls are employed regularly. Women are employed very little. All the children, young persons, and women employed here live close to their work. The hours of work of the boys are from 7 to 5; of the girls, from 8 to 5. I do not think it necessary to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture. There is a National school here, and a chapel school. The agricultural labouring class take advantage of these as far as they can. Some, however, are not allowed to attend the National school and the night school, because they happen to go to chapel of a Sunday evening; they are therefore obliged to go to the chapel school, where there are only females to teach them. The cottages here I consider good and sufficient. They are all conveniently situated, and are well supplied with water. The cottages mostly have good gardens; if not, they have good allotments of land near them.

The extent of my farm is 1,000 acres arable, and 160 acres pasture and down. The soil is clay, chalk, and gravel.

I employ—

—	Males.			
	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.
In spring - -	4	8	23	35
In summer - -	4	8	28	40
In autumn - -	4	8	28	40
In winter - -	4	8	23	35

—	Females.
	Between 13 and 18.
In spring - -	2*

SOUTH CHARFORD.

Population - 70; acreage - 777.

86. *George Read.*—Boys are employed from 9 years and upwards all the year round. Women are employed in haymaking and in the harvest. Those children, young persons, and women who do not live on the farm, have to go about a mile to their work. Their hours of work are from 8 to 5. I would not limit the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, as parents with large families are anxious to get them out young to earn something to keep them. There is a day and night school in the next parish, one mile from here. The cottages in this parish and neighbourhood are good and sufficient. All have good gardens.

My farm contains 400 acres arable, 138 acres pasture.

I employ—

—	Males.				
	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.
In spring - -	—	3	3	18	24
In summer - -	2	3	3	24	32
In autumn - -	—	3	3	18	24

—	Females.		
	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18, married.	Total Females.
In spring -	1	—	1
In summer -	4	6	10

* They work only occasionally, when they like to come.

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NORTH CHARFORD.

Population - 60; acreage - 800

87. *John Taunton.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. Boys are employed all the year round from 10 years old and upwards. Girls are employed at 14 years of age in weeding and haymaking. Women are employed about a fourth of the year. The children, young persons, and women employed here have to come about a mile to their work, in some few cases two miles. Their hours of work are from 8 to 5. I would limit the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 10 years and upwards. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females. There are good schools in the adjoining parish, where most of the children attend until they go to work. The cottages here are very fair and sufficient. They are situated within one and two miles of the farms. They are not overcrowded, and are well supplied with water. All the cottages have good gardens and allotments near them.

My farm contains 420 acres arable and 110 acres pasture. The soil is chalk.

The number and age of persons employed on my farm are as follows:—

—	Males.			
	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.
In spring - - -	5	4	22	31
In summer - -	5	6	26	37
In autumn - -	5	4	22	31
In winter - -	5	4	22	31

—	Females.				
	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.		Total.
			Married.	Unmarried.	
In spring - -	2	2	2	1	7
In summer - -	4	2	4	1	11
In autumn - -	2	2	2	—	6
In winter - -	2	2	—	—	4

TOYD.

Acreage - 650.

88. *George Waters.*—The cultivation is mixed. Boys from the age of 11 years are employed at all times of the year in this parish. No girls are employed. Women are employed in weeding, haymaking, &c. They never have to come over a mile to their work. They work eight hours a day. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture. This is a small parish without a school. There is a school in the next parish, which is within half a mile of this; but in many cases when the children are not at work they are not at school. The cottages here are good and conveniently situated. There are not cottages enough; they are not overcrowded. All the cottages have either gardens or allotments of land.

Nature of soil.—Chalky.
Extent of farm.—500 acres arable, 150 acres pasture and down.

Number and age of persons employed on farm.

—	Males.				
	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.
In spring - -	—	5	4	10	19
In summer - -	2	5	4	30	41
In autumn - -	2	5	4	20	31
In winter - -	—	5	4	10	19

—	Females.
	Over 18, married.
In spring - - -	3
In summer - -	8 or 10.
In autumn - -	8 or 10.

GODSHILL.

Population - 244; acreage - 256.

89. *W. T. Chubb.*—My connexion with the parish is a peculiar one. I am not an occupier nor immediately an owner of any property in it. I believe the state of the poor generally to be unsatisfactory from the absence of any resident gentry, and the almost entire absence of any means of education. There is no place of worship of any description that I know of, the nearest church being three miles off. I am unable to speak with accuracy on other points.

MARTIN.

90. *Matthew Aldridge.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. Boys are employed in agriculture here all the year round from 10 years old. Girls are not generally employed. About two or three women are employed on a farm. The children, young persons, and women have to go a very short distance to their work. Their hours of work are from 8 in the morning till 5 in the evening. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture. There is a National school in this parish. The condition of the cottages in this parish is much the same as cottages generally are in country villages; there are plenty not overcrowded, and there is a good supply of water. All the cottages have either gardens or allotments of land.

Nature of soil.—Light chalky.
Extent of farm.—410 acres arable, 35 acres pasture.

Number and age of persons employed on farm.

—	Males.					
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total.
In spring -	—	1	3	2	7	13
In summer -	—	1	3	2	7	13
In autumn -	—	1	3	2	7	13
In winter -	—	1	3	2	7	13

—	Females.					
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18, married.	Total Females.
In spring -	—	—	—	—	2 or 3	—
In summer -	—	—	—	—	2 or 3	—
In autumn -	—	—	—	—	2 or 3	—
In winter -	—	—	—	—	2 or 3	—

WHITSBURY.

Population - 204; acreage - 1,850.

91. *T. S. Ruddle.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. One or two boys may commence to work at 8 years of age where there is a large family. They are chiefly employed as scarecrows. No girls are employed in this parish. A few women are employed, chiefly at haymaking and harvest. The distances to which the children, young persons, and women employed here have to go to work do not average a mile. They work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., less an hour for dinner. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. Boys that commence working early, say from 8 years old, make the best labourers. They in fact do no work that is injurious to them, and a few shillings is a great assistance when there is a large family of young children. No young girls even apply to me for work; in fact they do not work here in the fields, and women are getting more scarce yearly, so that I see no necessity for any restrictions on the employment of females. I should like to see better means of education provided in this parish; some of the children go to Fordingbridge, over three miles. There are some very good cottages here. If there were more they would let. They are, however, badly off for water. The greater proportion of the cottages have gardens or allotments.

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Nature of soil.—Light, chalk subsoil; in 4 and 5 course husbandry.

Extent of farm.—1,282 acres; 970 acres arable, 312 acres pasture and wood.

—	Males.					
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.
In spring -	—	1	3	4	19	27
In summer -	—	1	3	4	19	27
In autumn -	—	1	3	4	19	27
In winter -	—	1	3	4	19	27

—	Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18:		Total Females.
					Married.	Unmarried.	
In spring -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
In summer	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
In autumn	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
In winter	—	—	—	—	1	—	1

DEVONSHIRE.

Devonshire.

Mr. Portman.

MEETING AT TAVISTOCK,

Oct. 16, 1868.

92. Rev. Dr. Tancock in the chair; a large attendance of influential persons from the neighbourhood.

The following resolutions were carried:—

1. That 10 years is the lowest age at which children ought to be employed in agricultural labour.

2. That it is desirable that the cottage should be as near the farm on which the labourer is employed as possible, due regard being paid to good water supply, schools, and places of worship.

3. That it is desirable that increased facilities should be given in rural districts for providing education for the children of the labouring classes.

Mr. Pratt stated that the wages of the district for a man were 12*s.* a week with perquisites. He also advocated night schools for lads in summer in preference to winter, as during the latter period the boys were wanted for the cattle in the evening.

Mr. Parsons advocated industrial training for boys, and quoted a case of a school at Bridgenorth where satisfactory results had been attained, the children coming to the school at 9 years of age and going out to farm service at 12 years.

Mr. Turner thought female labour in agriculture was degrading and would not in the long run increase the earnings of the family, as by such labour the wages of the husband was likely to be lowered.

Rev. T. Parris said 10*s.* a week was nearer the average rate of wages than 12*s.*

Mr. Collard said he paid his men 12*s.* a week; the labourers usually have a garden or allotment and a piece of potato ground manured for them. Women should not work in the fields except at harvest, "they take in 8*d.* to throw out 1*s.*" To a great extent the fault of non-education rested with the employer, who hired their boys as they bought their cattle and hought no more about them.

Mr. Martin, of Bratton, said the wages in his district were 10*s.* a week and perquisites, making it equivalent to 12*s.* Boys were hired out as soon as they were capable of performing the ordinary duties on the farm at from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week with food. Most of the labourers had gardens attached to their cottages and potato ground in addition.

On the third resolution Rev. T. Parris said they wanted to get the benefit of the Government grant for results, and not only for schools where there were certificated teachers.

DEVON CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

MEETING AT EXETER,

Oct. 23, 1868.

Earl of Fortescue in the chair.

93. The following resolutions were carried:—

(1.) That in the opinion of this meeting it is advisable that Parliament should not interfere in our rural districts with the education of the poor as regards their age or attendance at school, but that assistance from Government would be very beneficial for building schoolhouses and paying schoolmassers in our small parishes.

(2.) That the chamber does not think Parliamentary legislation necessary, yet they will ever be willing to

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continue their help for the amelioration of the condition of the poor in their education and welfare.

(3.) The following resolution was *negatived*:—

"That the chamber will render all assistance in its power to the prosecution of the inquiry by the Assistant Commissioner sent down under the Royal Commission."

In the course of the discussion,

Mr. W. Holley said that boys were not required by the farmers before 10 years of age. He thought it would be difficult to carry out any scheme of school attendance during a portion of each year between 10 and 13 years.

Major Porter thought the education of a farm boy ought to be finished by the time he was 9 years old.

Mr. Norris and Mr. Ward thought 9 years too early an age for children to go to farm service; the latter thought Boards of Guardians should allow relief for children up to 10 years.

Rev. W. Karslake said in South Molton Union 10 years was the age for relief. Female labour in his district was hardly to be obtained; the habit of women going into the field to work was gradually dying away. He spoke in favour of an alteration in the present regulation as to Government grants to schools.

Mr. Radmore thought the class whose education was most neglected was the small farmers. In his parish the children of many of them never went to school. The children of the poor were attended to, and the difficulty was to get them to work on a farm.

Mr. Risdon said "any scheme of education that the Legislature might attempt to enforce upon the rural population would be found very difficult to carry out, but it was quite certain that no nation could be said to have done its duty unless opportunity was given for every poor man's child to be taught to read and write." He thought that might be achieved by the time they were 10 years old.

Rev. H. W. Toms said that night schools if properly conducted were of the greatest possible advantage. He considered them as supplying the missing link between the time the children left the elementary schools and the time when they went to permanent service. He had had one for 12 years; when it was free it failed, when he required a payment of 1*d.* per night it answered very well.

Mr. Leatt was in favour of compulsory education.

Earl Fortescue said they had had a very lucid explanation of the points on which the Assistant Commissioner wished for information, and he ventured to think that from such a practical assembly he would carry away with him some valuable information. It seemed to him that great misapprehension had existed on the part of the public generally until very recently, and indeed it continued to a great extent now, as to the hardships suffered, as regarded ill-health, bad lodging, and defective education, by the rural population as compared with that of the town. He did not happen to have with him a valuable return which was moved for in the House of Commons, with regard to the signatures of persons to the marriage register, and as to the per-centage of mortality in boroughs and non-boroughs, or rural districts, but the results with regard to education had struck people with greater surprise, considering that the residuum of the country was supposed to be found not in the town, but in the rural districts, than even the statistics with regard to mortality, which implied health. Lancashire with its large towns got much larger grants from the Imperial exchequer in aid of education than Devonshire, with its small and thinly peopled parishes, and was thus better able to maintain certificated schoolmasters; yet notwithstanding that the signatures by marks to the marriage registers in enlightened Lancashire were 26 per cent. of men and 46 per cent. of women, whereas in poor, benighted Devonshire, with hardly any aid from Government, the per-centage was 18 men and 22 women. Sanitary matters too were better in the country than in the towns, and overcrowding in towns was infinitely worse. He thought ten years of age was a very reasonable limit under which no child should be systematically employed in agricultural work. Before that the great thing to do was to lay the foundation of a sound knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. He had no doubt that evening schools were most beneficial, although he could see in some localities there must be very great difficulty in carrying them on. It was quite clear that the schoolmaster who did his duty and worked hard in the day ought not be called upon to tax his energies by keeping school at night, for an overworked system would not do any good. Though it might be desirable that Government should grant support to evening schools where established, he did not think it would be desirable to have any legislation insisting on their being established anywhere. (Hear, hear.) Still less did he think that any standard of learning as a condition of help should be established. He thought that it would be very desirable that encouragement should be given by employers, but no compulsory power, to the production of certificates, such as giving the preference to those servants who brought them. He thought it would have a good influence in encouraging education amongst the children, and would overcome some of the reluctance on the part of the parents to send their children to school. He thought a modified renewal of the apprenticeship system would be a most desirable thing, and he thought the Legislature might encourage it by taking off the stamp duty of half-a-crown that was now put on apprenticeship indentures and substituting a penny stamp. Proper control over the young persons seemed to be one of the greatest deficiences in the working of the present social system in agricultural districts. With regard to women working it was a practice, whether desirable or not, that was fast dying out in Devonshire, and it seemed to him, as Mr. Karslake had said, that it was a matter that ought to be left to the discretion of the labourer and his wife, and the less the Legislature interfered in petty details the better. He was not the one to undervalue education, and he always looked upon that as having the first claim upon him wherever he had property, but he did feel most strongly that nothing would be so undesirable as having compulsory education at the public expense. Providing the school buildings did not seem to him to come under the same category, but the payment of the working expenses of the schools seemed to him should be mainly defrayed by the parents themselves. His lordship concluded by pointing out there was danger while giving book instruction of giving a bad education in those principles of independence and self-reliance which were even of more importance to the well-being of the community than book learning.

DEVON CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

MEETING AT EXETER,

April 9, 1869.

94. Mr. Kennaway's motion,—

"That the improvement in the condition of the agricultural labourer, which it is the desire of this Chamber to advance, will be furthered rather by individual efforts, resulting from an increasing conviction on the part of his employer of the community of their interests, and of the absolute necessity to the farmer of an adequate supply of trustworthy and intelligent labour, than by any general recommendation of this Chamber on the subject."

In moving the above resolution Mr. Kennaway stated that the supply of agricultural labour had decreased considerable between 1851 and 1861. He was of opinion that in many parts of Devon the cottages were not either sufficient in number for the population or good in the accommodation provided.

He descanted on the evils of overcrowding in the dwellings of the poor, and the difficulties of improvement on account of the expense of building. He considered 5*l.* should be the highest annual rent for an agricultural labourer's cottage, and expressed himself in favour of a garden being attached to each, as tending to make the labourer more contented with his lot. The educated labourer was, in his opinion, of great value to the employer, not only on account of the daily increasing use of machinery in farm operations, but also for the better care of stock. The school education ought to be continued and perfected on the farm. He submitted to the Chamber, that as they had on a previous occasion expressed their opinion that legislative interference was not desirable, the improvement of the welfare of the agricultural labourer should be effected by individual exertion and by the pressure of public opinion.

Mr. Risdon stated that one of his labourers had told him that he could not do without the earnings gained by his children at a tender age in turnip-hoeing and other similar work.

Mr. Moore-Stevens was of opinion that a boy's education should be such as to fit him for his station in life. He considered boys under 10 years of age valueless to the farmer.

Mr. Davy stated that in the South Molton Union-house a half-time system had been introduced, and that the number of applications for boys under that system by the farmers had much increased. He thought the same system might be beneficially introduced into all schools, and that if girls had some industrial training given them at school the comforts of the labourer's home would be much increased.

Mr. J. Dace thought a reform in the present system of Government grants to schools was much needed.

Dr. Budd considered that the gist of the resolution was to leave things as they are. The labourer now must come eventually on the parish for relief and maintenance.

EAST BUDLEIGH.

Drake's Charity School.

95. *William Fletcher*, master.—Boys go to work very young. An agricultural labourer's child begins at 8 years of age, sometimes younger. The oldest boy in the school is 10 years old. A boy earns 6*d.* a day, sometimes with cider, in weeding corn, potatoing, and apple-picking. The cider is reckoned at 2*d.* a quart. An ordinary labourer gets 10*s.* a week and two quarts of cider a day; they prefer an allowance of cider to extra money. The average rent of a cottage with one room and a closet on the ground floor, two bedrooms, a garden, and pigsty, 3*l.* 10s. a year. Field work makes the boys rough in their manners, and when once they begin work it is hard to get them to school again. The poverty of parents is often pleaded as an excuse for the non-attendance of the children. There is no night school.

96. *Mary Millyard*, mistress of girls' school.—The girls begin to leave school at 6 years of age. The oldest girl at present in the school is 9 years of age, and she only comes on alternate mornings. When the lace trade is good they do not come to school at all. They go to the lace school for twelve months at a payment of 6*d.* per week, and find their own cotton, and are not considered to bring in any earnings. After twelve months they begin to earn 2*d.* or 3*d.* a day, and at 12 years old they will get 8*d.* a day. The lace trade causes a want of domestic servants, and demoralizes the girls. This village is worse than a parish where there is no lace work. The parents are uneducated themselves and consequently do not trouble about the children. I do not think that without compulsion the limit of age for children's work would do any good. We once had a night school for girls, but it only succeeded while it was a novelty, and as long as the boys' night school was held at the same time.

97. *Emma Vooght*, lace maker.—A child of 7 years old can earn ½*d.* or 1*d.* a day; when they have worked three years, 3*d.* or 4*d.* a day, if kept at work all day. At 13 or 14 years of age, if they are quick, they can earn 9*d.* a day—as much as a woman. They have to find their own thread and silk. The girls do not go out to field work.

EAST BUDLEIGH.

Population, 2,530 - Acreage, 2,622.

98. *Henry Leatt.*—The cultivation is 1,705 arable land; 226, meadow and pasture; 106, orchards; 209, moorland, plantation, and furze; 338, commons. Boys are not generally employed earlier than 9 years of age. A few younger boys may be employed during the summer months either keeping sheep on the commons or keeping birds from the crops. No girls are employed in the fields. There is no woman so employed in this parish. Boys have in very few instances, if any, to go more than a mile to their work. They work in summer from 7 to 5, and in winter from 7.30 to 4.30. I do not think it desirable in this parish to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. Since ploughmen have been accustomed to drive the horses themselves I think it quite unnecessary to put any restriction on the employment of children in agriculture in this neighbourhood. There is a school at East Budleigh, a large village on one side of the parish, and another at Budleigh Salterton, a large village on the other side. There are also two smaller villages, each of which is one mile from one or other of the schools. The parents by no means take advantage of the schools as they should. One reason of this is the great indifference with which education is treated by many of the parents; another reason is the little attention given by the teachers when the children are at school. This is especially the case at East Budleigh school, the teacher of which fills the office of secretary to the gas inspectors at Budleigh Salterton, two miles from his school, and assistant overseer of this large parish. The trustees living at a distance, the vicar has the management.

The number of cottages in this parish is not sufficient for the supply of the labour required. They are conviently situated with respect to the farms. They are overcrowded in several instances; I have known no evil results directly from this cause. They are for the most part well supplied with water, but many of them are not well ventilated. All the cottages have good gardens or allotments of land.

99. *R. Lipscomb, Esq.*—The education in this district is at a very low ebb indeed, many of the farmers are quite unable to write correctly. The boys do not work much in the field before 10 years of age; their earnings are very small; they get their food and perhaps a 1*s.* a week. The women do not work in the fields at all, and lace making occupies all the girls and leads to a considerable amount of illegitimacy. The men's wages are from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a week with two quarts of cider a day, or 11*s.* a week without cider; hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The best men in the parish go away elsewhere. There are a large number of small occupiers who work with their own hands and employ but little labour. The cottages are bad; in my opinion some should have two and some three bedrooms, but not all to be built on the same plan. The cottages on the farms which are under the control of the tenant are stipulated for at a rent of 1*s.* a week for the labourer. It is a doubtful point whether a village or scattered cottages on the farms are best for the labourer; some labourers do not like to live in outlying cottages.

There are allotments in Otterton of half a rood each, rent 5*s.* a year free of rates, to be paid in advance; we had for these 69 applications.

In Budleigh there are 82 portions of allotments; in Knowle two or three acres divided into portions.

Devonshire.

Mr. Portman.

h.

BROADCLYST.

PRESENT:

Rev. L. Acland.
Mr. Ware,
Mr. T. Wish,
Mr. Cockram,
Charles Norris,
Richard Burton,
Richard Merry,
} Farmers.
Daniel Harris, Clerk.
Mr. Ham.

100. It was stated that boys are very rarely employed in this district under 10 years of age, and it was thought 10 years would be a good limit to be fixed by law as the age below which no boys should be employed. They are occasionally employed younger for apple-picking and bird-tenting. The wages are 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day and a quart of cider. Apple-picking is considered the same as harvest, and in acorn-picking they get 4*d.* a peck and can generally pick three pecks a day. Twelve years should be the youngest age for permanent employment on the farms. Girls are not employed at all in the fields, nor are children generally employed so much as they were 20 years ago, as the farmers are beginning to think it is the dearest labour they can have. Women are generally employed when they choose to work; they get half a man's wages and shorter hours, 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Boys work with the men from 6.30 a.m. The women do not, as a rule, work more than four days a week. The wages of a carter or a shepherd are 10*s.* a week and 4*d.* a day for cider; and as a rule they get wood firing for nothing, a house and garden free. An ordinary labourer's wages are 10*s.* a week with two quarts of cider, not including Sundays, and no extras. The rent of cottages attached to farms is 1*s.* a week, and for those in the village 4*l.* and 5*l.* a year. Task-work men get 2*s.* a day and cider; for a day's work they would expect to earn 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* at piecework. There are gardens attached to most of the cottages, and allotments in the parish usually of a quarter of an acre each rented at 10*s.* a year free of rates and charges. Many of the best educated lads and young men go away from the place elsewhere.

A system of half days or alternate days for work and school would not answer, nor would a certificate of school attendance between the years of 10 and 13 be fairly carried out by the employer. Boys that leave school at 10 years old do not after that attend Sunday or night school and lose what they have learned. There are, however, 19 boys over 10 years of age on the books of the Broadclyst school and who attend pretty regularly four and a half days a week. Farm lads are not hired by the year and there are no hiring fairs. Under the old apprentice system lads become better agricultural labourers.

The farms in this district are large for Devonshire; the land is about one-third grass, and two thirds tillage. Two to three cottages per 100 acres would be sufficient. Cob cottages are going out of fashion; the price of a double cottage with two rooms below and two above in each, built of brick and slate, is about 200*l.* In this parish, with a population of 2,385, there are 485 cottages, giving an average of five persons to a cottage, which is sufficient accommodation. At the same time there are a few cottages crowded. In our opinion the cottage of the labourer whose wife works in the fields is quite as tidy (and sometimes even more so) as that of the woman who does not work.

The labouring class do not save much money. They have their clubs; one has been in existence for 100 years, and has about 180 members. The sick allowances from these clubs for those in bed is 10*s.* a week, but if they are able to get about at all, or are able to be out of bed, 5*s.* a week. 10*l.* is allowed for funeral expenses, and the payment to the club is 1*s.* a month, and when this payment is made by the members, the public-house keeper deducts out of each shilling so paid three half-pence for himself.

101. *Mrs. Finnimore*, labourer's wife.—I used to work in the fields regularly after my marriage, and I do not think I ever got any profit out of it, as the things were wasted at home, and the children could not get to school. I was compelled to go to work. The cottage was let by the farmer on condition that the wife and children of the labourer went to work when wanted. I think the same system goes on now among the farmers. I used to get 8*d.* a day, and a quart of cider, and work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I could earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a day pulling mangold and turnips by the piece. I have had six children; a few girls go out to field work now. My cottage and garden is rented at 5*l.* a year, and has one kitchen, two back places on the ground floor, and two small bedrooms upstairs.

POLTIMORE AND HUXHAM.

102. The *Hon. and Rev. J. Fortescue.*—There are eight women at Poltimore who go out to work in the field. No unmarried girl goes to the field, and the children leave school as soon as they are able to earn anything. I think field work for women makes the cottages untidy, and the women often take to drink. I fancy there is an arrangement made by the farmer to have the labour of the wife when he wants it. The farmer has the cottages, and lets them to the labourers. I do not think that any system of compulsory school attendance or an educational rate would be listened to by the farmer.

Lord Poltimore's Cottages.

103. A block of four front rooms, and back kitchen on the ground floor, three bedrooms upstairs very good. Two with fire-places and wash-house among the four, with two ovens. There are privies, but no other outhouses, no pigsty, a good garden. Rent 5*l.* a year and rates.

104. *Mr. Benson*, late agent to the Duke of Bedford.—A great many children of all ages are employed for apple-picking. As a rule women and children are not much employed throughout Devon in the fields, though they are so in mines and paper mills. I think that 10 years would be a good age to fix below which no child should work, and between the ages of 10 and 13 a certain number of days' schooling in the year should be required, though I think a system of certificates would be difficult to work. The state of education in this county is better than it was. Aid is wanted from Government to start a good school in smaller parishes. For outlying cottages on the farms a small school might be placed to suit certain districts till children are old enough to walk two or three miles to a better one.

Some few lads live in the farm houses, and are hired by the week or month. The wages of a labouring man in this district are 10*s.* a week, and in the neighbourhood of Tavistock 12*s.* and 13*s.* In some cases there is a tendency to put money by in the savings bank, and I have known cases of a man saving enough to take a small portion of land; but the means of saving are very small. The piecework done in Devonshire is not equal to that done in Lancashire, whereas in Lancashire a man would get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and in Devonshire 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, the former would do for 7*d.* the same amount of work as the latter for his 1*s.* 8*d.* It is very desirable to give the labourer as good a cottage as possible. I have often seen a man reclaimed by being removed from a bad to a good cottage with a garden attached to it; he becomes more comfortable, and then turns his thoughts to educating his children.

HONITON UNION.

Population, 80,866. - Acreage, 20,870.

105. The cultivation is mixed. The land is chiefly divided into dairy farms, with proportionate arable. Boys are employed as farm servants permanently

from the ages of 11 to 15 years, and occasionally during the weeks of harvest. Girls are likewise commonly employed as farm servants of the like age with boys, but are very seldom seen in the fields. Women are employed to a very small extent. The distance they have to go to work does not exceed a mile. Their hours are from 8 to 5 generally, with an allowance of half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. We are of opinion that legal interference as to the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed, and as to the employment of females, is unnecessary.

There are generally sufficient local means of education, but indifference upon the part of the parents, and occasional inability to provide suitable clothing for their children, above all, the prevailing habit of encouraging the manufacture of lace at home, interfere with their due attendance at school.

The amount of cottage accommodation and the quality is in some cases unsatisfactory, but a general improvement is taking place in this district. The cottages by no means generally have gardens. Some of the inconvenience resulting from this deficiency is met by the custom of farmers underletting small allotments of land for the purpose of potato culture, &c.

By order of the Board,
CHARLES GORDON.
Chairman.

BOARD OF GUARDIANS, HONITON,

October 24.

106. *Mr. Gordon* in the chair; 12 guardians present.—Some women are employed hoeing turnips, for from 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day; at piecework they will earn 1*s.*; in some cases cider is given. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. The boys begin work at 10 years of age; if by the day, at the rate of 2*s.* a week; if they live in the farm house, they get food and lodging only. If a child comes out of the union he has a suit of clothes given him. Men's wages, 9*s.* a week and cider. Many have half piecework and half day work. The upper class labourer gets 9*s.* a week, his breakfast, cider, a house and a garden free. The hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. The best men earn at piecework, draining, &c., 15*s.* to 16*s.* a week. The harvest is often let by the acre to a man with a machine, who will earn from 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week. Turnip-hoeing is let by the acre at 6*s.* the acre. In lace-making children will earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, and a good working woman about 9*d.* a day.

OFFWELL.

107. *Rev. J. Coplestone.*—Agricultural labourers' children leave school at 10 years of age. There are many parishes in this neighbourhood without any advantages either of a squire or of an active clergyman. The small farmers' children go to a National school. If the limit of age for work were placed at 10 years, this district would not be much affected, and the earnings could well be spared. But some compulsion for school attendance is absolutely necessary. I do not think that the requirements of a certificate for a certain amount of school attendance during the year between the ages of 10 and 13 would have much effect. The best educated lads leave the parish. Girls are not much employed in field work, and women but very little. They earn 10*d.* a day, and work from 8 a.m to 5 p.m. Boys go to live at the farms at 10 years of age, and get their food and lodging, washing and mending the clothes being found by the parents. A boy of 11 years of age gets 3*s.* a week and cider, Sundays included, and lives at home. A man's wages are, for those in the house, 3*s.* 6*d.* and 4*s.* a week and keep, and those living at home, 8*s.* to 10*s.* and privileges, that is, cider, cottage, &c. Men prefer clubs to savings banks. There is a great want of cottages in the district towards Colyton and Widworthy. There is a night school here kept by my daughter, and well attended. The young girls are principally occupied in lace-making, at which they frequently begin at 7 years of age.

OFFWELL.

Population, 390. - Acreage, 2,000.

RETURN.

108. *The Same.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs in this parish. In this parish two women, five boys, three girls, and four young men are employed in agricultural labour. There are only two boys employed who are not inmates of the farm, being either children of labourers or of the farmer. Those two, as well as the others, are mostly drivers of three-horse ploughs. One of the two boys lives close by; the other goes a mile to and fro. The hours of work on the land are from 6 to 6. An hour and a half is allowed for meals. The work does not injuriously affect the health of the labourers, nor are they subject to ill-treatment. The young females usually work at home, or at a small school, at lace-making. I do not think that lace-making, which we have, is better for morals than farm work, which we have not; but lace-making does not conduce to health and strength of body. I think it would be well to limit the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour to 10 at least. Some go at 9, or even 7 and 8. I do not think the provisions of the Factory Act and Printworks Act, as to school attendance, applicable to this district, where the boys' chief employment is driving, and does not admit of interruption. Schools here are in general conveniently situated, so that few have far to go. The school attendance is very considerably affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents.

Cottage accommodation is very bad in some parishes, attended with the usual evils, and counteracting education. The cottages here that belong to the landlord are too often let with the farms, and kept in bad repair; and those built new (the landlords build none) are very cramped as to rooms and gardens and back premises. I can suggest no other remedy for bad cottage accommodation than the action of public opinion on landlords who neglect their duty.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.
Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	7 or 8
Between 10 and 13 - -	—
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	8
Between 10 and 13 - -	6

In Winter.

Boys:	
Under 10 - - -	7 or 8
Between 10 and 13 - -	—
Girls:	
Under 10 - - -	6
Between 10 and 13 - -	8

There are no children who, throughout the year, are neither at school nor at work; there are a few in winter. About 10 or 12 males, and three or four females are growing up with insufficient education. An evening school is open from October to March, excepting a few weeks at Christmas. It is open

Devonshire.
Mr. Portman.
h.

four nights a week, an hour and a half each night. There are about six scholars. The instruction is chiefly in reading and writing. It is difficult to find a teacher who is in earnest in the work, and bears the drudgery cheerfully. The school is at present kept by my own daughter, the master not relishing it.

LYMPSTONE.

Population, 1,111 - Acreage, 950.

109. *Rev. W. H. Curtler.*—The cultivation is mixed, more pastoral than arable. No females at all are employed in agricultural work. Five boys between 10 and 13, and four between 13 and 18, are employed. They are made generally useful, and are put to all kinds of work. They live on or near the farms at which they work. Their hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with half an hour for lunch and one hour for dinner. They are not subject to ill-treatment, and are not injuriously affected by their work. I see no reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour, upon the distance to which they should be allowed to go to work, or upon their hours of work.

I think any mode of enforcing school attendance in my own district unnecessary and inadvisable. The schools here are within very easy reach of all. The parents can and do afford to pay for their children's schooling. We regulate the payments according to the parents' means. The girls are taught plain needlework.

Nothing more injuriously affects the morals of the people than the want of proper cottage accommodation. Most of the people in the parish reside in the village. There are very few cottages on the farms. The cottages are sufficient in number, and, the area of the parish being small, well enough situated. The quality is indifferent, and in cases of large families they are overcrowded, not with lodgers, but with members of the family. There are scarcely ever three bedrooms, the accommodation therefore is insufficient, especially in sickness. The cottages are owned by various owners of small means, often residing at a distance. The rent is 5*l.* per annum, with a small bit of garden; 4*l.* 10*s.* without garden. Very little progress is being made towards increasing cottage accommodation; none whatever through the Union Chargeability Act.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	12	12
Between 10 and 13 -	5	5
Total - -	17	17
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	9	9
Between 10 and 13 -	5	5
Total - -	14	14

There is not a child in this parish who is not either at school or at work. I do not think there are more than two or three young persons who cannot read and write, and these are learning to do so.

There is an evening school in the parish, open from October 1st to March 25th. It is open four nights a week, two hours each night. There are 30 scholars on the register (two under 12, and 28 above). The average attendance is 18. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. I consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiences of the day school. The area of the parish being small, and the great bulk of the population residing in the village, we have not the great difficulty of distance to contend with.

Children are employed on the beach as young as 7 years, this being a fishing village.

The farms are small, and the farmers for the most part an ignorant set of men. The better educated among the labourers go away to London or other places for higher wages.

The wages of an agricultural labourer in this parish are 11*s.* a week and cider; the upper men 12*s.* and cider; jobmen get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Lympstone School.

Boys.

110. 1. Boy of 12 years, earned 9*d.* a day planting mangel. Passed examination in sixth standard.

2. *Passmore*, 10 years old; worked for a farmer at 8*d.* a day stripping mangel. Hours of work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one and a half hour out for meals. Began to work last year.

Girls' School.

111. *Miss Langdon*, mistress.—Girls are not employed here in the fields. They go to the lace schools at 10 or 11 years of age, after leaving the National school.

UPLOMAN.

Population, 444 - Acreage, 2,577.

112. *Rev. C. S. Bere.*—The cultivation is mixed; two-thirds arable. There are no private gangs. There are employed here in agricultural labour, nine males between 13 and 18; 13 females (married) and one (unmarried) over 18. Their occupation in spring is weeding corn, stone-picking, &c.; in summer, haymaking; in autumn, corn harvest; and in winter, digging and cutting turnips. They live near the farms on which they work. They work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and are allowed an hour and a half for meals. They are not injuriously affected by their work. As far as the morality of the women is concerned, the work they do by themselves (as turnip cutting, &c.) is better by far than the work of the hay field or harvest field. Cases constantly occur in which the mother leaves the younger children in the care of an elder child (of 9 or 10, perhaps, who ought to be at school), so that she may go to work. Here, I think, restriction is necessary. Mothers, where children can all go to school, might go to work an hour later, at 9 a.m., and be home a little earlier than 5. I should fix the age below which boys should not be permitted to be employed at 12. Restriction is not necessary as to distance or hours of work. Farmers are strongly opposed to either of the modes for obtaining school attendance contained in the Factory Act. The method of school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months, or six months throughout the year, would be just feasible. I see nothing short of compulsory education as a real and effective antidote to the present indifference and labour-interest of the parents; by labour-interest I mean, the interest which parents have in keeping their children at home that *they* may work. The school attendance here depends on the weather, which involves the state of the roads. The people are (and must be to some extent) "weather Christians" on the Sunday; and the children are "weather scholars" in the week. I do not think the parents feel the penny a week at all. No efforts, of which I am aware, are being made for the industrial training of girls.

There are few overcrowded cottages here, but there is much want of comfort, which the outlay of a little money might procure to the poor. There is not quite a sufficient number of cottages. There are 35 instead of 50. Two to 100 acres is the proper proportion.

The cottages are conveniently situated. There are very few with three bedrooms. They are chiefly built of "cob," and have usually two rooms downstairs, the chief room being about 12 feet square, the other of the same size or smaller, for wood, &c. They are *too* well ventilated, being very draughty. Draughts (arising from badly made or badly hung doors, imperfect casements, &c.), *and want of proper light*, are the worst features in Devonshire cottages. There are generally two bedrooms, sometimes as large as the downstair rooms, sometimes smaller (where the second room downstairs is very small). There is always a garden attached of an average of 30 perches. The supply of water is fair. The drainage is imperfect, but the cottages are too isolated to make this a cause of infection. They are generally let with the farms. The rent is generally 1*s.* a week, seldom more than 4*l.* a year. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase of cottage accommodation. I think it is impossible for good cottage accommodation to be provided on self-supporting terms, unless groups of eight or six, or at least four, could be built together.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On the Register of some School.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	19	—
Between 10 and 13 -	6	—
Total - -	25	20
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	29	—
Between 10 and 13 -	7	—
Total - -	36	24

There are two girls between 8 and 10 and three between 10 and 13 who are neither at school nor at work. About 10 or 12 are growing up with insufficient education. The young persons forget what they have learnt; they seldom read at home, even if they have books occasionally. An evening school is open 20 weeks in the year, from October to April. It is held two nights a week and is open one hour and a half each night. There are eight scholars on the register; the average attendance is six. The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. It does not supply the deficiencies of the day school. The chief difficulty in the way of maintaining it is the distance the boys have to come from their farms to the school.

Uploman School.

113. Boys who have been to field work.

1. 11 years old; had been out bird-keeping at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and his meat.
2. 11 years old; had been one year at work driving horses at 6*d.* a day, meat, and a quart of cider. Hours from 8 a.m., to 7 p.m., with one hour and a half out.
3. Had worked with his father on a job of thistle-picking on the grass lands; *got* no money.

Girls are only occasionally employed in stone-picking with their mothers.

114. *Mr. Pearce*, vice-chairman of Tiverton board of guardians, farmer, Uploman.—Boys are not much employed before 12 years of age in this parish; girls not at all; and of the women, perhaps one in three go to the fields.

I think the law should not place any restriction on the work of children above 10 years of age. The Tiverton board of guardians does not give relief for children above 10 years; they must then go to work.

Carter boys live in the farm houses. At 12 years of age they get 1*s.* a week, food, and lodging; their wages are raised at the rate of 3*d.* or 6*d.* a week per year till they become men. At 20 years and upwards the pay is 4*s.* a week, board, and lodging. I think the system is a good one for the lads. The hiring is broken at a month's notice.

I calculate the average weekly earnings of an agricultural labourer throughout the year at 10*s. in cash*; in addition he has grist-corn, food at harvest, cider always, and potato ground at 1*s.* a perch, the potatoes being put in for them; the whole may be calculated at 14*s.* a week. The grist-corn is of the same quality as that used by the farmer; tailings are now given to the cattle.

The wages of an ordinary labourer are now 8*s.* a week; of carters, &c. 10*s.* a week. The cottages are usually let with the farms and repaired by the landlord. Where a labourer has his cottage and garden of 20 perches free, it is calculated at 1*s.* a week.

Women's wages are 8*d.* a day and cider, or 9*d.* without cider.

A man can earn 12*s.* a week at task-work.

Two cottages per 100 acres are sufficient in this district for the working of the farms.

I think a system of half day at school and work, or of alternate days, is impracticable in agricultural districts, and I should prefer direct compulsion in the matter of education to any quasi-compulsion by a system requiring the production of any certificate of attendance at school or of attainment before hiring. State aid for education may be dispensed with when a child reaches 12 years, and further improvement may be left to private aid. No child should be employed at all before 10 years of age.

Whitnage, Uploman.

115. *Mr. R. Pearce*, farmer.—Boys do not go to work before 10 years of age. I see no reason why they should not be prevented doing so by law. Women do not work in the fields as much as they formerly did.

The land belongs to many small owners. Cottages are usually let with the farms. I farm 300 acres, but should like to see the farms enlarged.

Men are employed all the year round at 8*s.* a week and privileges. My men do not earn 14*s.* a week on an average through the year. They do not take as much task-work as they might. They are content to earn 2*s.*—2*s.* 6*d.* per day; the task-workmen have no privileges. Turnip-hoeing is done by men; children are not employed here for singling behind the hoe.

Women earn 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day.

The hours of work for men are, in summer, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., two hours out; winter, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., one hour and a half out. Women begin work at 8 a.m.

I do not approve of compulsory education. A system of half days or alternate days for school and work is impracticable. Lads in farm service cannot well be spared to attend night school, as they are wanted for foddering the cattle, &c. at 8 p.m.; the difficulty would be greater where the farm is at a distance from the school.

Cottages.

116. 1. Property of Mr. Squire, farmer; one room and back house down, two large bedrooms up. Inhabited by man and wife and five children. Rent, with fair-sized garden, 4*l.* a year. Built of cob.

2. Two rooms down, two up.

Rent, with garden, 3*l.* 10*s.*, also the property of Mr. Squire.

[The cottages in Uploman are fairly good; they are mostly built of cob, with substantial walls, and lime ash floors, but not *well* ventilated; some have three bedrooms, and all have gardens.—E. B. P.]

117. *Mary Arthurs, married woman.*—I work regularly in the fields. Women's wages are 7*d.* per day and

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cider, or 8*d.* without cider. My husband gets 9*s.* a week and cider; no other privileges. Hours of work are 7 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with one and a half out. "Farmers' times is very early." Most women work from 8 to 6, with one hour and a half out.

The weeding of the corn is sometimes let by the acre; one or two women will take a job among them. Some farmers screw down the price of the piece-work, so that you cannot make much by it.

Boys are not employed much before 12 years. Most of the ploughing is done with reins now, and the little boys are not wanted to lead the horses. I do not think it would do any harm to the labourer if his children were prevented from working before 10 years of age. No allowance is made by the Board for children over 10 years of age.

I do not hold my cottage under a farmer; those who do so are under the compulsion of their employer. I never heard of any arrangement between a farmer and a man for the work of the wife and children; "but there, they might say I shall want the wife."

118. — *Ware*, jobber or task-work man.—I earn, by hedging, turnip-hoeing, harvest, and other task work on an average 12*s.* a week throughout the year.

In turnip-hoeing I can do nearly half as much again in the day if I employ a boy; I pay him 6*d.* a day.

Boys do not go to work much before 10 years; we can't exactly afford to keep the children at home, but the farmers won't employ them earlier.

Jobmen get no privileges. I consider farmers' regular men with privileges better off than job men; I've tried them both. Very few men earn 14*s.* a week through the year, perhaps a shepherd might. I pay for my cottage 4*l.* a year, and rates and taxes 10*s.* or 11*s.* a year. There is not much chance for a labourer to get a bit of land, the small farms are being put into big ones.

Some clubs part the money every seven years, keeping back some in the box to pay for sickness. I think a deposit system, with a repayment to the family of a portion of the money at the death of the depositor, would be acceptable to the poor. Men pay 12*s.* a year to the club. There is not much to spare out of a poor man's earnings for a savings bank.

Wages of ordinary labourer, 7*s.* a week and cottage; of a carter or shepherd, 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week and cottage. Farmers don't care what sort of cottages the men live in; we can't get them to do anything in the way of repairs. I suppose the landlord knows nothing about them.

ASHBRIDDLE.

119. A cement preparation applied to tile, slate, or thatch roofs, rendering them air-tight and water-tight, and composed of two-thirds Portland cement and one-third wash sand, is much used here. Mr. Cotterell, mason, will undertake to do any roof at 5*s.* a square; a square is $10 \times 10 = 100$ feet.

HALBERTON.

Population, 1,663 - Acreage, 7,602.

A very large and straggling parish.

120. *Rev. Canon Girdlestone.*—The cultivation is—

3,397	acres	arable land.
3,187	„	pasture.
366	„	orchard.
151	„	garden.
387	„	coppice.
9	„	common.
35	„	
70	„	waste.
7,602		

The children, young persons, and women employed in agriculture in this parish number about 810.

Males:	
Under 8 - - - -	30
Between 8 and 10 - - -	12
„ 10 and 13 - - -	78
„ 13 and 18 - - -	375
Total - -	495
Females:	
Under 8 - - - -	30
Between 8 and 10 - - -	15
„ 10 and 13 - - -	60
„ 13 and 18 - - -	125
Over 18—Married - - -	55
„ Unmarried - -	30
Total - -	315

Their employment in spring is weeding and bird-keeping; in summer, hay and corn harvest; in autumn, threshing; in winter, turnip pulling and cutting. The average distance to which they have to go to work is a mile. Their hours are nominally from 7 to 5, but *really* they are very often more. Reckoning from the time of leaving home in the morning to the time of returning in the evening, their hours are, for those who live on the farms, from 6.30 to 6; for those who live at a distance, from 6.30 to 6.30. One hour is allowed for dinner. Their health is injuriously affected by the demand on their physical powers, especially on account of the wet climate and soil of Devon. The young and females are not particularly subject to ill-treatment. Turnip pulling and cutting is injurious to females and the young. Out-door employment interferes much with the proper discharge of domestic duties by women. The number of bastard children is considerable, but how far the joint employment of the sexes in the fields conduces to this I cannot say. Out-door work for women and girls ought to be abolished as both morally and physically unfit for them. The gain to the labourer's family, owing to wear and tear of clothes, is almost nothing, and would be more than compensated by the rise of men's wages which would result from its discontinuance. The farmers cling to it tenaciously, as cheaper than male labour, and tending to keep down wages. I would prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, except at hay and corn harvest. I would recommend that boys under 13 years of age should not be permitted to be employed in farm labour. The low wages of the father are no valid reason for the employment of the boys at an age when they ought to be at school; raise the father's wages, and keep the boys at school. I would restrict the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work according to age.

I should say that—

No boy of 8 years of age and under 10 - - - - -				½ mile.
No girl under the age of 13 -				
No boy of	10 years of age and under 11			1 „
	11	„	12	
	12	„	13	
No young person of	13	„	14	1½ „
	14	„	15	
	15	„	16	2 „
	16	„	17	
	17	„	18	

should be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of

If the age of 13 be adopted as the earliest age for work, there would be no need of restriction as to hours; if children continue to be permitted to be sent to work before 13, then such restriction of hours must be adopted as will allow of the education of the mind with a body unfatigued.

The plan of obtaining school attendance by alternate whole days at school and whole days at work

would be most applicable to the circumstances of this parish. The school attendance is affected by the distance the children have to go to school. A great number of children are kept from school in consequence of the extreme poverty of the parents. As it is, the vicar pays the school fee for many, always for one when three in a family are sent, and often for all where there is a large family of young children. No efforts are being made here for the industrial training of girls.

Sleeping and cottage accommodation here generally is bad; many so-called cottages are mere ruinous hovels. In visiting the sick I am often obliged to take great care that my legs do not go through the holes in the floor of the sleeping room to the room below. Some of the cottages are conveniently situated with respect to the work, and some are not. Few have more than two bedrooms; many have only one. They are overcrowded with the family; the rooms are small, low, and badly ventilated; the drainage is bad; the water supply is usually good; the gardens good; the outhouses bad, and generally without doors. They are chiefly rented from tenant farmers, otherwise from persons who have bought up, and live on the rent of, cottage property; the rents are from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. No progress is being made towards increasing cottage accommodation; the Union Chargeability Act does not cause any increase. Just as the landowner always provides a good house and outbuildings for the tenant farmer, which form part of the let for which the rent is paid, so he ought to see that on or near the farm which he lets to his tenant farmer there is a sufficient number of good cottages for the labourers employed on the farm, which he, and not the tenant farmer, ought to keep in repair. These should form part of the let for which he receives his rent, the value of which ought to be included in the let, for which he ought not to expect any separate profit, and the control of which he should, to a certain extent, keep in his own hands. Tenant farmers seldom keep the cottages in even decent repair, and are apt to evict the labourers from them most tyrannically at a moment's notice.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10	67	50
Between 10 and 13	25	11
Total	92	61
Girls:		
Under 10	55	40
Between 10 and 13	19	8
Total	74	48

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10	63	46·4
Between 10 and 13	20	11·19
Total	83	57·32
Girls:		
Under 10	53	34
Between 10 and 13	18	10
Total	71	44

The schools are excellent, as witnessed by the reports of the Committee of Council on Education, but the attendance is small compared with the amount of population; partly owing to the distances some of the children have to travel to school in a parish of 7,602 acres, but chiefly in consequence of the low wages of the labourer, and his inability on that account to pay school fees, to do without his children's earnings in the field, or even to clothe them decently. Some farmers force their labourers to send their children into the fields. Some children are kept at home to nurse while the mother is in the fields. A labourer's wages are 9*s.* a week, sometimes 8*s.*, with cider; carters and shepherds have in addition house and garden rent free.

An evening school has been tried more than once in this parish, but without success, for want of appreciation and attendance.

HALBERTON SCHOOL.

121. *Mary Jane Goodding*, 10 years old.—I worked in the fields when I was 8 years old with mother, weeding corn; it was not high or wet. I got 1*d.* a day and dinner most days at the farmhouse. Mother got 7*d.* a day.

122. *Thursa Wright*, 9 years old.—I have been out pig-keeping at 4*d.* a week.

123. *Sarah Osmond*, 10 years old.—I have been out cutting turnips. I worked from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mother came in the afternoon.

124. *Emily Sloman*, 9 years old.—I went out weeding corn two years ago with 12 others. We were looked after by a women who came to ask us to go to work and paid me a 1*d.* a day; we worked from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. with 1½ hour out for forenoon and dinner. The woman found dinner for us all; on three days in the week we had cabbage, potatoes, and bacon hot, on the other days bread and cheese. I was out for two months on different farms in Sampford.

125. *W. Morrish*, 8 years old.—I have been out bird-scaring at 3*d.* a week, wet and dry, from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. I took my dinner with me. It was near home.

126. *H. Lovell*, 9 years old.—I have been out bird-scaring; got my meat; for breakfast, teakettle broth; for dinner, meat and hot potatoes; forenoon, bread and cheese; supper, bread and meat. I was out wet or dry from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m. and went three-quarters of a mile to work.

127. *George Hodder*, 12 years old.—When I was 9 years old I went out thinning turnips with a man by whom I was paid 6*d.* a day, and I found my own food. I left home at 5.30 a.m. and got home at 8 p.m., going six miles to work. The man got 4*s.* an acre for the job. At 11 years old I went out leading horses, got 6*d.* a day, lived at home, and found my own meat. I expect to go to service next Lady-day at 1*s.* a week board and lodging.

128. *Mrs. Sloman.*—I have eight children. My husband is a farm labourer earning 9*s.* a week and three pints of cider a day; he comes home on Saturday. The rent for my cottage is 1*s.* 4*d.* a week (one room down, one upstairs) with small garden; the landlord is a small tradesman in Tiverton. My husband has 15 yards of potato ground free and finds the seed. We had parish relief for two elder children, one a cripple the other a girl of 14 years very delicate; the relief for the latter has been stopped. We consume 1 lb. of bacon a week; bread costs us 1*s.* a week. We eat treacle and lard, and greens from the garden.

Women work in the fields a good deal; their work does not pay for wear and tear of clothes. The earnings of a child under 10 years do not pay for the outgoings.

It is the custom here for a man to take turnip-thinning by the piece and to employ a child to work behind him. The man gets 7*s.* an acre, the child 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre.

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The woman who employed my child used to take weeding by the piece and get the little ones to work; sometimes she made a profit out of them.

129. *Ann Hodder.*—My husband is a farm labourer but a job man; he earns 9*s.* a week, gets nothing on wet days. I have five children under 11 years of age earning nothing. I get a bit of meat, perhaps 2 lbs. of mutton, once a week for my husband; the children and I usually live on tea, bread and treacle, from 9 to 12 loaves in a week=4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*

130. *Cottage.*—One room down.
Two rooms upstairs of a fair size but cold; small garden, no potato ground. Rent 4*l.* a year.

POND HALBERTON.

Cottages.

131. (No. 1.) Two rooms down.
Two „ upstairs, no garden.
Rent 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; man and wife, two grown up lads, two little children.
(No. 2.) One room down.
Two rooms up, very small.
Inhabited by two old people. Rent 11½*d.* a week.

ASH.

Hamlet of Halberton.

132. *Sarah Ascott.*—I have lived in this cottage for 40 years; there are my husband and myself, one child, and two old men lodgers living in it. (Downstairs one room and backhouse, upstairs two bedrooms; no ceiling to either floor.) We have a large garden with the cottage, rent 4*l.* a year, held under a farmer. My husband earns 9*s.* a week. He put 18½ yards of potatoes in farmer's field at 1*s.* 3*d.* a yard, found the seed himself, the farmer found the dressing. We don't often get butchers' meat. My daughter goes to a dame school in Ash on week days and to Halberton Sunday school.

133. Cottage, with one room down, one „ up } 1*s.* a week.
Another with one room down,
one „ up,
small garden, no conveniences, 9*d.* a week.
These cottages are all in very bad repair; they belong to small proprietors.

HUNTSHAM.

Population, 240.

134. *J. W. Kemp*, agent to Mr. Troyte.—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. There are 30 children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour in this parish; six on my farm. There are 12 males between the ages of 10 and 13 and 6 between the ages of 13 and 11; there are also 12 married females over 18. They are employed in spring in weeding and picking stones, in summer in hay-making and harvesting, in autumn in picking apples and cleaning mangel, and in winter the males are employed in feeding sheep and cattle and in the general work of the farm. They live on or near the farms. Their hours, reckoning from the time of leaving home, are 10; 1½ hours are allowed for dinner. They are not subject to ill-treatment and their health is not injuriously affected by their work. I believe agricultural employment to be beneficial to the morals of married females when they have no very young children to care for, as when they have nothing to do they spend their time in gossiping and often make strife. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture, but I would not allow boys under 11 to be so employed. I do not think any restriction is necessary as to distance for boys above 11. In this neighbourhood no restriction is necessary upon the hours of work of children and young persons.

The school attendance in this parish is not at all affected by the distance to which the children have to go to school. It is also not affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents, as they pay only 1*d.* a week and get well clothed every Christmas. Girls are taught sewing and knitting. Great improvement has been made in cottage accommodation in this neighbourhood during the last 20 years. The proportion of cottages in the parish is two to 150 acres. This is sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. The cottages are conveniently situated, but in some cases overcrowded with lodgers who are employed on extra jobs. They are generally built in pairs, one containing three bedrooms and the other two. Each has a kitchen about 14 feet square, a pantry 6 ft. by 10 ft., a woodhouse at the back, a rood of garden, a pigstye, and a watercloset. Each room has a casement in the window for ventilation and one bedroom has a fire-place. There is also an oven in each cottage. Water is supplied by pumps where it cannot be brought by pipes. Drainage is effected by tile or stone gutters supplied with stink traps. The cottages belong to the landowners, but are let to tenant farmers with their farms. In most cases the rent is 1*s.* a week. Where there is deficient cottage accommodation progress is being made towards increasing it. I think it is impossible to provide good cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms and involving no disadvantage to the tenant.

In this parish there are no persons growing up with insufficient education. Wages of labouring men are 7*s.* and 8*s.* a week and privileges, viz., grist corn at 6*s.* or 7*s.* a bushel, fuel free, and garden. The average weekly earnings throughout the year are 13*s.* for carters and upper men and 12*s.* for ordinary labourers.

Cottages on Mr. Troyte's property with quarter acre of garden are let at 1*s.* a week. A pair costs 200*l.*; the repairs are done by the landlord and the rates paid by him. We have lately built several pair.

Cottages placed on the farms and at a distance of one or 1½ mile from the village are in my opinion an advantage to the labourer. The men usually go home to dinner, for which 1½ hour is allowed.

It is the custom to have lads living in the farm-houses and I believe it is good for them. The hiring is by the year with a month's notice on either side.

The working expenses of a farm of 300 acres, part pasture, including manure, ploughs, horses, and men, are 2*l.* per acre.

HEMYOCK, near WELLINGTON.

Population, 1,068 - Acreage, 5,437.

135. *Rev. F. J. Kitson.*—The cultivation is mixed, grass and arable; the grass is chiefly used in dairy farms. Boys from 10 to 13 years of age are employed all the year round. The greater number are employed at the age of 11 to 13, but in some cases as early as 10. Girls do not go out to service as early as the boys, nor are they employed in the fields; but they seldom remain at school beyond 13. There is very little employment of women in field work, very much less than 10 or 12 years ago. They then worked at stone-picking or storing roots and at hay harvest, but are now seldom seen. It would be desirable for boys to remain longer at school; but it is very difficult to induce parents with large families and small wages (9*s.* a week with three pints of cider) to keep children at school as soon as they are old enough to contribute ever so little to the weekly earnings. In this district it is not necessary to place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There is a parish school here supported entirely by myself (with the exception of 3*l.* per annum); the farmers contribute nothing. The parish is scattered, and the attendance is consequently intermittent, and partially dependent on weather. Nursing and errand going also sadly interfere with punctual attendance.

The condition of the cottages, as a rule, is not good. Many of them are in the hands of small proprietors who cannot be induced to keep them in good repair. There is a sufficiency for the supply of labour. Many

have been pulled down, or have fallen down within the last 10 years. Many families have left to get better wages elsewhere. Occasional instances of overcrowding occur. The water supply is excellent. Attention to sanitary matters has improved. Most of the cottages have more or less garden ground attached to them; and an endeavour to introduce allotments of land completely failed; none cared for them.

CHEVITHORNE.

Part of Tiverton parish.

136. *James Bragg*, farmer.—The cultivation is for the most part arable. Boys are employed from 12 years of age; they for the most part live in the farm house. Girls are not employed in agriculture; women are employed from two to four days a week in fine weather during the summer, less in winter. Their cottages are for the most part on the farms at which they work; they are not employed more than eight hours. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture.

The cottages are not very good; they are sufficient in number; there are rooms enough for the most part; they are well supplied with water; they have good gardens in general. A boy of 13 or 14 years of age would earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; we have them in the house on yearly hiring.

I should like to pay all wages in cash, but the men will have cider and less money.

Girls do not go out to field work at all.

137. *Thomas Mugford*, formerly schoolmaster.—Men's wages are 7*s.* and 8*s.* a week and privileges; carters get 9*s.* with privileges. The privileges are cider and firewood, free or *led* for them, house and garden equal to 1*s.* 2*d.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* a week deducted every week from their wages, and potato ground 20 yards, free. All houses have gardens. Boys in the farm houses agree by the year, with a month's notice. Farmers do not take them now till they are big. The employment of children is much less than it was 10 years ago. Married women go to fields to work. Girls are not hired by the farmers, but some may occasionally go with their mothers if they have a job of cutting turnips. The farmers' sons are very often uneducated, and they think that the poor are too much educated now.

Chevithorne School.

138. *Mr. Frisby*, master.—This is a school for the districts comprising East and West Mare, Crazeloman, Chettiscombe, and Chevithorne.

On the books:

Infants - - -	20
Boys over 6 years of age -	36
Girls over 6 „ -	37
Total	93
Average attendance for the year -	58
The oldest boy in the school - -	14

The oldest girls (two) in the school 12 and 13

There is one farm in this parish of 800 acres, one of 600, one of 500, and one of 250. The wages average 7*s.* a week with cider and garden with a cottage. The fuel is stopped out of the pay, and *led* by the farmers.

139. *John Bowden*, 8 years of age.—I have been leading horses at the plough for two years. My father works all the year round as an ordinary labourer, and I am forced to go when I am wanted. I get no money and no food for my work.

140. *John Walker*, 10 years of age.—I have been leading horses at plough, and get 1*s.* 6*d.* a week and a pint of cider a day. My father earns 8*s.* a week; there are seven in the family. I began work last year. (This boy attended school 223 times.)

141. *James Hawkins*, 11 years old, earns 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

142. *Sarah Roe*, 11 years of age.—I went out at stone-picking at 8 years of age with my mother; we were paid separately; I was paid by the load of 12 barrows. I was out for a month, and earned 6*s.* I had a new pair of boots when I went out, which cost 6*s.* 6*d.*, and when I came back from my work I had completely worn them out. My father is an agricultural labourer, and earns 7*s.* a week; we have five children at home. There is no extra pay in harvest; I got 6*d.* a week for tying corn, and food found. I have been out topping and cleaning turnips at 4*d.* a day, which is very hard work. The high corn is weeded by the women; I have been out weeding corn at 8*d.* a week. I have seen six children together, with a man to look after them. Girls go out to service at 12 years of age; often get 6*d.* a week and their food.

143. *Mr. Frisby.*—The cottages are let with the farms; the farmers have perfect control over the labourers. The rent of the cottages is reckoned at 1*s.* a week. I have very few children above 10 years of age in the school. The farthest distance that they come is two miles and a half. A night school did not answer, the farmers did not like to let the lads come.

Milum's Cottage.

144. Two rooms on ground floor, one of which is used for ashes and rubbish; two bedrooms; a very small garden; 10 yards of potato ground rented under a farmer at 4*l.* a year; five children at home.

145. *Maria Levercombe.*—Cottage.—Two rooms down, two rooms up; only uses one on each floor, the others are used for rubbish, and to store potatoes in. Man and wife and three children; the husband looks after the farmer's bullocks at 8*s.* a week; garden and house rent free; cider and fuel free; and the woman works in the field stone-picking and in the barn.

CHETTISCOMBE.

Part of Tiverton parish.

146. *Henry Haydon*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed. Boys are employed from about 12 years of age, generally as in-door servants, and throughout the year. Girls are not employed. There is always plenty of work for women in fine weather. There are labourers' cottages on most farms, sufficient for nearly all employed. The children, young persons, and women are employed eight hours a day. It is not desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There are plenty of schools here at easy distances, which are generally well attended.

Some of the cottages are good, and some very bad; they are sufficient in number, and conveniently situated. Not many are overcrowded; nearly all have good gardens adjoining.

The women earn 8*d.* a day, and work from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Man's wages, head workman's, with machine, &c., 9*s.* a week and extras. A carter's wages, 8*s.* a week, cottage and garden rent free, with 20 yards of potatoes, equal to 1*l.* a year, and fuel. Best wheat at 5*s.* a bushel, one bushel a fortnight; if they want more grist they can have it at the same price; two quarts of cider a day, equal to 1*s.* 3*d.* a week; and a run for a pig. Average weekly earnings over the year, 14*s.*; harvest pay makes 1*s.* a week on the year. I have also two men at 7*s.* a week, and the same privileges, except three pints of cider instead of two quarts; they have extra time and piecework; no day is lost for bad weather, and man agrees for all the year round. My cottages are let with the farm; the tenant does the outside repairs, and the landlord the inside. A pair of cottages let with the farm have two rooms down and two up, with fire-place. Man and wife, brother, and two small children in one.

I think that 10 years of age would be a good limit, if any, to place for children to work in the fields. We have no hiring fairs. I have two boys in the house of

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10 and 12 years of age, taken on charity, who get their meat and clothes. There is no night school. If attendance at night school is made compulsory after 10 years of age, farmers would not employ the boys, as it would be very inconvenient, as in the mornings and evenings boys are most wanted. You may over-educate the poor children.

THORVERTON.

Population, 1,211 - Acreage, 4,050.

147. *Venerable Archdeacon Freeman.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs in this parish. About three or four males between 10 and 13, and about 40 between 13 and 18, and also about six unmarried females over 18, are employed here in agricultural labour. Some live on the farms at which they work, most near, two miles distant at most. Their usual hours of work are from 7 to 5.30. Half an hour is allowed for breakfast at 10, and one hour for dinner at 1. The demand on their physical powers, joined to scantiness of food, injuriously affects their health in after life. I have heard of a case or two in which the young have been ill-treated.

There are no special employments which injuriously affect females or the young. I think very ill of the employment of females in agriculture; I should be glad to see it discouraged. I do not think boys below 12 should be permitted to be employed in agriculture. No boy from 12 to 13 ought to go beyond one mile to his work. I think it desirable to place restriction on the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture.

There are great disadvantages in introducing such a system as that in the Factory Act or Printworks Act at all into a parish where the whole-time system works well as here; it discourages the regular and *suggests* half attendance. Out of an average of about 60 children six live less than three miles from the school, nine less than two miles, and 45 less than one mile. The attendance is affected by the distance in bad weather, but not seriously. All but the very poorest parents and the most ill-conditioned can and do send their children to school. No efforts are made for the industrial training of girls.

There is often scanty cottage accommodation, dangerous to morality, and the wretched condition of many cottages directly tends to teach untidiness and disorder, and discourages cleanliness and healthy ways. There are about 150 cottages to 4,000 acres, which is about sufficient. In most cases the cottages are conveniently situated, but in some cases they are crowded with members of the family. There is not a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms.

They generally consist of one large room below, paved with round stones or "lime-ash" floor, say 16 feet square, and two rooms above half that size. The water supply is fair, gardens rare, outhouses bad. They are mostly owned by farmers or tradesmen. Rents are from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week. Better cottages are being built. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	57	40
Between 10 and 13 -	21	16
Total - -	78	56
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	28	20
Between 10 and 13 -	29	19
Total - -	57	39

There are about three boys and three girls between the ages of 8 and 10, and six boys and six girls between the ages of 10 and 13, who are neither at school nor at work. There is an evening school open four nights a week for 42 weeks; it is open an hour and a half each night. The average number of scholars is 14.

In Winter.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	1	1
Above 12 - - -	38	17

In Summer.

Under 12 - - -	1	1
Above 12 - - -	38	6

The subjects of instruction are religious knowledge, reading, writing, and arithmetic. I consider that the evening school supplies the deficiencies of the day school. The late hours of work in winter for such as have the care of horses and cattle are an obstacle in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school.

There are Sunday classes of recent formation, in which some 20 males from 13 to 18, and 12 girls from 14 to 18, are taught to read, &c.

148. *Mr. Rodmore* and *Rev. Baynon.*—Charities, money is not given to children over 10 years of age; they are then expected to earn something for themselves.

The population has decreased lately.

[The schoolmaster said that of late several farm lads had been forbidden by their employers to attend night school, on account of such attendance interfering with the arrangements for foddering the cattle and doing-up the horses.—E. B. P.]

CADBURY.

Population, 241 - Acreage, 1,899.

149. *G. Turner*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed. There are plenty of roots grown, and cattle and sheep are bred and fed. Boys are employed here from 11 years old. Girls are not employed in the fields. There is only about one woman in 20 who will work on the farm. The young persons and women do not live half a mile from their work. Their hours are from 7 to 5, with half an hour for lunch and an hour for dinner. It is needless to restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, as they generally learn reading, writing, and arithmetic before they go to field work; but at 12 they are useful to the farmer and to their parents, and they generally work for their first master four or five years. I do not think that girls ought to be employed in the fields at an early age, and there is plenty of employment for them in farmhouses as indoor servants.

There is a good parochial school here, at which nearly all the children in the parish are instructed, according to their age, in reading, writing, arithmetic, knitting, and sewing.

There are good cottages for all the labourers and their families on every farm. I have a dozen on my farm. They have separate sleeping apartments in good repair. There is also a good supply of water. There ought to be two or three bedrooms in each cottage. There is sufficient garden ground attached to each cottage and close to it. The rent of each cottage and garden is 1*s.* a week. I think that the labourers are better fed, better housed, and better clad than I ever remember, and I also know that labour on the farm is full 50 per cent. higher than it was 50 years ago, or in 1820.

Culver Park Cottages.

150. *Rev. E. Fursdon.*—Double cottage.

(1.) *Roach.*—Down—kitchen, small room, and back house.

Up—Three bedrooms, one fire-place.

Man and wife and three children. Rent with pigsty, outhouse, and 16 yards of garden 1*s.* a week. The cottage is attached to a farm.

Eldest boy 11 years old; earns 6*d.* a day taking up turnips for the bullocks.

151. *James Elsworthy,* labourer.—I earn by thatching 2*s.* 3*d.* a day and cider reckoned at 6*d.* An agricultural labourer's wages are 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week and cider. 1*s.* a week drawback for cottage rent. Most of the cottages have gardens.

Boys go out to work at 10 years; they should not go till 12 years. Girls are not employed in the fields, nor do women go out as much as they formerly did.

Cottage.

Mr. Fursdon's.—One room and back-house down.

One bedroom up.

With garden, 2*l.* a year and "outs."*

Hill's Cottages.

Row of five.

152. Hill is a carpenter by trade and owns this row; he once had a small farm of 26 acres. They are built of cob; the gardens attached are very small. Three of them with kitchen and back-house down, and two bedrooms upstairs are let at 1*s.* a week. Two others at 4*l.* a year, (1) with three bedrooms, (2) with two bedrooms.

153. *Mrs. George Elsworthy.*—My husband is shepherd under Mr. Turner; he gets 10*s.* a week and cider; no extra pay for lambing. He pays 4*l.* a year for his cottage and garden.

154. *John Elsworthy,* waggoner.—I get 10*s.* a week, two quarts of cider a day, and a house rent free. If I had to take it all in money I would not take less than 12*s.* a week.

CADELEIGH.

155. *Rev. P. F. Britten,* rector.—The school has been shut up since Christmas for want of support.

There is no resident squire; the properties are very small, and I cannot get any subscriptions or support from the farmers.

A labourer's wages are 9*s.* a week and cider, without privileges.

Slade's Cottages.

Row of five.

156. Downstairs,—kitchen and back-house.

Upstairs,—Two bedrooms.

Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 12*s.* a year and outs. Small garden. They are in bad repair.

157. *Mrs. John Blackmore.*—My husband is a job man; his wages for constant work are 9*s.* a week and cider, without privileges; 2*s.* a day when working with thrashing machine. I used to work in the fields when I was a girl, and got 7*d.* a day; the money was a help to the family.

Cottage, property of a farmer.

Down,—kitchen and back-house.

Up,—two small bedrooms.

Pigsty, privy, and small garden. Rent 4*l.* a year and outs.

[Cadeleigh parish is a very poor one, and cottages are in bad repair.]

BAMPTON.

158. *Mr. Periam,* farmer.—I farm 150 acres of land and have also some lime quarries. I employ five men and two women on the farm. Boys begin farm work about 12 years of age; some few at 9 or 10 years are employed for driving horses at the quarries at 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, with 1½ hours out for meals.

Girls are very rarely employed in the fields.

Agricultural labouring men get 10*s.* a week in money, or 9*s.* and a house. Women earn 4*s.* a week; they often take weeding corn by the piece. I prefer paying my people all in money, and they like it better than part in kind.

Children attend school pretty regularly; there is a free endowed school and an infant school.

I see no objection to placing a restriction by law on the employment of children under 10 years of age, and I do not think there would be any injury to the heads of the families by reason of the loss of children's earnings before that age.

There are 19 or 20 acres of allotment ground let in plots of one-eighth to one-fourth an acre, at a rent varying from 6*d.* to 1*s.* a perch, according to the quality of the land. There are also gardens attached to many of the cottages.

The cottages are pretty good. Most of them belong to tradesmen; they are for the most part built of stone with slate roofs.

You can build a double cottage with kitchen, back-house, and two bedrooms in each for 120*l.* Each would let with a garden for 4*l.* a year.

MOREBATH.

Population, 430 - Acreage, 4,130.

159. *Rev. S. Berkeley.*—The cultivation is mixed with a preponderance of arable. There are no private gangs. The children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour are too few to be worth enumerating. I do not think employment in the fields by any means necessarily injurious to the morals of women, but it cannot fail to interfere with their fitness for and the fit performance of domestic duties. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in field work, but I have heard a farmer say that he would rather see a woman turniping than haymaking. I would not let boys under 11 be employed in farm labour. In this neighbourhood it is not necessary to place any restriction upon the distance to which children and young persons have to go to their work. I would suggest the requirement of *regular* attendance at school during the winter half, and of a certain number of days during the summer half; the methods contained in the Factory Act are entirely impracticable in agricultural districts. The school attendance in this parish is very slightly affected by the distance the children have to go to school. The distant children are often the most punctual and regular. Poverty is not seldom pleaded as an excuse for not sending children to school, especially where there are three or more children to be taught; but I do not consider the plea a good one, or in most cases a sincere one, for if I pay for the children, or one of them, they are *not sent a bit more regularly.* Girls are not trained industrially beyond receiving instruction in needlework.

The accommodation of the existing cottages in this parish is fairly satisfactory. No progress is being made towards an increase of cottage accommodation. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	20	11
Between 10 and 13 -	9	5
Total - -	29	16
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	24	11
Between 10 and 13 -	7	3
Total - -	31	14

* "Outs" mean rates and taxes.

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Older children come best in winter; younger in summer. There are neither at school nor at work,—

In Summer and Winter.

Boys:	
Between 8 and 10 - - -	3
„ 10 and 13 - - -	1
Girls:	
Between 8 and 10 - - -	1
„ 10 and 13 - - -	1

I should say about two-thirds of the total number of persons between 13 and 18 are growing up with insufficient education. In most cases they have no education whatever. There is an evening school open 20 weeks in the year during the winter. It is open for an hour two nights a week. Hitherto it has been carried on only by the clergyman in person and alone. There are 19 scholars above 12, of whom eight attend on the average. They are taught reading and writing. The evening school does not supply the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulties in the way of maintaining an evening school, are generally the indifference of the lads themselves, and some hindrances on the part of employers, especially when the work is about horses, which have to be attended late in the evening.

School Statistics relating to the parish of Bampton.

Population, 1,971 - Acreage, 7,997.

—	On Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	35	26
Between 10 and 13 -	17	12
Total - -	52	38
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	30	25
Between 10 and 13 -	20	11
Total -	50	36

The number of children neither at school nor at work is very small. An evening school is open 25 weeks in winter. It is open five nights a week, one hour each night. There are,—

On the Register.	In average Attendance.
(Age, 14 to 30.) 27	15

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, arithmetic, and dictation. It does not supply the deficiencies of the day school. The difficulty in the way of the evening school is indifference to education.

With the view of making this return as complete as possible, I have sent to all the managers in my district of diocesan inspection (and one or two out of it) a circular, of which the following is a copy.

"To which of the following causes do you mainly attribute the irregularity of attendance at elementary schools?

1. Fair claims of labour for hire.
2. Fair home claims.
3. Caprice or indifference of parents.
4. [Any other cause, which please name.]"

A very large proportion of the answers assigned "3" as the main cause of irregular attendance. One correspondent, of very considerable experience as diocesan inspector of a large district in the adjoining county, modifies this opinion by attributing the prevalence of cause "3" to the apathy of teachers and clergy, and a consequent indifference to the efficiency of their school or their people's estimate of the benefit of education.

No doubt this was painfully true in past years, and may be true to a great degree in some districts still, but I do not think it is more than exceptionally the case in this district.

160. *Mr. Stoneman*, farmer.—The people are well off here, and the women do not go out much to field work. Wages for men vary from 8*s.* to 11*s.* a week; they generally prefer money and cider to money and privileges.

There are not enough cottages for the work of the farms, much of the labour comes from Bampton, two miles distant. Some farms have no cottages attached to them; in that case men live in the farmhouses, and get 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, and lodging, food, and washing.

Emigration has thinned our population, and the best young men go away to the police, railways, &c.; those are the best educated.

I have always found educated men the best labourers. "A man who has got a bit of learning has more "reason about him, you can talk to him."

I see no objection to preventing children under 10 years of age from going to work. The earnings before that age are of no importance.

161. *Mr. Pine*, farmer.—I employ one lad of 16 years at 2*s.* a week, meat and lodging. I prefer having my carter in my house. Small children are not much employed in the fields. This year they have earned a good deal of money at acorn-picking. My farm is about 200 acres, chiefly grass. The land about here is mostly arable and very poor.

I have one cottage where my labourer lives rent free; he gets 7*s.* a week and privileges. I pay wages part in money and part in kind. Grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel, and at a reduced price if wheat is lower than that.

My man gets 7*s.* a week, cottage and garden rent free, cider, bread baked for him in farmhouse, 20 yards of potato ground, and piecework, and when hedging he gets the wood for firing.

Hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. I never heard of a gang of children in these parts working under the charge of a man or a woman.

162. *Mr. Goodding*, farmer.—I hold 300 acres. Two cottages per 100 acres is not quite enough for the requirements of my farm.

I think that where the master is a good one, the labourer with privileges is better off than the man who gets all his wages in money. If a man gets all money he has to buy at the shop, and loses to the amount of the profit made by the tradesman.

Ordinary wages are 7*s.* to 9*s.* a week with privileges. A man the other day refused 11*s.* a week without privileges. I consider a man's average weekly earnings through the year are 12*s.* a week. Yearly servants get board, lodging, and washing, and from 3*s.* to 5*s.* a week.

Boys do not go out to work young, they should not go till 12 years. I do not think if the limit was placed at 10 years there would be any injury done to the parents.

Women are employed when they can be got; they are paid 8*d.* a day, but sometimes work by the piece pulling turnips. In harvest wages remain unaltered, but all meals are found by the farmer. Some few pay one and a half day's wage for a day's work.

In the Dulverton union relief is not withdrawn till children are 12 years old.

I do not think much money is saved by the labourers, except, perhaps, by a few young men; they used to be more saving. The single men do not stay long in one place.

There is usually a garden of one-eighth to one-quarter of an acre with each cottage, besides which the labourers have from 20 to 25 yards of potato ground in a field; they find their own seed and one planter, the farmer finds horses and plough and dress-

ing; afterwards the labourer has to reap the crop clean, and take it up.

I should not make any difference between two men of equally good character because one was better educated than the other. I do not find much difference between the work of an educated and an uneducated man, except in case of a carter who has to fetch and deliver goods. The benefit of education is to the labourer, and not to the employer. I am decidedly in favour of educating the labourer.

The small farmers on poor land, and with small tenements, are worse off than the labourers.

There is a class called dairymen. A labouring man takes a dairy from the farmer at per cow, depositing a quarter's payment in advance. If the dairy is 20 cows he does no other work, if under that number he usually works on the farm three or four days in the week; he keeps a horse on same land if he has 15 cows and upwards, he also keeps pigs. The take is by the year; each cow being in the dairy 40 weeks; dairyman gets the calf; the rent per cow is usually about 10*l.*

This is the only way in which a labourer here can rise. A man who lived with me as a labourer raised himself in this way, and is now renting a farm at 100*l.* a year, and has put by some money.

163. *Jane Quartley*, old woman.—I have always been a field worker. My husband lived in a farmer's cottage rent free, and the agreement was that I was to work when wanted. I used to earn 8*d.* a day. I would never send a girl of mine to field work, it is not good for them.

Morebath School.

164. *J. Aldred*, master.—The attendance of boys over 10 years of age is irregular. The school is most full between Christmas and Lady-day. Irregularity of attendance is more often caused by the necessity for keeping some of the children at home when the mother is at work in the fields, than by any constant employment of the children themselves. I should like to keep children regularly at school till they have passed the fourth standard, which might be done by the time they reach 10 years of age. 12 out of 90 attended three-fouths of the year.

165. *John Court*, 9 years old.—I went out driving bullocks at plough last year and got 6*d.* a day; had to go a mile to work, and went home to dinner for which an hour was allowed. My father is a dairyman with seven cows, he works on the farm as an ordinary labourer.

166. *Henry Court*, nearly 8 years old.—I went out pig-keeping last year, got 2*d.* a day; was out from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I also went stone-picking with mother.

167. *Emma Stephens*, 12 years old.—I have been out weeding corn with mother, and got 6*d.* a day; I have also been stone-picking with her.

168. *Robert Thomas*, 80 years old.—I have been a planter and hedger. I used to earn 15*s.* a week planting at so much per 1,000. I went about to different places for work. I do not hold to women going out to field work, they don't gain much and they are wanted at home.

Young men go away from the parish for work more than they used.

I do not think it would be any hardship on the labourers to prevent children working till they are 10 years old.

169. *Firway cottage* (Mr. M. Bere's) in good order, two rooms, down.

Three bedrooms, with fire-place.

Half acre of garden, 5*l.* 5*s.* a year.

170. *Cottages* property of Mr. Hancock, farmer, built of cob.

(1.) One room and backhouse, down, lime-ash floor.

One bedroom, up.

With garden, 1*s.* a week.

(2.) Keepers house:—

One room and backhouse, down.

Two bedrooms, up.

1*s.* 6*d.* a week with garden.

MESHAW.

Population, 250 - Acreage, 1,745.

171. *Rev. W. H. Karslake.*—The cultivation is mixed. Four males between the ages of 13 and 18 are employed here, and one female between 10 and 13, two between 13 and 18, and four married females over 18. Neither private nor public gangs are in existence in this parish or neighbourhood. The farms in this parish being as a rule small the children of farmers of both sexes for the most part do the work suited to their age and sex on the farms, and are generally so employed from about the age of 12 years. The boys and girls that are hired servants live in the farmhouses on which they work and are treated pretty much as members of the family. The farmers children so employed are often sent for a quarter or half year at a time to school as opportunity and leisure are afforded. The children are employed in driving the cattle to and from pasture, foddering them night and morning, weeding corn and roots, driving the horses, going on errands, &c. according to sex. The women are employed in tending pigs, milking, weeding, assisting in threshing, planting, and storing roots, &c. The distance they have to travel to their work does not much exceed one mile in any case. The children of both sexes suffer not unfrequently from chilblains and sore feet, from badly made boots, neglect of cleanliness, and wet. Obviously these are evils which may partially be remedied by attention from day to day, but it is presumed they can hardly form the subject of legislative interference. There are no special employments injuriously affecting females or the young generally. It cannot with truth be asserted that no cases occur in which the morals of females are injuriously affected by their employment in agriculture; but from the experience which I have had as a clergyman and magistrate I can safely say that the morals of females brought up as agricultural servants do not contrast unfavourably as compared with those of females employed in the few factories which exist in this district or with those kept at home as glovers and lace workers. So also as respects the training of females for domestic duties. The best wives and mothers are those who have been trained in domestic service either in farmhouses or those of gentlemen, and none are so ignorant and slovenly as those whose early life has been spent at home. The amount of female labour in the fields has so materially diminished of late years that the question of its restriction as regards adult women may safely be left to answer itself. I am not prepared to advise legislative restrictions even as respects girls. The out-door work of young females seldom goes beyond those duties connected with the dairy, and the tending of pigs and poultry in the farmyards, or taking these creatures to and from their feeding ground. The greatest risk to which the virtue of young females employed in agriculture appears to be exposed, arises from young females being frequently the only hired servant in families where there are grown up sons of the farmers, or it may be where her companions are male farm servants in and about the house and yard.

It does not seem necessary to restrict the distance to which practically boys are required to go for farm labour. They are not employed at an unduly early age. I see no reason for recommending any restriction upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture. The question of school attendance is a most important one, as undoubtedly there is at present great danger of young persons losing to a great degree the advantages they have obtained during their early school days, say up to 10 or 12 years of age, through subsequent neglect. There are no doubt very many honourable instances of

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farmers and their wives taking much and deep interest in their young servants of both sexes; and it is believed that these instances would be multiplied to a very great extent but for the difficulty experienced by employed labour in enforcing reasonable submission to domestic discipline on their young male and female servants. These seem to consider that when not actually engaged in the employer's ordinary work they have a right to be masters or mistresses of their own time, and ordinarily are disposed to resist even any restriction on their hours of being in the house at night or in the disposal of their time on the Lord's day.

I am not fond of multiplying legal enactments which are too often oppressive and therefore inoperative, but I am inclined to believe that a statute requiring a return as respects all servants employed in agriculture, of the number of their attendances during the past six months at school and at *some* place of divine worship, would be advantageous and would be hailed as a boon by agriculturists. The school attendance here is considerably affected by the distance to which the children have to go to school. This should never exceed two miles. The cases in which the pecuniary recources of the parents prevent the attendance of the children at school are generally met by private charity. No efforts of a public character are being made for the industrial training of girls.

The cottages generally in rural districts contrast favourably with the accommodation of the poor in towns. All have two rooms, viz., one bedroom and one sitting-room or kitchen; most two bedrooms; several three rooms. The number of cottages at present occupied by labourers in agriculture in this parish is 15, and as there are several other cottages which are unoccupied it may be considered that the supply is at least equal to the demand. It is however believed that additional labour (if procurable) could be profitably applied to the land. The cottages are conveniently situated, and there is a sufficient number with good bedroom accommodation. But some families are contented to live in cottages without sufficient bedroom accommodation, and it is always difficult to avoid overcrowding when sufficient accommodation is provided. The water supply is scarcely sufficient in quantity, and is inconvenient as to distance from many cottages. Gardens are universal. Privy accommodation is insufficient. Landowners are generally the owners of the cottages. The rents are about 3*l.* per annum. The Union Chargeability Act is having no effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation. No result has followed 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. It is believed that no system can be devised by which cottages can be made really self-supporting as the habitations of agricultural labourers, but that landowners must be content to provide cottages for the labourers on the same principle as they provide for the stock on a farm and a residence for the farmer, as necessary, that is, to the profitable occupation of the land.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	10	8
Between 10 and 13 -	4	3
Total - -	14	11
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	11
Between 10 and 13 -	7	6
Total - -	21	17

In Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	10	7
Between 10 and 13 -	4	4
Total - -	14	11
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	8
Between 10 and 13 -	7	7
Total - -	21	15

There are none who are neither at school nor at work.

CHAWLEIGH.

Population, 800 - Acreage, 5,359.

172. *Samuel Trick*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed, arable and pasture. Boys are generally employed about the age of 10, if they are employed younger it is at harvest time and the spring of the year. Girls are not employed except as indoor servants. Women are employed to a small extent. Their hours are from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. No restriction is necessary upon the age at which boys should work upon the land. It is not desirable to place any restriction upon the employment of females; girls are not employed in agriculture, their occupation is mostly making lace.

A good school is provided by the Earl of Portsmouth for the children of the labouring class by their paying 1*d.* per week. Some do not send their children regularly to school, and so do not take full advantage of it.

The cottages here are much improved of late. They are not overcrowded. No evil results to morality have arisen in our parish. They are well supplied with water and well ventilated. They have very good gardens or allotments of land.

Women are not employed regularly, but in the spring they go out weeding corn. The girls are occupied with lace making. There is no night school. I should like to see an alteration made in the mode of giving Government aid to schools, especially as regards the necessity for having a certificated master. There is a reading room in the parish.

A man's wages 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week or 8*s.* in money with a bushel of barley a week at 3*s.*, or a bushel of wheat at 6*s.* I should prefer to have them on money payment only. Turnip-hoeing is done by the piece by the men at 6*s.* an acre; some men will earn 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day. Children are very seldom taken out for this work. The limit for children's work should be placed at 9 or 10 years of age.

The rent of a cottage is usually 1*s.* a week with a garden. My cottages have a quarter of an acre of garden and a quarter of an acre of land in fields manured for potatoes.

KENTISBURY.

Population, 385 - Acreage, 3,000.

173. *Frederick Smyth.*—The cultivation is arable. The produce consists of oats, roots, and grass. Boys are employed all the year round. No girls are employed. About one in twenty of the labourers' wives is employed. They do not have to go more than a mile to work. Men work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; women and boys from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Boys should not be employed at an earlier age than 10 years; for my part, I would rather say 12 years of age. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the employment of females in this part of the country. Labourers are very well off, consequently women do not care to do agricultural labour, and young people

are not sent out to work in the fields very early in life, except in a few instances ; young persons never. There is a good parish school here, supported partly by a small endowment, partly by voluntary subscriptions. In most instances parents avail themselves of the opportunity afforded them, and send their children to school.

The cottages here are tolerably good, and quite sufficient. In some instances they are not conveniently situated. The inconvenience is often the result of the labourer's choice ; they prefer living in the village, even when they might have work close to their doors. The cottages are not overcrowded in general ; and they are generally well supplied with water. The ventilation is tolerably good. All have gardens.

The rate of wages for men is 12*s.* a week ; for women and boys 5*s.* The payment is made entirely in money. In this district skilled labour, such as ditching, &c., is done by piecework, and many men earn as much as 1*l.* a week during the summer.

ASHFORD, near Barnstaple.

Acreage, 359.

174. *George Langdon.*—The cultivation is mixed. No private gang exists in this parish. Boys are generally engaged from 10 years of age, and are lodged with and boarded by the farmers. Girls, from the age of 10 years, are engaged generally as domestic servants. No young females are engaged in out door work. Six married women are employed here in agriculture. The work of the young persons and women in spring is weeding corn, planting potatoes, &c. ; in summer, hay harvesting, &c. ; in autumn, harvest work, gathering apples, potatoes, &c. They are rarely employed in winter. They live on or near the farms at which they work. It takes them but a few minutes to reach their work. They are usually employed eight hours. Half an hour is allowed for luncheon, and one hour for dinner. They are not injuriously affected by their work, and are not ill-treated. Here only married women and widows are employed in agriculture. I am not prepared to recommend any restriction upon the employment of females in field work.

The distance to which children have to go to school does not exceed half a mile. The children, as soon as capable of instruction, usually attend the village school until they become of age, or are sought for, for service. In most cases where there are large families some benevolent person assists the parents by paying for the schooling of one or more of the children.

Three cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. We have 14 cottages in the parish ; some of the occupiers are employed in the adjoining parishes. All are situated within a mile of the work ; most have three bedrooms, some more ; they are not overcrowded, and there are no lodgers. The cottages are built with stone and cob, covered mostly with thatch. The rooms are from 12 to 14 feet square. The largest room is the living room. There are generally three bedrooms ; some have four. The ventilation and drainage are good. There is plenty of good spring water, gardens, and outhouses. Some cottages are the property of the landowners ; six out of the 14 are the fee simple of the cottagers themselves. Rent is generally 1*s.* a week.

I believe there are no children who are neither at school nor at work.

COMBE MARTIN.

Population, 1,484 - Acreage, 3,815 a. 3 r. 4 p.

175. *Rev. H. W. Toms.*—The cultivation is mixed. A considerable quantity of land is used as gardens. There are no private gangs in this parish. The work of the children, young persons, and women employed here is, in spring, planting potatoes, garden and field work ; in summer, weeding, hoeing ; and in autumn, harvest work, digging potatoes, &c. They live on or near the farms at which they work. Their usual hours of work are from 8 to 5, with one hour allowed for dinner. The females and the young are not ill-treated, nor does their work injuriously affect their health. Very few females are employed in agriculture. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in field work, or upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be so employed. I would not restrict the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture.

The school attendance is not affected by the distance the children have to go to school, the parents living near the school. In consequence of having a small endowment the charge for the children of the poor is only 1*d.* a week. No efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls, unless knitting and sewing are considered industrial.

Very few of the cottages here are more than a mile distant from the farms on which the work has to be done. Very few cottages have three bedrooms ; most of them have two. In some cases there is overcrowding. The size of the rooms is generally small. There are open fire-places, and defective windows and doors are the ventilators. Water is abundant in the parish, and almost every cottage has a garden and an outhouse. Many of the cottages are owned by the cottagers themselves ; very few by landowners. The rents range from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* and upwards, according to the size of the garden. This being an open parish in the midst of others more or less close no increase of cottage accommodation is now required. It would be an immense advantage if two or three model cottages could be built in the parish. I do not see how cottage property *per se* can be otherwise than unprofitable.

School Statistics.

There is no other week day school in the parish but the National school.

There are in summer—

	On the Register.	In average Attendance
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	97	90
Between 10 and 13 -	67	
Total - -	164	
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	90	
Between 10 and 13 -	52	
Total - -	142	

In winter there are on the register 170 boys and 144 girls ; the average attendance is 160. An evening school is open 24 weeks in the year, from Michaelmas to Lady-day ; it is open four nights a week, two hours each night. There are about 54 scholars.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	4	3
Above 12 - - -	50	29

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. A few learn a little grammar. It, to a very great extent, supplies the deficiencies of the day school.

176. *Mr. Ward*, Langridge, Crediton.—The women are employed for hoeing turnips and weeding corn in my district at 8*d.* a day. The hours are usually from 7.30 a.m. till 5.30 p.m. They do not work more than

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four days a week. Boys go out at 9 years of age, some to the farmhouses for food and clothes.

177. Copy of a Letter from J. H. Holley, Esq.

Dear Sir, Oaklands, 26th December 1868.

I have the printed form which you sent to me, but I cannot fill it up to my satisfaction, and therefore I prefer writing to you my few ideas on this subject.

Legislative interference between employer and employed, as a rule, is bad, but there are contingencies which justify exceptions, and make it impolitic to maintain this general rule too stringently. Such are education and the health and growth of the young. It is necessary for the security, welfare, and social order of the nation that the labouring classes should be educated suitably to their position in life, and the Legislature should therefore interfere to protect children from being reared in ignorance. The age at which boys and girls are considered eligible for physical labour may be determined by Act of Parliament so as to give time for a certain amount of instruction to be insisted upon; this would not materially lessen the means of the parents from maintaining their children. Compulsory interference to this extent would not only benefit the nation at large, but the employer and employed would derive mutual advantage by realizing a more efficient performance of the work required. After the age sanctioned for going to work easy access to education ought to be provided by night schools. Education, to be effective, must be national and free from all private interference; and I believe when schools are conducted on a good system they will be eagerly attended. Only in a state of gross ignorance would the labouring classes be content to remain in the degraded condition of immorality they exist in at the present time; therefore it seems to me if you give a good sound education you put it in the power of every man to improve his condition, and induce him to exert himself in that direction; consequently after being educated the labourer will work out his own improvement. As regards the erection of cottages and the moral improvement of the labouring classes, I do not see my way clearly to legislative interference. The erection of cottages depends on the requirements of three parties, the owner of the land, the tenant, and the labourer. As soon as the tenant discovers that it is necessary for the profitable cultivation of his farm that the labourer should be resident on it he will induce the owner to build the residences as well as the barn, stabling, and other buildings previous to this period considered requisite. There is a sort of partnership existing between landlord and tenant, the one finds the capital for the working of the land, the other the capital and knowledge for the tillage. There must be a prospect of remuneration to these two parties in realizing the anticipated improvement in the position of the labourer. I do not think the employment of women in agriculture exists in this county to an injurious extent.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) J. H. Holley.

Hon. E. B. Portman.

Cottages belonging to Mr. Holley (double) one with two bedrooms and space to put a third, the other with two bedrooms. The double cottage was built for 100*l.*; the stone was on the spot; the wood cut by steam saw; the roof is slated.

The boys earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week at a much earlier age than they do in Norfolk. The women will not work in the fields, even for stone-picking or weeding, excepting in a few instances.

[On Mr. Holley's premises there is an excellent girls' school, and 20 children kept and taught by his daughters. I examined them and found them well instructed in reading, geography, and arithmetic, and the writing from dictation was very good, both in the first and lowest class. These children are mostly from Okehampton.—E. B. P.]

OKEHAMPTON.

Population, 1,929 - Acreage, 9,800.

178. *Archdeacon Downall.*—The cultivation is mixed. No gangs exist here, either private or public. 25 males and 20 females are employed in agricultural labour in this parish. There are 10 males between 10 and 13, and 15 between 13 and 18; the respective ages of the females are 12 between 10 and 13 and eight between 13 and 18. Their employment in spring is weeding and stone-picking; and in autumn harvest work. Some live on the farms; some two miles distant; some one mile. Their usual hours of work are nine; from the time of leaving home to the time of returning their hours are from 8 to 6; one hour is allowed for dinner. Their health is not injuriously affected by their work. I know nothing to the prejudice of the morals of the females employed in agriculture, or to their proper training for domestic duties. I think that boys under 10 should not be employed in farm labour. I think the method of obtaining school attendance most applicable to this parish, would be school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months. I would produce certificate of such attendance, and be acquainted with the three R.'s. Here the distant children are the most regular. All willing to attend are *enabled* to attend, so that the pecuniary resources of the parents need not influence the school attendance. There are no efforts being made for the industrial training of girls.

The cottage accommodation here is most defective, and prejudicial to the health and comfort and morals of the inhabitants. The proportion of cottages required depends much upon the accommodation of the cottages and the developed cultivation of the land; they are, very generally, convenient, but are overcrowded; they have mud or "cob" walls and stone floors; the ventilation is bad; there is only one room on the ground floor, and one bedroom; the water supply is good; there are allotments and garden, *but no outhouses.*

The owners are various, one or two tradesmen, &c. No progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation; the Union Chargeability Act is having no effect in causing any. I think the only way to obtain good cottage accommodation is by legislative compulsion.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	40	29
Between 10 and 13 -	12	9
Total - -	52	38
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	38	23
Between 10 and 13 -	14	9
Total - -	52	32

The attendance and averages vary very little in winter.

Perhaps one-third of the whole number of young persons are growing up with insufficient education. Efforts have been made to maintain an evening school, but with no encouraging success; the highest number of scholars was 15. The subjects of instruction were reading, writing, and arithmetic. The difficulty in the way of maintaining the school was indifference.

NORTH TAWTON.

Population, 1,906 - Acreage, 5,814.

179. *R. Fulford.*—The cultivation is arable, with a fair proportion of grass land. There are no private gangs in this parish. In this parish no women or female children are employed to work in the fields. The employment of the boys and youths in spring is attending to the cattle and preparing the land for spring crops; in summer and autumn in preparing the land for green crops, hoeing turnips, hay and corn harvest; in winter in looking after stock, and as carters. They are invariably boarded in the farm houses; their hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with a rest between 7 and 12, and an hour for dinner. They are not injuriously affected by their work. I think females should not be employed in field labour, except at hay and corn harvest; as regards this parish none are so employed. As a rule I think no boy or girl should be employed under 11 years of age; if under that age they should reside in the farm house or on the premises on which they are employed. I think no restriction upon the hours of work of children and young persons in this parish or locality generally.

I think alternate whole days at school and work the best mode of providing for the education of boys and girls employed in agriculture. No doubt distance from the school influences the attendance; the attendance is also, no doubt, affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents. If the education were free, I think parents would gladly avail themselves of it. No efforts are made for the industrial training of girls, neither do I think it could be practically carried on in this or any locality.

The cottages here generally are far from such as should be provided. A great improvement is being made. I think every cottage should have three sleeping rooms. Two cottages to 100 acres are sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land; there is that proportion here. In this parish very few labourers have to travel more than a mile to their work. The farm labourers' cottages have a kitchen and back room (the former having a fireplace), with two rooms over, in one of which would be a fire-place. Cottages in the country all have gardens. In addition to the garden, the labourers in constant employ are provided with a certain quantity of potato ground, which is cultivated and manured by the master. In some instances the Union Chargeability Act has caused an increase; in neighbouring small parishes where cottages had been pulled down they have been rebuilt. I think improved cottage accommodation can only be effectually made through the landlord and tenant. Every estate or farm should be provided with cottages for their labourers, and the owners of land would, I think, find it pay them to do so.

In this parish a considerable number of the children are employed at a woollen manufactory, where there is a school under the regulation of the Factory Act. We have in this parish an infant school, with an average of 80 scholars. The Sunday school is well attended. A night school is being established. The subjects of instruction will be reading, writing, and arithmetic. I think evening schools may be successfully carried on in towns, or small town populations, but where the agricultural labourers are scattered evening schools cannot be carried on.

SOUTH TAWTON.

Population, 1,541 - Acreage, 10,879.

180. *R. Fulford.*—The cultivation is arable, with a considerable portion of common and uncultivated land. No private gangs are employed in this parish. The number of women employed is very inconsiderable, and children are never employed in field labour. Boys and girls from 11 years and upwards to 18 are employed, and live in farm houses, the girls assisting in household work, and the boys attending the cows, pigs, &c., and other light work. Female labour is only employed at hay and corn harvest, and other light work, such as weeding, &c. As regards this district and county, I think no restriction is necessary upon the hours of work of young persons.

The cottage accommodation in this parish is about the average. No doubt many improvements are to be desired, especially as to the number of the bedrooms, which if possible should not be less than three. I think it is the interest both of landlord and tenant to provide sufficient accommodation to the farm tenant for his labourers. I think a tenant would gladly pay 5*l.* interest on the outlay for cottage accommodation for his labourers, and would underlet to insure permanent labourers at a reduced rental to his labourers.

The attendance at school before going to farm service at 11 years of age is about the average, but, no doubt, an improved and extended system of education would be beneficial.

SAMPFORD COURTNEY.

Population, 991 - Acreage, 7,962.

181. *R. Fulford.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. There are no private gangs. There are very few women employed in agriculture. There are very few boys or girls employed in the fields. Girls from 11 years and upwards are employed to assist in household work, living at the farm house; and boys from that age are also employed to attend the cattle, and do other light work. As a rule no boys or girls are engaged in agricultural labour under the age of 18 years that do not live in the farm houses. No restriction is necessary upon the employment of females in agriculture, as they are scarcely ever employed except in hay and corn harvest, or in weeding the corn in spring. Boys are never employed until they are 11 years old. I think no restriction necessary upon the hours of work of children and young persons. In large scattered parishes there are great difficulties in continuing the education of boys and girls after they enter farm service, the houses of the masters in which they reside being often distant from the village school. If attendance is to be given it should be alternate or certain whole days in the week at school, and the other at work. The distance from school no doubt interferes with the attendance, but this is unavoidable.

The cottage accommodation in this parish is not such as one might wish, but improvements are being made. Generally the cottages have gardens, and the cottagers are supplied with ground, cultivated and manured by the master, for growing potatoes. Directly cottages do not pay for the building, but indirectly it is the interest of both landlord and tenant to provide cottage accommodation in order to secure the constant service of a good labourer.

There is a parochial school for boys and girls in the village of Sampford Courtney, open daily; it is tolerably well attended. There is also a Sunday school in the village, as well as in the hamlet of Stocklepall.

CHAGFORD.

Population, 1,379 - Acreage, 5,743.

182. *Rev. H. G. Hames.*—The cultivation is mixed. The children and young persons employed in agricultural labour number about 62, 12 of whom are between the ages of 10 and 13. Their employment in spring is tilling, minding cattle, &c.; in summer, haymaking, hoeing crops, &c.; in autumn, harvesting, getting in crops, &c.; in winter, minding cattle, threshing, &c. They live mostly on the farms. Their hours of work are from 7 to 5; one hour and a half is allowed for meals. I do not think the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affects their

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health, nor do I think the young are subject to ill-treatment. Females are seldom employed in agriculture, except for haymaking, harvest, and potato tilling, and then only to a small extent. I think that boys under 12 should be compelled to attend school on alternate days. Any restriction upon the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work is needless here, as is also restriction upon their hours of work.

The mode of obtaining school attendance by half day at school and half day at work is impracticable; alternate whole days at school and whole days at work would be most effective. School attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months would find most favour with farmers. Children from the outlying parts of this parish cannot attend school before they are 7 years of age or thereabouts. No poor child in this parish need stay away on account of the school fees. Girls are taught sewing.

We have a sufficient number of cottages for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. The proportion is from one to two per 100 acres. Generally they are conveniently situated. They seldom contain more than two bedrooms, and no sitting room. In a few cases, perhaps, they are overcrowded. The labourer's cottage usually consists of two rooms downstairs (a living room and back room or scullery), and two bedrooms; each room is about 13 feet square, and eight feet high. There is no special provision for ventilation, except the casement. The drainage is pretty well provided for in the village. There is usually an outhouse for fuel, and a pig's house; sometimes a garden. Some are owned by landowners, some by speculators. Such a cottage is sometimes occupied by a family of five, six, or seven; rent about 4*l.* or 5*l.* This was never a close parish; the Union Chargeability Act does not affect this neighbourhood. We depend for good cottage accommodation on the law of supply and demand.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	45	35
Between 10 and 13 -	25	20
Total - -	70	55
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	45	25
Between 10 and 13 -	20	15
Total - -	65	40

There are about 10 boys and 10 girls between the ages of 8 and 10, and five boys and five girls between the ages of 10 and 13, who are neither at school nor at work. I do not know the number of those growing up with insufficient education. There are some who read and write a little, others not at all. There is now no evening school in the parish; there used to be one, but it was closed.

DREWSTEIGNTON.

183. *Rev. W. Ponsford.*—Boys go out to the fields at 10 and 11 years of age; the girls go to farm service. Men's wages, including privileges (such as cider, cottage, &c.), is 11*s.* to 12*s.* a week. The parish is about 6,000 acres, and the population about 1,000. The farms have lately been increased in size, and some of the old farm houses converted into cottages for the labourers, to afford better accommodation. There are some farms of 300 acres more arable than pasture. Most of the young who go out to service live in the farm houses, and get very little money payment but food and clothing. There are some apprentices still in the farms bound by the parents, and some from the union. A portion of the girls' work at farms is out of doors, such as pig-feeding, cattle-feeding, &c.

There are allotments for the villagers of an eighth of an acre each; the farm labourers living in outlying cottages would have one-fourth of an acre for potatoes, manured in the farmer's fields, or half an acre attached to the cottages; most of them have a small garden attached, and one-fourth of an acre in the field.

184. *Elizabeth Way.*—My husband works all the year round for his employer; he gets 9*s.* a week, house rent free, and a garden and 40 yards of potatoes in his employer's fields; he finds the seed, and the manure is found for him. He also gets a quart of cider a day, and he grows enough potatoes usually to last through the winter. A farm labourer would get 10*s.* a week and a house free; a woman would get 8*d.* a day. They sometimes work at potatoing, and go weeding the corn in the spring. Children are not used for weeding.

185. *Elizabeth Oads.*—My husband works regularly for all the farmers throughout the year; his wages are 10*s.* a week in money, and a quart of cider a day, but no other privilege; he gets no piecework. During harvest, meat is given in addition, but not extra money. I never go out harvesting, or for any other field work myself. Women who go out to the fields usually neglect their cottages and children. I never had much schooling; I cannot read and write much, but I find it a great benefit to have my children taught. Hy husband can read and write well. The children here do not go out to work before 12 years of age.

Cottage.—One room downstairs, one up; rent 3*l.* a year, and rates 3*s.* a year; inhabited by a man, wife, and their five children.

Fuel is very dear. I sometimes get a little meat on Saturdays; sometimes eat bacon. We keep a pig, but have to sell it to pay our rent, "as the money "won't keep to it." We have an allotment of 20 yards in Mr. Ponsford's field at 6*s.* 8*d.* a year. This year I have got a piece of potato ground free from the master. Last year I had 40 yards in the farmer's field, and had to pay 2*l.* for it; the manure was found.

NEWTON ABBOT.

Board of Guardians.

March 24, 1869.

Rev. R. R. Wolfe, chairman.

186. The following resolution was carried:—

"That no boy should be allowed to work in the fields under 10 years of age, nor any girl under 16 years in the fields or in out-door work."

The chairman stated that in Devon they could hardly get a woman to work in the fields, and it was very rarely that girls were employed. He believed that the inadequate house accommodation was the chief cause both in town and country of the loose morals of the people. He did not see what there was in agricultural employment *per se* to make it injurious to the morals of any person, and if the women so employed were immoral, they brought the immorality with them, the cause of it being the insufficient accommodation in the houses where they had been reared.

He expressed himself in favour of compulsory education, and protested against the system of the Council giving aid to schools only which had certificated teachers. He considered a half-time system for school and work impracticable in agricultural districts, but thought education might be continued after boys leave the day school either by a system similar to the system under the Printworks Act, or by improved organization of night schools.

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Mr. C. Mallock was opposed to any interference with the parents or the children in the matter of their employment, as he considered that the loss of the earnings of young children would be much felt by the parents. He thought education would concentrate people in the towns.

Mr. J. Creed was against any compulsory system of education, but thought that grants in aid of schools should be given for results only. There is a need of inducement to education after lads begin to work either by night schools or in some other way.

Mr. E. Ford, a large farmer, was in favour of compulsory education. He thought 10 years was quite young enough for a boy to go to work; he had seen lamentable physical ailments brought on by children of a tender age being placed on a farm. The best men on his farm were educated men; it is necessary to educate the labourers if the farmers wish them to be good workmen and to remain on the farm.

Rev. F. Taylor said there was a lamentable want of interest on the part of parents in regard to the education of their children, and he thought some compulsory system must be adopted. If possible, a combination of labour and education would be the best thing.

Mr. W. Sowton, farmer.—Boys under 10 years are useless on a farm; girls are not employed, and women less than formerly. He did not know where good labourers would be obtainable if the youths are not well educated.

Mr. Stook, farmer, expressed himself in favour of a system of compulsory education with a small rate and a local committee of management. A restriction on the work of children under 10 years would not inflict any real hardship on the parents.

Mr. Vivian said the question was, whether the labourer should be used up in his early days. He thought that children if not protected by the State would at times be ill-used by the employer and the parent in the matter of early work, perhaps more often by the parent.

Mr. C. J. Wade expressed himself in favour of an alteration in the present rules of the Committee of Council, by which grants in aid are given only to those schools having certificated teachers.

DEVON CENTRAL CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

14 April 1869.

187. THE REV. R. R. WOLFE ON THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.

The rector of Upton, the Rev. R. R. Wolfe, addressed the members of the Devon Central Chamber of Agriculture last Wednesday, at Newton, on "The Agricultural Labourer." There was a large attendance of members.

The rev. gentleman stated in the course of his address that he laboured under two difficulties. First, he was not in the pulpit, and the people would have the right of replying, which they would not have in church; secondly, the subject which he had chosen had lately been pretty well ventilated at a large and influential meeting in the county, and what he had now to say might be considered stale news. But he had not altered his notes since reading the account of that meeting. They had to consider the questions of legislative interference and restrictions in the employment of women and children in agriculture, and how best to provide for primary education. He should divide the subject into three heads—its physical, moral, and intellectual aspects. Regarding the employment of women in agriculture, they must remember that he referred to agriculture exclusively; for on a former occasion he had been misunderstood on that point. Should there be any legislative interference? Well the principle of restriction was applied to every other description of labour. All the industries in this kingdom, except farming, were under legal restrictions, under the control of Acts of Parliament. The Factory Acts provided for "half time" schooling; and the Printworks Acts for schooling for the period of one hundred days in a year. The Workshops Act, past last session, regulated the time of labour of women and children in the workshops of London. There had been a great necessity for such enactments as these. When he was a "journeyman parson," at Leeds, he had ample opportunity of seeing the evils of excessive work in the factories, which by the means of artificial light was indefinitely prolonged. Working in a close atmosphere, amid oily machinery, dust, and bad smells, was prejudicial to health; and when the time was indefinitely prolonged, it became imperative that the Legislature should restrict it. But it appeared that for this restriction there was not the same necessity in the agricultural districts—(hear, hear). Except in the stables or the piggeries young persons could not be put to work at night by the farmer; they could not plough by gaslight. Therefore restrictions as to long hours were unnecessary. The gang system was not in operation in Devonshire; rather it was a difficult thing to get women and girls to work on the farm. The only restriction perhaps required—and he was not going to say that it was absolutely necessary—was that boys under 10 years of age, and girls under 16, should not be employed. He fixed the latter age because medical men said that the employment of girls under that age was prejudicial to health, and might ruin their constitution. He had drawn up a resolution to the effect that the Chamber were of opinion that the employment of women and children in agriculture in this county was not of that excessive amount at to require restrictive legislation. He now came to the question whether field work was degrading to women and girls. On this there was a conflict of opinions. He had looked carefully over a blue book on the subject, and found that from the counties of Norfolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester, the answer was in the affirmative, while from Northumberland it was in the negative. Women were largely employed in Northumberland and the borders of Scotland with most favourable results. He had occasion to go into Scotland in October, when he saw women working in the fields; they had on a most appropriate dress of linsey wolsey—a sort of bloomer costume; they had on gaiters or trowsers—he did not examine so closely to tell which—(laughter). The dress was so appropriate that he asked to have a group of the women photographed. He held that where women did not work in gangs there was nothing of an immoral tendency. Of all occupations agricultural was the most innocent—(hear, hear). Immorality had been brought into the fields; field occupation itself had not led to immorality. The condition of the agricultural labourer at his own house lay at the root of the evil—(hear, hear). Imperfect cottage accommodation was the prime evil. What were the reports from other counties? Why from Norfolk, that cottage accommodation was one of the most prolific sources of immorality; and from Gloucester, that it was a disgrace to the Christian community. Until there was improved cottage accommodation there would be immorality in the field. How to get over this difficulty was a question for consideration. Occupiers of cottages ought to be limited with respect to the extent of accommodation; he would advocate the system of an inspector going round and seeing that certain prescribed conditions respecting the cottages were complied with. It might be said, as an objection to this, that the Englishman's home was his castle, and that an inspector had no right to intrude. But the time had gone by when every man had a right to do as he pleased. So long as men did right, they should not be interfered with; but when they did things tending to crime and poverty, the case was far different. He would curtail the liberty of the subject when there was a disposition to do wrong. The Bible said, 'No man liveth unto himself;" and everybody should be

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made to respect the sentiment contained in those words. The liberty of the subject was already curtailed with regard to vaccination; was there any tyranny then in curtailing it with regard to the overcrowding of his cottage? Landlords should see that lodgers were not introduced into houses to the detriment of the families; this difficulty should be got rid of in some way or the other. He thought that every cottage ought to be well drained, well ventilated, and supplied with plenty of water. Let this be done and overcrowding prevented, then the complaints as to immorality would cease. What was the use of the National schools, if there was a counteracting influence at home? Children were trained at home for good or evil. School influence was often nullified by that exercised at home. In Norfolk, crime resulted from overcrowding to an alarming extent, for one child out of every 10 was illegitimate; and Sir William Jones, of that county, stated that three-fourths of the affiliation orders which he had issued were for domestic servants, and not for agricultural labourers—persons who never went into the field to work. There was nothing in agriculture *per se* to give it in any way an immoral tendency. Coming to the intellectual aspect of his subject, Mr. Wolfe dwelt on the importance of education to the agricultural labourer. He would have direct or indirect compulsory education, or the voluntary system. By direct compulsion, he meant adequate legal provision to secure the regular attendance of children at school. Such was the law of Prussia, America, and Switzerland; nor would it be introducing a new principle into this country, for it was the principle of the Factory Act. Were boys engaged in trade to be sent to school, and a few idle little vagabonds to go scot free who were not occupied at all? He would make it penal for parents not sending their children to school. It appeared to him to be monstrous that the law should compel those who were engaged in industrial pursuits to go to school, and not to compel those miserable street arabs to go there also. It might be said that there were not so many idle boys in the streets as was thought—(hear, hear). But, according to recent statistics made in the House of Commons—(March, this year)—there were at Liverpool 25,000 or 30,000 children in the streets, learning nothing except evil; at Manchester, 20,000 to 25,000; at Birmingham, about the same number. In the three towns, from 65,000 to 75,000 children were growing up uneducated. These are astounding facts. (Mr. Hawker: They refer to towns, and not the country.) But there are similar facts concerning the country. The rev. speaker then contended that school instruction must not be defective or insufficient, and that the poverty of the parents must be considered. It had been said that improved education would deprive the farmers of the services of many of the young people, but he could not see that this would be the case if education were equally distributed throughout the whole kingdom. Another objection was, that children of farmers would be left behind. That might be so in a few instances, in which the middle classes were not fully alive to the necessity of education. To such persons, he would say as the police said to loiterers on the highway—"Move on." Humility in its proper place was an excellent virtue; but he would say to those who were contenting themselves with the "lowest room" of the intellectual standard, "Friend, go up higher." Are labourers' children to be kept in ignorance because some of their betters care not for education? Again, it had been said that if there was to be compulsory education, there must be a compulsory rate; but he could not see that. From a recent paper, moved for by Mr. Acland, he found that 583,794*l.* 5*s.* 4*d.* were granted for education last year by the State, but 1,021,184*l.* 0*s.* 1*d.* were raised by voluntary contributions and school pence in the same period. Now, if you had compulsory rating for educational purposes, you must of necessity sacrifice the payments from voluntary contributions and from school pence, which, he saw, amounted in 1868 to 1,021,184*l.* 0*s.* 1*d.* The country could ill afford this. Besides, if they were to have a rate for this purpose, how should it be raised? Real property ought not to be saddled with it. Education was an imperial and national question, and the whole nation ought to bear its expense. The consolidated fund, therefore, was the most just, and the fairest source from whence to derive the expenses of national education. The present system, by which voluntary efforts and school payments were aided by Government grants, was the best. But, he would have much of the present conditions and restrictions removed or greatly modified. Why should a certificated teacher be considered, a *sine qua non*, to State assistance? Why not have free trade in educational matters, and grant aid according to "results," no matter by what instrumentality accomplished? Under the present system of granting aid, rich localities, who were able to pay certificated teachers, got all; and poorer, who were not, got none. Poverty stricken (?) Torquay was, under the present system, in the receipt of State aid to the amount of several hundreds a year, while the poorer parishes of its neighbourhood got nothing. Throughout England there are 8,761 parishes whose population was under 500, of which only 981 receive annual grants from Government—*i.e.*, there are 7,780 parishes, so conditioned, without any aid whatever. The present system is most objectionable, and must be modified, because it is diametrically opposed to common sense and justice, giving all to the rich and nothing to the poorer localities. Mr. Wolfe then referred to the admirable system of Miss Coutts, whereby, through the instrumentality of a "perambulating certificated "schoolmaster," groups of country schools were brought within the letter of the conditions of Government aid. The difficulties as to management, and the conscience clause, could be easily got over and fairly adjusted by mutual consideration and concession. Mr. Wolfe went on to vindicate the church of which he was a minister, and asked what had dissent done for the education of the masses? Of the whole number of children throughout the country under education in day schools, 75 per cent. were educated by the church. Mr. Wolfe alluded to a system of *indirect* compulsion, namely, that before boys or girls should be permitted to work, they should be obliged to procure a certificate of their being able to read and write and cipher. He concluded by showing that the amount of school accommodation was at the present time sufficient, and that whatever system of national education might ultimately be adopted, he was sure there was that religious instinct pervading all classes of society in this country that would never tolerate any "godless system," but would insist upon sound morality and religious sentiments as the basis of national education.

The Rev. J. M. Hawker said he could not agree with the lecturer in reference to compulsory education in the agricultural districts. There was a thirsting for knowledge at the present time in the country districts, and it would be necessary as things advanced to have agricultural labourers educated, on account of machinery, &c. But he believed the agricultural labourers would see the necessity of educating themselves. He was of opinion that the great intelligence possessed by the Americans was owing to the thirst for reading the newspapers; and if we could get the newspapers more thoroughly circulated among the lower classes we should soon find them far better educated.

Mr. Creed expressed disapproval of compulsory education.

Mr. G. Stooke approved of compulsory education, for he considered it a mercy to children to have them educated. It was the educating children up to 10 years of age that would qualify them for reading the newspapers.

Mr. Bowden was of opinion that if we had compulsory education we must have sectarian schools. He thought that the Established church should be more liberal, and allow the children attending their day

schools to go to any Sabbath school that their parents may wish. He suggested that children in the agricultural districts should go to school three days in the week and three days to work. He advocated having certificated masters, as before they could act as schoolmasters they must have a certificate of competency to teach.

Mr. Coulson said that women were very rarely employed in the fields in Devon. Boys earn in the summer something to pay for schooling in the winter. He thought grants should be given to schools for results, and not only in the case of certificated teachers.

Mr. Ford advocated a system of inspection of cottages, the present state of the dwellings of the poor being such as to require the attention of the Government.

Mr. Wills said there was often great difficulty in obtaining locally funds for schools in rural districts, and this difficulty was partly caused by the profits of the land being taken away from the district and spent elsewhere. He would support compulsory education on the ground that it is the duty of the State to provide for the moral health of the children and for the prevention of crime.

ILSINGTON.

Population, 1,209 - Acreage, 7,653.

188. *George Wills.*—The cultivation is mixed. Boys from 12 years of age are employed all the year round. There is not one girl in the parish so employed to my knowledge. Women are chiefly employed in weeding corn, picking stones and apples, and they assist in the harvest. On my farm the women live within three-quarters of a mile of my house; my only boy is a servant in the house. Some others may have a little further to walk. In my opinion it is not desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed. As there are no young females employed here to my knowledge, there can be no need of any restriction upon the employment of females.

There are four or five charity schools situated in different parts of the parish, and I believe them to be tolerably well attended.

I should say we have cottages enough, very well dispersed throughout the parish in hamlets. Some are very good, others small, and some, I fear, overcrowded. Most have a small garden attached, and most farm labourers have allotments of potato ground, if they choose to avail themselves of it.

WHEDDON.

Population, 437 - Acreage, 1,461.

189. *John Creed, Esq.*—The cultivation is partly pastoral and partly arable. Boys are employed from the age of 12 years. Girls are not employed. Women are occasionally employed for weeding and picking stones. They live at the most a mile from their work. Boys are employed from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and women from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is not desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed upon the land, as boys are not employed at too young an age. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There is a day school here supported by subscriptions, which is open to all on payment of one penny weekly. This is well attended.

The cottages are generally good and sufficient. I am not aware of any overcrowding. All have gardens or allotments.

TEIGNGRACE.

Population, 172 - Acreage, 1,400.

190. *E. Bearne.*—The cultivation is mixed. No boys are employed under 13 years of age. Neither girls nor women are employed in outdoor work on the farms. The hours of work for the boys, &c. are from 7 to 5. I would place the limit of age below which boys should not be employed on the farms at 12. There is a school in this parish supported by the funds of a charity. It is well attended. The cottages are in good condition, and there are sufficient for the supply of labour required. They are conveniently situated, and are well supplied with water and well ventilated. All have good gardens.

IPPLEPEN.

Population, 812 - Acreage, 3,070.

191. *W. Sowton.*—The cultivation is mixed; orchard, pasture, arable, and common land. Children seldom work on the farm until 10 or 11 years old, and generally live in the house on small wages. They are hired more or less all the year. The young men as labourers on the farm are very unsatisfactory. They are not bound after 14 or 15 years of age, when they should be useful labourers on the farm, and they prefer being their own masters, and too often are found spending their evenings at the public-house, where their morals become corrupted, and instead of being useful citizens they are too often a nuisance to the public. Girls are not employed in agriculture, and women to no great extent. The labourers have to go from one to two miles to their work. Their hours of work are from 8 to between 5 and 6. I think no restriction is needed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in agriculture. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females.

There is a Wesleyan Sunday school here and a day school, taught by a trained master, under Government inspection. There are about 120 on the books. The average attendance is 90. The school is open to all children; the only restriction is that the children shall attend some place of worship on the Sunday.

The cottages are of a middling character. They are sufficient in number. Each has a small garden. They are situated at distances varying from half a mile to a mile and a half from the farms on which the work has to be done. They are well supplied with water and well ventilated. Some few are overcrowded. In addition to the garden the labourers on the farms are supplied by their masters with a portion of ground (manured for them) for potatoes free of expense.

LUSTLEIGH.

Population, 322 - Acreage, 2,900.

192. *Thomas Wills.*—The cultivation is mixed;

about 1,000	acres	arable,
200	„	grass,
1,000	„	woodland,
700	„	open commons.
2,900		

I never employ boys under 10 years of age, and very seldom under 12, they are useless under 11. This is the case generally in the parish. Girls are rarely employed in the parish; they are usually indoor servants. Women do but little work on the farm except at potato-sowing, stone-picking, hay and corn harvest, and apple-picking, not exceeding six weeks in the year. There is not, on the average, one on each farm employed. The average distance to which they have to go to work does not exceed a mile. They work seven hours a day. I should not let boys work under 10 years of age, and not then until they can read. I do not think it desirable in my parish and district to place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture, as girls do not work in the fields.

The education of the children of the agricultural labouring class is provided for by a small endowment of 6*l.* a year, with about 10*l.* a year subscription by the clergyman, and the pence of some of the children

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who learn to write, making in all 18*l*. Not much progress is made. There is no Government grant or examination. There are 40 on the books. The chief cause of non-attendance is that so little is taught. A complete supervision by an inspector is wanted.

The cottages are all very old. They are kept clean and well ventilated. They are either detached or in pairs. They are chiefly situated on the farms where the men work. All have two bedrooms, a living room down stairs, and a back house. There is plenty of water near each (a good spring generally). They are not overcrowded. All have good gardens and large allotments, which fatten on the average two pigs each, one always granted by their master; and men get their work not more than a mile on the average from their homes, some much nearer, living close to it.

DENBURY.

Population, 410 - Acreage, 1,068.

193. *Mr. W. Salter.*—The cultivation is a mixture of white and green crops. Boys from 12 years old are employed in agriculture, generally through the year. The principal employment of girls of the labouring class is running about the streets. Very few women are employed in outdoor work, and these mostly in the spring of the year. Their employment is stone-picking and weeding. In the months of June and July they are employed in hay-making. In October and November some may be employed in picking apples. They do not live more than a mile at most from their work. They work seven or eight hours a day. I do not think it necessary to place any restrictions upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm work, or upon the employment of females.

We have a National school in the village, where the children are taught reading, writing, and sewing.

In our parish cottages are good and plentiful, sufficient for the supply of the labour required. There are enough for the occupation of the labourers from one or two of the adjoining parishes. There is in general a good supply of water. The cottages are well ventilated. By far the greatest number have gardens; in default of this they have allotments of land.

EAST OGWELL.

Population, 275 - Acreage, 1,249.

194. *Rev. F. J. Taylor.*—The cultivation is mixed. The boys are generally taken from school as soon as they are able to earn anything by driving horses at ploughing time, often at a very early age, from 10 to 12 years old. Girls are not employed, but are frequently kept at home for the purpose of taking care of younger children. Women are occasionally employed in weeding and in picking up apples in the orchards in the cider-making season, but not in hard field labour. On an average they have to go about one mile to their work. Their hours are from 7 or 8 to 5 or 6. It is very desirable that boys should not be taken from school before 12 years old.

We have a dame's school here under diocesan inspection. The mistress has no certificate, but went through a course of instruction at the training school in Exeter before her appointment. Early labour is the chief cause of non-attendance; also indifference on the part of some parents.

The cottages in the parish are old, but in most respects good, and sufficient for the supply of labour. They are, with the exception of one small hamlet, situated in the village. There are no evils from overcrowding, except in one or two instances. Most of the cottages have small gardens, but there are no allotments.

COFFINSWELL.

Population, 194 - Acreage, 1,126.

195. *Thomas Devonshire.*—The cultivation is mixed, consisting of arable, pasture, and orchard land. Boys are employed from 10 years of age all the year round when the weather permits. Girls from 12 years of age are employed principally in domestic occupation. A few women go out occasionally weeding corn, making hay, picking apples, &c. Their cottages are all contiguous to the farms on which they are employed. They work from 7 to 5, and have 1½ hours allowed for meals. Boys are generally engaged in very light work until they are 14 or 15. I do not think it desirable to put any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture. Young females generally begin by assisting their parents at job work.

There is a village school here aided by a small Government grant. This is well attended.

The cottages are all in excellent condition, and ample for the supply of labour required. All are adjoining the farms. Most of them have three sleeping rooms and two living rooms. They are well supplied with water and well ventilated. Nearly all have good gardens attached, and it is the general custom of the farmers to allow their labourers allotments in addition, for the cultivation of potatoes.

MORETON HAMPSTEAD.

Population, 1,460 - Acreage, 7,656.

196. *Elias Cuming.*—The cultivation is for the most part arable. Boys are employed in agriculture here from 11 years of age. Girls are not employed. Women are employed to a small extent in harvest; they live on the farms where they work. Their hours of work are from 8 to 12, and from 2 to 5. I would certainly not place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There is a National school, which the parents to a certain extent take advantage of. Nothing but the apathy of parents prevents their doing so to a greater extent. There is a sufficient number of cottages in the parish, in decent condition, conveniently situated, and not overcrowded. Water is very plentiful, and the ventilation good. The cottages, with but few exceptions, have gardens.

IDEFORD, near CHUDLEIGH.

Population, 358 - Acreage, 1,471.

197. *Rev. J. M. Hawker.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. No women are employed in this parish. Farm boys are employed of various ages from 9 to 13. They live on or near the farms on which they work. They work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and are allowed half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. When females used to be employed in agriculture the effect upon their morals and proper training for domestic duties was always bad. I see no reason for recommending any restriction upon the hours of work of children and young persons in agriculture. If any of the modes suggested for obtaining school attendance would be applicable to this parish, it would be that of half day at school and half day at work. An inquiry even from an employer as to whether a child could read and write, as in the navy, would, I think, make the parents more careful about their children's attendance at the schools available. The school attendance is a good deal affected by the distance the children have to go to school, but scarcely at all by the pecuniary resources of the parents either in this parish or in the neighbouring ones. The girls are taught sewing and knitting, and also receive a little instruction in cookery. The cottages in this small parish are fairly commodious, I think. They are conveniently situated, and not overcrowded. The buildings are old, but generally the accommodation is fair; always two bedrooms, and sometimes three. They are owned by private owners and feoffee property, managed by the clergyman. The rent is about 1*s*. a

week. There is very little garden ground. The Union Chargeability Act is not causing an increase of cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	12	8
Between 10 and 13 -	—	—
Total - -	12	8
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	20	18
Between 10 and 13 -	—	—
Total - -	20	18

In Winter.

Boys :		
Under 10 - -	18	14
Between 10 and 13 -	—	—
Total - -	18	14
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	26	18
Between 10 and 13 -	—	—
Total - -	26	18

There are no children here who are neither at school nor at work. About 20 males and 8 females are growing up with insufficient education ; they are, for the most part, in a state of appalling ignorance. There is an evening school here on Sundays, open for about an hour ; about 15 boys and lads attend it. They are instructed in Bible reading, and have some amusing book read to them. An evening school was tried on week days here for some years until about two or three years ago ; it always failed after a little. The farmers dislike to have their boys and lads out ; bigger lads do not like to have their slowness and ignorance shown up before the younger ones ; and I have found it extremely hard to interest them sufficiently to enable them to overcome the first difficulties of hard work ; it is a pity. I find, as diocesan inspector, that evening schools diminish in this neighbourhood instead of increasing.

BERRY POMEROY.

Population, 500 - Acreage, 4,500.
Rev. A. Everett.
Mr. Mortimer, } farmers.
Mr. Moysey, }

198. The farmers in the neighbourhood are large. Boys used to be employed at 9 years of age ; 11 years is now the earliest age, and then only for occasional work ; they do not live in the farmhouses. Girls are not employed in the fields. Women occasionally for stone-picking ; there is now great difficulty in getting them, probably owing to the rise in men's wages.

An ordinary labourer's wages are 11*s.* a week and cider, and 15 yards of potato ground, dressed. Hours of work for men are from 7 to 5.30 p.m. ; for women from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. ; 1½ hour out for meals. Turnip-hoeing is taken sometimes by task-work in morning and evening by the men regularly employed on the farms in addition to their regular work ; in other cases it is let by the acre.

In harvest 21*s.* to 25*s.* are given beyond the regular wages.

The supply of labour depends a little on the town of Totnes, there not being a sufficient number of cottages in the village or attached to the farms.

A restriction on the age at which boys should be employed might occasionally be inconvenient ; for instance, small boys are sometimes wanted for bird-keeping, or for taking care of a horse at the bottom of a hill to be used as leader up a steep place ; these earn 6*d.* a day ; the parents of long families would also suffer from the loss of the earnings.

Mr. Moysey thought labourers are by no means the better for education ; the best young men go away from the parish to the police, &c.

Children should be taught to read and write, but as a matter of supply of labour for the farmer education shortens such supply.

There is a night school in the parish open twice a week in the winter. Yearly hirings are not the custom here.

The oldest boy in the school was barely 10 years of age. The school is a mixed one under a mistress, and has no Government aid.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	28	23
Between 10 and 13 -	5	2
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	15	12
Between 10 and 13 -	8	3

In Winter.

Boys :		
Under 10 - -	21	15
Between 10 and 13 -	5	5
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	8	4
Between 10 and 13 -	8	6

There is another school in the parish at Bridgetown, Totnes.

Cottages.

199. 1. Cob and thatch ; very old and bad. One room and back house down ; two bedrooms up. Small garden ; rent 1*s.* a week. Man can have 15 yards of potato ground free.

2. Stone and slate ; lately repaired. Down, one room and back house ; up, two small bedrooms, one with fire-place ; garret above. Very small garden. Rent, 3*l.* 3s. a year. Stone very porous and wet.

3. A pair ; new. Down, large room and back house ; up, three bedrooms. With garden, 4*l.* a year.

COLLATON, near PAIGNTON.

200. *Rev. P. Lilly.*—The farms are large, mostly over 400 acres, and the farmers less obstructive than the older generation.

Farm boys usually live at home, but have to go and do up the horses at night ; the farmers are not very willing to make it easy for boys to attend night school.

Girls do not work in the fields for farmers. Women are employed, and the result is untidiness in their homes. There are gardens attached to the cottages here, and allotments at Paignton and Marsdon. A

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man's wages are 11*s.* a week and cider. Small boys are first employed for taking cattle to and from the fields.

COLLATON SCHOOL.

Oldest boy in school about 8 years, March 2nd, 1869.

201. *W. E. Penwell*, 9 years old.—Is regularly employed by a farmer in the fields from 6 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., and has been at work since November 1867. His earnings, including the value of meat, are calculated at 2*s.* a week. He lives with his mother. He once got first prize at school for regular attendance; has now nearly forgotten all he learnt.

202. *Partridge*, 16 years.—Came to prepare for confirmation; could not read or write, or remember a single fact connected with our Saviour. He had been in farm service since he was quite small.

203. *C. Penwell.*—Cottage, property of farmer. Down one room; up, two bedrooms. With garden, 4*l.* a year. Woman works in the fields; cottage very untidy.

204. *Mrs. R. Penwell.*—Cottage. One room down; one bedroom divided; small garden; 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. It does not belong to the farmer for whom my husband works. I whitewash it myself once or twice a year. My husband is an ordinary labourer, and earns 11*s.* a week and cider. Thrashing is taken by the piece at 2½*d.* a niche=one bundle; the hours are long for that work. Harvest is let sometimes by the piece. Ordinary hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

My son, 12 years old, works for same master, gets 1. 3*d.* a week and all his meals, sleeps at home. He looks after cattle, drives horses, and does odd jobs. He gets home at 7, 8, or 8.30 p.m., and begins at same time in the morning as his father.

Women work a good deal in the fields here, and "things go back at home" in consequence. Girls very seldom go out to field work.

Husband has 15 yards of allotment, quite a mile away; pays 6*d.* a yard for it, and can grow vegetables enough for the year's consumption. He has a bit of meat every day.

I do not think it would hurt the parents if children were prevented working before 10 years of age, and I am quite sure the farmers make a difference in favour of an educated lad. Many boys who are well educated don't care to go to farm service if they can get anything else.

My husband pays 2*s.* 4*d.* a quarter to his club, without funerals; if there is a funeral in the quarter there is an extra payment of 1*s.* in case of a man, 6*d.* in that of a woman; there is 2*s.* 6*d.* a year more to pay for the doctor, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for the dinner. Allowance for sickness is 7*s.* a week. He often says he wishes he had begun to put into the savings bank when he was young instead of into the club.

BLAGDON BARTON, PAIGNTON.

205. *Mr. Lewin.*—I farm 450 acres. I should not employ a boy regularly under 12 years old; I think 10 years would be a good limit. Boys are useful in spring and summer for stone-picking, apple-picking, &c.; they might easily go to school in the winter, or after 12 years of age attend night school. I began work myself in Northamptonshire when I was 7 years old.

Devon labourers take no interest in their work, and want a deal of looking after. Midland-county men are better than the Devon men by 10 to 12 or even 14. An educated labourer is far better for the employer than an uneducated one; he takes more care of things.

Girls are never employed in the fields here. The usual rate of wages for men is 11*s.* a week and cider. I give my regular men 12*s.* a week, cider, and potato-ground manured free.

206. MEETING OF CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE, KINGSBRIDGE,

April 12, 1869.

J. F. Earle, Esq., chairman.

It was stated that the employment of women in the fields was daily decreasing in consequence of the rise in men's wages, and that if those wages were increased another 2*s.* a week, there would be no women in the fields; that the homes of those women who work in the fields are as tidy as those of other women.

As to the age at which children should go to work it seemed to be the unanimous opinion that 10 was the proper age for boys, and 13 for girls. The hours of work were stated to be seven and a half to eight hours for men and boys, and seven hours for women.

Wages for men were 10*s.* a week, and taking into consideration the piecework, potato-ground, and extra money in harvest, the chairman calculated the average weekly earnings at 13*s.*, which calculation was confirmed by some others. Mr. Adams gave an extract from his wages book, showing that he paid eight regular men 260*l.* in the year. It was said that many labourers preferred having corn supplied by their employer at a fixed price, as they could not buy it so well from the millers, but that this system of truck was being abandoned in that district.

As to the amount of accommodation in the cottages the accounts varied. It was stated that in many instances there was only one bedroom in a cottage, that there were not sufficient with two bedrooms, and very few with three bedrooms.

Rev. A. Earle expressed an opinion that every landowner is bound to provide a sufficient number of decent cottages for every 100 acres he possesses.

The average rent of cottages was said to be from 2*l.* to 3*l.* Where a labourer has one rent free under his employer it was reckoned at 1*s.* a week. Gardens are almost always attached to the cottages, in some cases allotments also, though the latter system does not prevail to any extent in that neighbourhood. It was stated that there was great want of privies for the cottages in all the villages.

On the education question Mr. Popplestone stated that the supply of schools was not sufficient, and that the small parishes were in want of aid, and he suggested that good schools should be established at convenient centres.

Mr. Cornish wished for more Government aid for small rural parishes. Under the present system help was given to those which were quite able to help themselves, and none to those which really needed it. He was in favour of night schools as a means of continuing education for lads earning wages. Boys should be kept at school till 10 years of age.

Rev. A. Earle, as diocesan inspector, admitted that small rural parishes were in want of more Government aid. He would utilize the present agencies through the chambers of agriculture, &c., and wished for a system of education under local management and supervision; all schools to be inspected by Government, and payment of grants in aid made for results only.

It was stated by Mr. Balkwill, a receiver for the savings bank, that there was a fair proportion of agricultural labourers among the depositors; that the wives now come with money in purses, whereas formerly they used to bring 1*s.* 6*d.* at a time in the corner of their pocket-handkerchiefs. He considered that the agricultural labourers were now far better off than 30 years ago, but from what cause he was unable to say.

It was thought that good clubs were a boon to the labourer.

It was resolved, "That in this district no legisla-
" tive interference is required with regard to the

"employment of young persons, women, and children in agriculture."

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207. Letter from the Rev. A. Earle to Honourable E. Portman:—

West Alvington, Kingsbridge,
April 6, 1869.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE communicating with you I have done my best to arrive at the facts connected with the three following subjects of your inquiry in our neighbourhood:—

1. Employment of women and children.
2. The labour question and condition of cottages.
3. Educational difficulties.

With the following results:—

The employment of women is on the decrease; it appears to be the opinion of trustworthy persons that their employment is not detrimental to morality, but is injurious to their future usefulness as in-door servants. This I am inclined to doubt, and believe that in many instances the cases brought forward in proof of it fail, because the individuals would never have been likely to prove good in-door servants, out-door service was their *métier*. And again, as to immorality, it is true that in my own experience several habitual field-workers have bastard children, but a very intelligent farmer induced me to believe that in most instances the fall had preceded employment in the fields, and was not the consequence, but rather the *cause* of their seeking such work, from having disqualified themselves by their misconduct for respectable in-door service.

With regard to children I do not think any are employed under 10, nor do I think they suffer in health from their work. What does decidedly injure them is their contact with elder lads of from 15 to 20 years of age, who in my district are a rough, ignorant, coarse lot. There is a marked class of lads, from the ages of 14 to 20 and 24, who are most difficult to handle, shifty in their work, ignorant, very few can read or write, and utterly regardless of authority. I detect symptoms of a similar class in the report on America, under the head of "Juvenile Rowdyism;" it is on the increase, and is a marked and bad feature in our present social position, full to my mind of future evil. * * * * The farmers feel it and are at a loss to control it. The lads take offence and shift service; there does not seem to be any mutual or common interest between employer and employed.

With respect to cottages they are universally bad, very bad. In my home parish very few belong to the landowners, very many to poor persons, who have invested their savings in dilapidated tenements and cannot improve them. Rents are, considering the accommodation, high. Few have three, a large number not two, sleeping-rooms. I can quote instances of five and six people sleeping in one room. Great reform is needed here, and I should like to see every landowner forced to build decent cottages for his labourers where necessary, or to improve where improvement is necessary. I believe it would be most beneficial to all, landowner, occupier, and labourer, if some such arrangement could be made, by which the miserable cottages in poor hands could be bought up and improved. Decency and morality are impossible under existing circumstances; very many have no proper privies; some have no gardens; but I believe all can obtain allotments if they choose.

With respect to wages I give you a table which can, I believe, be relied upon, as coming from one of the most intelligent employers of labour in the neighbourhood; and not content with the mere fact of his high character I have taken it to several employers and find that they agree with it in the main; the *employed have as a rule put a lower rate as the average.* The figures give an average of 13*s.* 6*d.* a week.

	s.	*d.*
Weekly regular wage - -	10	0
Piecework, average per week	1	0
30*s.* for harvest - - say	0	8
Privileges, *e.g.*, potato ground, straw, and dowse - say	0	6
Cider - - -	1	4
	13	6

With respect to education in the outlying small parishes I fear the standard is very low, and I have been surprised to find how this appears to be the case even where fair opportunities have existed for education; but my firm conviction based on much thoughtful experience is, that the real reason why such localities are low in standard and the schools neglected is "they are bad," bad in discipline, bad in teaching power. I find that children will come long distances to a good school; we do not want more schools but better schools. I have five schools under my charge, two indifferent, one fair, two very good; in the two latter I have no difficulty as to attendance, in the others it is slack in proportion to the character of the school. I believe we might improve our present schools at small expense in the following way, I speak only of small agricultural parishes:—If the schools could be brought into union and grouped, say 25 to 30 together, in connexion with a committee of education formed out of the agricultural chamber and placed under a competent organising master who should give all his time, under the direction of the committee to whom he would report every month, to organising the said schools, teaching in them and assisting the present teachers to a better method and discipline the schools would be sure to improve. The cost would not be great, and the salary of the organising master could be paid by contributions from each school in union. The Government inspector could inspect and report, and a smaller grant might be given according to results, and if these results are satisfactory I do not see the justice of insisting upon a certificate. To pay for *results* only and insist upon a preliminary certificate is, I think, a contradiction, and if a good system of organisation, whereby present educational agencies in remote and small agricultural parishes could be fostered, is possible, I believe it would be the duty of Government to give such aid as the inspector's reports might justify. I believe some plan of this kind in connexion with the Chambers of Agriculture would do more to make education general than any compulsory measures connected with an educational rate. * * * * * * Local management would create local interest on a wider scale, Government inspection and interference would prevent false economy and jobbery, and stimulate activity. I believe the majority do feel that something *must* be done or a compulsory system under a rate is inevitable; and I think that some form combining a minimum of Government grant with local voluntary subscription, and a local rate might before long be generally adopted. In my own case several farmers have recently volunteered subscriptions, and though at present I personally pay for education not less than 50*l.* to 60*l.* a year that sum is decreasing, and will, I feel sure, as the usefulness of a good school becomes felt, diminish year by year, partly by increased payments partly by increased subscriptions. Many farmers are beginning to recognise the necessity of a really good school if the time of attendance is to be limited to the age of 10 or 11.

The compulsory system and the secular system would both, I believe, be most unpopular here, so much so that the force of public opinion would override the most stringent legal enactments.

Half time and night schools are not suited to our necessities.

Yours, &c.
A. EARLE.

Devonshire.

Mr. Portman.

h.

WEST ALVINGTON.

Population, 925 - Acreage, 4,120.

208. *Rev. A. Earle.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no gangs in this parish. There is a decided decrease in the employment of women in this parish. They are employed in spring in picking stones and setting potatoes, in summer and autumn in hoeing and weeding, in winter in trimming roots, &c. They live within a fair distance of their work. Their hours are from 8.30 to 5 or 4.30. An hour and a half are allowed for meals. They are not ill-treated, and their health is not injuriously affected by their work. I put your Commissioner in communication with an intelligent surveyor, who says that in parts of our district where female labour is more common injury is not unfrequent, especially to young married child-bearing women. One such case has come within my knowledge, but she was working for herself potato setting when taken ill. Many persons imagine that the employment of females leads to immorality. I do not. Women who have misconducted themselves take to field work because they cannot get house service, and as a rule the women who take early to field work are not originally suited to house service. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the employment of females. I believe if any injury does arise it arises *during harvest*, which is a time of laxity and drink; but I think the evil has been exaggerated. I should like for boys not to be employed under 11 years of age, but I believe general consent says 10, and no restriction would serve. I do not believe any restriction upon the hours of work would avail; but I believe chambers of agriculture might, if permitted, make bye-laws regulating these and other matters, which are connected with the subject with good effect. They will eventually rule opinion on these subjects, and their moral influence would be great if properly directed. I do not think any of the modes for obtaining school attendance provided by the Factory Act and the Printworks Act would be of any service at present. Good schools and short attendance is our only chance, supplemented perhaps by night classes, but these are not popular. I think village reading rooms and libraries will do some good in keeping up previous education. Our school attendance is considerably affected in bad weather by the distance the children have to go to school; but when the school is good this is overcome. In this parish, as our average attendance proves, we do not suffer so much as in neighbouring parishes. The school attendance is affected by the pecuniary recources of the parents, but it ought not to be. The wasteful parents make this an excuse; but it is only an excuse. Wages average from 12*s.* to 13*s.* No efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls.

The cottage accommodation is bad, and the fewness of the rooms is opposed to decency. Many cottages are in the hands of poor persons who have no power to improve. In my home parish, West Alvington, the landowners *ought* to build new and improve old. They have but few in their ownership. Necessaries and drains are bad. There ought to be three cottages to 100 acres; there is not that proportion. The cottages are fairly situated, but there is not a sufficient number with even two bedrooms; they are overcrowded. It is impossible to give a general description of them; there is no uniformity except in their general wretchedness. Some have only one bedroom, with five persons in it. The water supply is bad; many go some distance. Some have no gardens, but all might have, I think, allotments. The ownership varies in two of my parishes; principally in landlords and feoffees in West Alvington. The rents are very high for so bad accommodation. I went with your Commissioner to a few, but did not take him to the worst, but the average cottages. The relief officer in my presence spoke of the general badness of the cottages in his district. The Union Chargeability Act is having no effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation. No progress is being made towards increasing it. I hope to try before long a co-operative system, but I fear the interest will at first be very low.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	35	39
Between 10 and 13 -	10	
Total - -	45	
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	35	30
Between 10 and 13 -	12	
Total - -	47	

There are no children who are neither at school nor at work. About 10 males and eight females are growing up with insufficient education; they are very ignorant, and, as a rule, insubordinate and shifty. I tried an evening school for three winters but it failed. The first year and second its success was marked. It was open three night a week, two hours each night, from October to April. I have now closed it. The subjects of instruction were reading, writing, arithmetic, with the Bible read and explained. I do not think, in our scattered hamlets, an evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school; but I mean to try classes at farmhouses when I can get permission to group the labourers in two or three hamlets together. The principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school are, the late hours of labour, bad weather, long distances, dislike of the farmers to the system, and want of teachers. With respect to education, I venture to hope that Government aid will be brought down to our small rural parishes. I do my best, and so do my brethren of the clergy. My educational bill is never less than 60*l.* to 70*l.* per annum. I have known town schools with balances in hand, and yet receiving every Government aid. I know *no* rural school—I speak as diocesan inspector—that is not struggling for existence. We contribute to the imperial taxation and have a *right* to aid; it is a grievous wrong to keep it from us. Within three years I have set on foot two schools under inspection, and am about to open a third, *but* this I can do only because I have private means. Under existing regulations our rural parishes cannot benefit from our miscalled National System.

S. HUISH, MARLBOROUGH, S. MILTON.

Population, 2,700 - Acreage, 12,136.

209. *Rev. A. Earle.*—The cultivation is mixed. No boys are employed at an earlier age than 10. Girls are not employed. The employment of women is greatly on the decrease. As a rule they do not have to go more than a mile to their work. Women work from 8 to 4.30, with, say, an hour and a half to two for meals. The farmers, at a recent meeting of the Kingshide Agricultural Chamber, expressed a unanimous opinion that children should not work before 10, and that no restriction was necessary. I should prefer 11. I do not think it desirable in this immediate neighbourhood to place any restriction upon the employment of females.

I have five schools in the parish under my care; two of these I have set on foot recently. I find the two good schools well attended, and the other three

in proportion to their goodness. Night schools have failed; not from want of energy, but from the scattered condition of the parish and the dislike of the farmers.

The cottages are very bad. They are overcrowded, and not well supplied with necessary accommodation. I believe them to be so bad that only rebuilding will be profitable. Their condition is adverse to morality and decency. Some have gardens. No one need be without a small portion of ground for potatoes, but there is no regular allotment system. The cottage question is our real trouble. The owners are, as a rule, small and poor people who have invested their savings in numerous tenements; but this applies chiefly to West Alvington, and the overcrowding is caused partially by *artizans* from the neighbouring town of Kingsbridge.

West Alvington Cottages.

210. No. 1 cottage, without garden.
3*l.* and *outs* = 4*l.* a year.
No. 2 cottage, with garden.
3*l.* 10*s.*

Most of them are owned by small proprietors. Many with one bedroom only and much crowded.

Boys are employed "setting tatties" at 3*d.* and 4*d.* a day, at 10 years of age.

Distin, regular agricultural labourer. — I earn 10*s.* 6*d.* a week and three pints cider a day. I get a little task-work, and get 2*s.* a day for threshing. Cottage and small garden, 50*s.* a year and "outs."

A job-man get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, no cider, and loses wet days.

Huish Parish.

211. Two women, field workers, stated that they got 7*d.* a day for regular work; were now picking stones at 6*d.* an acre; hours of work, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The money earned was hardly enough to do more than pay for extra clothes.

Mr. Nicolls, relieving officer, Kingsbridge Union.—Relief is stopped in almost all cases when a child reaches 10 years of age, except in cases of bad health, Payment is made for children's schooling by the guardians, according to age. The cottages in the union are somewhat overcrowded.

LODDISWELL.

212. Letter from Rev. H. Townend to Hon. E. Portman.

Vicarage, Loddiswell,
April 15, 1869.

Sir,

In my parish boys are employed usually at the age of 10 years; girls seldom work on the farm; women are employed mostly in planting potatoes, weeding, and picking up stones; their work is generally near home, and their hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. We have two schools, supported mostly by voluntary contributions. The girls take advantage of the means of education, the boys leave much too young. I attribute their non-attendance to early labour, and also to the want of a good master. The cottages are mostly in pretty good condition; they are sufficient, I consider, for the supply of the labour required and are conveniently situated with respect to the farms. I believe most of them have gardens or allotments of land.

Yours faithfully,
H. Townend.

STOKENHAM.

Including—
Stokenham Village.
Chillington.
Beeson.
Kellaton.
Bickerton.
Tor Cross, } Fishing villages.
Bee Sands, }
Hall Sands, }

Population, 1,566 - Acreage, 5,901.

213. *Rev. J. C. Carwithen.*—There are no private gangs.

Females are rarely if ever employed in field work, save some elderly women in the spring weeding corn, planting potatoes, &c.

The hours of work for men are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., for women, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; one and a half hours allowed for meals. Owing to the use of machinery women and children are but little employed during hay and corn harvest in this parish.

I would not employ boys under 9 years of age. I think school attendance might be obtained by half day at school and half at work, the attendance to be in the morning.

The school includes a radius of 5 miles. Many of the children are from 10 to 14 years of age before they come to the National school, and know but little, having only attended a dame's school. Labourers children only pay 1*d.* a week, which does not affect the attendance.

The cottage accommodation affects the morality of the labouring poor. They are crowded, both with members of the family and with lodgers; there is certainly not a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms.

The cottages vary must. Ventilation is invariably bad and drainage worse. Rooms—one below, with an outhouse; bedrooms—never more than two, in many cases only one. There is no supply of water in the house; in many cases it has to be fetched from a great distance. The garden varies from one perch to 20. The ownership is in the hands of the landowner, with whom the tenant has to deal with but very few exceptions. Rent, from 2*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year.

I cannot suggest any mode of providing good cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms, because the wages of the district are not sufficient for the labourer to pay a higher rent for his cottage. I think that cottages may be erected in blocks of four at the rate of 80*l.* per cottage, two rooms below and two above; but in every two cottages I would make a third bedroom, which may be placed to either cottage as circumstances may require.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	70	60
Between 10 and 13 -	40	30
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	60	50
Between 10 and 13 -	33	22

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	60	50
Between 10 and 13 -	50	40
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	50	40
Between 10 and 13	43	23

Devonshire.
Mr. Portman.
h.

Approximate number of agricultural children neither at work nor at school :—

In Summer.

Boys :	
Under 10 - - - -	65
Between 10 and 13 - -	15
Girls :	
Under 10 - - - -	60
Between 10 and 13 -	10

In Winter.

Boys :	
Under 10 - - - -	65
Between 10 and 13 - -	20
Girls :	
Under 10 - - - -	60
Between 10 and 13 - -	10

There are about 80 males and 60 females growing up with insufficient education. Some have never been at school, others only for six or 12 months. A few, also, have no education except that afforded at a dame's school.

The difficulties in the way of an efficient evening school are the impossibility of working the master for so many hours and the want of funds, as the landowners and tenant farmers will not subscribe, and are, as a body, averse to education.

STOKENHAM SCHOOL.

214. *Mr. Lavers*, master.—Boys go out at 9 years of age for potato and barley planting and apple-picking, and return to school. Girls do not go out to work.

Many children come five miles to school. One boy (Ware), son of a warrener, comes to school in the summer and is absent all the winter ; he loses much of his knowledge, as his parents are ignorant and do not help him to keep it up when at home.

The oldest boy in the school is 14 years of age.

215. *Lamble*, boy 10 years old.—Had been out driving horses for threshing machine. Got 1*s.* a week.

216. *William Trout*, 9 years ; *George Trout*, 8 years.—Had been out "setting tatties." Got their meat but no money. Hours of work, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

217. *John Phillips*, labourer.—I look after master's cattle and work early and late. I get 11*s.* a week and cider, house and garden rent free, and potato ground allowed by the farmer. I do not have any task work.

PUTT'S COTTAGE.

218. One room down.
One „ up.

Father, mother, and four children living in it ; eldest girl at home 11 years of age. Another comes home from service and sleeps there. Rent, with small garden, 2*l.* 13*s.* a year.

COTTAGE IN CHILLINGTON, MR. HELMER'S.

219. Built of cob and stone, with stone floor.
Down—one room and cupboard.
Up—one large and one small room.
Rent, with garden, 50*s.* a year.

TOR CROSS.

The population is engaged in fishing in the summer. The men work at odd jobs for the farmers in the winter.

MR. HOLDSWORTH'S COTTAGES.—New.

220. Two rooms down, two bedrooms, closet. Small garden ; 7*l.* 10*s.* a year.

SIR LYDSTON NEWMAN'S.

221. Small and bad dwellings. Mostly stone with thatched roofs. Average rent, 50*s.* a year.

G. KELLON'S COTTAGE.

222. One room down, two bedrooms. 3*l.* 5*s.* a year. Not in good repair ; landlord will not do any repairs.

MRS. HOBBS.

223. One room down, two very small bedrooms, four yards of garden. Rent, 50*s.* a year. Man and wife and seven children, eldest 12 years old. Landlord won't do any repairs. The roof in a bad state ; no ventilation.

J. CLEMENTS.

224. One room down, one bedroom. 2*l.* 2*s.* a year.

WOOD.

225. One room down, lime ash floor, one bedroom. No garden. Rent, 3*l.* a year. Man and wife, wife's father, and five children always living in it. When some of the others come home from service they sleep there too.

TROUT.

226. One room down, two upstairs, of a good size, but very much out of repair. Landlord does no repairs.

PLYMPTON ST. MARY UNION.

North District.

227. *Henry Pearce*, relieving officer.—There is no gang system. I would prohibit female labour in the fields altogether except during hay time and harvest. Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age. There is no necessity for placing any restriction on the hours of work. Cottage accommodation is very inferior as regards the morality, health, and comfort of the labouring poor. Two cottages per 100 acres would be sufficient for persons engaged in agriculture alone, I think there is that proportion in the union ; they are generally conveniently situated for the work of the farms. There is not a sufficient number of them with two or three bedrooms, and the dwellings are often crowded both with members of the family and lodgers. The construction of the cottages is altogether inferior, and the accommodation totally inadequate ; they for the most part belong to landowners ; rent varies from 4*l.* to 6*l.* a year. There is no progress being made towards increasing the accommodation, nor has the Union Chargeability Act had any effect in causing an increase in the number of cottages.

NORTH DISTRICT, PLYMPTON ST. MARY UNION.

Parish.	Acreage.	Population (1861).
Plympton St. Mary - -	11,200	3,026
Bickleigh - - -	2,980	402
Compton Gifford - -	830	880
Plympton Maurice - -	170	900
Cornwood - - -	10,680	1,087
Shaugh Prior - -	7,170	570
Egg Buckland - -	3,800	1,416
Laira Green - -		
St. Budeaux - -	2,500	1,376
Pennycross - -	900	315
Tamerton Foliott - -	3,910	1,163
Total - -	44,140	11,135

APPROXIMATE NUMBER of CHILDREN of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools in the North District of the Plympton St. Mary Union.

In Summer.

Parish.	On the School Register.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
Pennycross	6	—	12	4	6	—	12	4
Tamerton Foliott	64	32	57	28	58	27	49	22
Plympton St. Mary	167	72	129	51	137	57	105	42
Bickleigh	27	16	25	9	20	4	16	5
Compton Gifford	35	3	28	9	30	3	26	8
Plympton Maurice	35	—	38	—	29	—	30	—
Cornwood	152	48	137	26	102	29	100	19
Shaugh Prior	30	2	21	6	28	1	19	5
Egg Buckland	30	29	33	7	25	22	25	3
Laira Green	30	1	29	12	26	1	28	10
St. Budeaux	75	23	44	21	66	18	40	11
Total	877		726		689		579	

In Winter.

Pennycross	6	—	12	4	6	—	7	4
Tamerton Foliott	64	32	57	28	60	26	49	23
Plympton St. Mary	167	72	129	51	129	59	88	26
Bickleigh	27	16	25	9	25	5	18	4
Compton Gifford	35	3	28	9	27	3	25	5
Plympton Maurice	35	—	38	—	29	—	30	—
Cornwood	152	48	137	26	101	33	83	19
Shaugh Prior	30	2	21	6	25	1	17	4
Egg Buckland	30	29	33	7	25	25	23	4
Laira Green	30	1	29	12	24	1	24	8
St. Budeaux	75	23	44	21	66	16	40	11
Total	877		726		686		512	

There are five night schools in the union open about 26 weeks in the year from October to March (one is open all the year) for two hours on four nights a week.

—	On Register. (Above 12 years.)	In average Attendance.
Plympton St. Mary	17	13
Colebrook	30	20
Plympton Maurice	48	38
Cornwood	15	11
Laira Green	17	In winter 17 In summer 10

They do not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day schools. In consequence of the villages being so scattered the distance to school is a great difficulty in the way of securing regular attendance.

PLYMPTON ST. MARY, SOUTH DISTRICT.

228. *Richard Coleman*, relieving officer.—There is no gang system. I do not find that the employment of females in agriculture tends to demoralize or unfit them for domestic purposes, indeed, I find the contrary to be the effect, for I know a great many women who have served an apprenticeship at a farm-house and have been much employed on the farms whose moral character will bear a very good comparison with others who have not been so employed, and I find them more domesticated, their cottages also are particularly clean.

I do not see why there should be any restriction on the employment of women in the fields; their small earnings being added to that of their husbands often prevent them from falling on the rates for sustenance in time of need when otherwise they would be obliged to do so.

Boys under 10 years of age ought not to be employed at all in agricultural labour, for if made to work too young, and exposed to the inclemency of the weather, their health and muscular development would be likely to suffer.

I think a restriction as to the distance to work is desirable. No young person should be required to go a distance of four miles, nor yet even three from his or her home to their daily work. I would recommend two miles to be substituted. There is no need of restriction as to the hours of work.

All labourers' cottages should have at least two bedrooms, both for the sake of morality and the health and comfort of the occupants. Cottages having only one bedroom where a family is being reared up must have a demoralizing effect.

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Two cottages per 100 acres would be, I think, sufficient for persons employed on the land; there is that proportion in my district. They average more than a mile distance from the farm where the labourer works, but there are some instances of cottages being attached to the farms. Very probably there are sufficient with two bedrooms, but it generally happens that those persons who have the largest families are the least able to pay the rent of the largest cottages. In many instances there are five and six persons of one family living in one bedroom.

Labourers' cottages in my district are generally constructed of stone and mud with thatched roofs, with rooms about 10 ft. by 10 ft. and 6 high. Ventilation and drainage very imperfect. The accommodation varies, but there are many with only one room on ground floor and one upstairs, with only one doorway, without any garden, and often without any pigsty or privy. Rent varies from 2*l.* to 5*l.* a year.

Parishes.	Acreage.	Population according to Census (1861).		
		Males.	Females.	Total.
Brixton - -	3,060	332	358	690
Ermington - -	4,920	894	890	1,784
Harford - -	3,680	73	85	158
Holbeton - -	4,800	480	484	964
Newton-Ferrers -	3,090	319	351	670
Plymstock - -	2,860	1,481	1,506	2,987
Rebelstoke - -	1,460	251	254	505
Wembury - -	3,070	271	290	561
Yealmpton - -	3,240	493	542	1,035
Total -	30,180	4,594	4,760	9,354

Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools in the South District.

Summer.

	On the School Register.						In average Attendance.					
	Boys.			Girls.			Boys.			Girls.		
	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Total.
Brixton - -	30	5	35	24	11	35	26	4	30	20	10	30
Ermington - -	69	7	76	56	10	66	59	8	67	55	6	61
Harford - -	—	—	—	3	5	8	—	—	—	8	8	16
Holbeton - -	54	14	68	30	15	45	35	11	46	30	15	45
Newton-Ferrers -	19	4	23	5	3	8	19	4	23	5	3	8
Plymstock - -	168	56	224	147	36	183	154	48	202	145	37	182
Revelstoke - -	22	9	31	24	2	26	17	5	22	20	2	22
Wembury - -	40	8	48	22	18	40	40	8	48	22	18	40
Yealmpton - -	33	19	52	43	27	70	30	16	46	40	25	65
Total -	557			481			484			469		

Winter.

Brixton - -	30	5	35	24	11	35	22	3	25	17	8	25
Ermington - -	69	7	76	56	10	66	58	4	62	53	6	59
Harford - -	—	—	—	3	5	8	—	—	—	3	5	8
Holbeton - -	54	14	68	30	15	45	33	10	43	20	10	30
Newton-Ferrers -	19	4	23	5	3	8	19	4	23	5	3	8
Plymstock - -	168	56	224	147	36	183	144	44	188	133	28	161
Revelstoke - -	22	9	31	24	2	26	15	7	22	18	2	20
Wembury - -	40	8	48	22	18	40	40	8	48	22	18	40
Yealmpton - -	33	19	52	43	27	70	30	17	47	40	23	63
Total -	557			481			458			414		

Combe Gate.

229. *Mrs. Mears.*—Cottage, one room down, two bedrooms of a good size; large garden. Rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year; held with Mr. Hodge's farm.

I have had eight children. My husband works for a farmer at 12*s.* a week and cider; he comes home for dinner. I have worked in the fields myself, stone-picking and weeding at 9*d.* a day. My boys began work at 7 and 8 years old, and lived in a farmhouse; they were paid 6*d.* a week. They had been to school up to that time, and can read and write a little; they never had a chance of keeping up their learning while in farmer's service except on Sunday afternoon. Girls do not work in the fields; I think it very bad for them.

It is the custom to put boys out to work as soon as they can earn 6*d.* Many farmers take them under 10 years of age. I think the loss of children's earnings when the family is large and young would be a hardship on the parents.

Women at hay time get 1*s.* a day and no meat. Men at harvest get all their meals but no extra money.

230. Venton Cottages.

(1.) Old, and built of cob.
Down, one room and backhouse.
Up, two bedrooms. No privy. Rent, with garden, 3*l.* 10*l.* a year.

(2.) One room down, and one bedroom. Small garden. Rent 1*s.* a week.

(3.) Stone cottage. One room down, and two bedrooms. 12 or 13 yards of garden. No privy. Rent 3*l.* 3*l.* a year.

231. *Vincent Parsons*, nearly 70 years old.—I look after cattle, mornings and evenings, and on Sundays, and get 12*s.* a week and no privileges. I go half a mile to work, and begin at 6.30 a.m., get home at 7 or 7.30 p.m. I have brought up a large family. I used to get 8*s.* a week and no privileges except grist corn.

My children began to work at 9 years old in the farmhouses, they did not do much else; there is not much difference now as to being able to keep children at home longer, though the wages are higher. My children have learnt to read and write since they went to service. Boys go out to work now about 10 or 11 years old; they get 9*d.* to 1*s.* a week and board, lodging, and washing. Girls do not work in the fields at all, and women only a little.

Harvest pay is 1*s.* 6*d.* a day above regular wages, or else meat, which is more usually given by the farmers.

Wages for ordinary labourer 11*s.* and liquor; for a woman 9*d.* a day. Stone-picking is done by them at per acre. I do not think there is a privy in the village.

232. Sparkwell Cottages.

(1.) Property of a miller.
Three in row, all the same size.
Down, one room and backhouse.
Up, two bedrooms. Man and wife and one lodger. Rent, with 12 yards of garden, 4*l.* 10*s.* No privy. The man is earning 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, not an able-bodied man.

(2.) A pair, one rented at 4*l.* 15*s.*, the other at 4*l.* 10*s.* a year; built of stone, with stone floor. One room and backhouse down, two bedrooms up; no fire-place upstairs. A pigsty and privy. A garden large enough to grow vegetables. Potato ground in addition rented from farmer at 1*s.* a yard, the farmer finding manure and ploughing in the potatoes.

HEMERDON.

233. The land here belongs to Admiral Woollcombe, but not all the cottages.

Cottage (1.) *Mrs. Wilmot.*—Stone, with slate roof, stone floors. One room down, two small bedrooms; with very small garden. Rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year.

There are no privies in the parish. I had four children alive at once and brought them up in this cottage. I keep a small school for infants; there is no other school in the parish; the children go to Sparkwell school. Children are irregular in their attendance at school; most of them go the mines from 9 to 10 years of age, but do not work underground; they get 5*d.* a day at first.

(2.) Next door to No. 1. One room down with earth floor, two bedrooms. Rent, with garden, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year (this is a very bad cottage, almost tumbling down).

(3.) Row of three, two of which have kitchen and backhouse down, two bedrooms, about 14 yards of garden; no privy; at a rent of 5*l.* a year. The other has only one bedroom.

COLEBROOK.

234. *Perseverance Cottages*, inhabited by railway men, artisans, &c.; property of Earl Morley; new and good. Two rooms down, three bedrooms; garden, privy, and pigsty. Rent 6*l.* 10*s.* a year.

Maria Blake, wife of a labouring man, who drives a timber waggon and earns 16*s.* a week. The cottage has kitchen, backhouse, and slip-down; two bedrooms upstairs; very small garden; privy. Rent 5*l.* a year.

I have worked in the fields weeding, stone-picking, potatoing, and sometimes spreading dung, at 9*d.* and 10*d.* a day, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner in the field. The big girl stayed at home to mind the little ones when I was out. My present eldest is 10 years old; she has been kept away from school for 12 months while I have been working; she can't write. If there was a school that would take her for three days a week she could be spared to attend it.

COMPTON, near PLYMOUTH.

235. Cottage. Stone and slate roof. Very damp. One room down, one upstairs; no garden; 4*l.* 10*s.* a year. Man an agricultural labourer earning 11*s.* a week and meat; his wife and two children live in it; there is one privy for seven cottages in an orchard at some distance; slops are thrown outside the front door.

Row of seven; property of a publican. All have one room down and one bedroom, and are rented at 4*l.* 4*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* a year.

Mr. Soltau says many cottages have been pulled down in Crabtree and Knacker's Knoll for purposes of the fortifications, and the families are crowded into Plymouth.

236. Children entered in the Plymouth Public Free School during the year 1868.
Boys' Department.

Summary of Occupations.

——	Master Tradesmen.	Artizans.	Labourers.	Policemen.	Sailors.	Soldiers.	Clerks.	Ministers.	Fathers dead.	Schoolmaster.
Boys -	10	152	85	5	53	3	6	2	27	—
Girls -	10	78	60	1	33	5	2	—	11	1
Total -	20	230	145	6	86	8	8	2	38	1
Average Wages per Week.	—	1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*	15*s.* 6*d.*	1*l.* 1*s.*	13*s.*	12*s.*	1*l.*	1*l.* 5*s.*	—	—

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DARTMOOR.

Population, 1,510. - Acreage, 54,241.

237. *Charles Barrington.* — The cultivation is mixed. It is estimated that there are,

	A.	R.	P.
Arable land - - -	1,357	0	0
Meadow and pasture land -	1,294	0	0
Woodland - - - -	109	2	0
„ recently planted -	140	0	0
Marsh and forest pasture -	1,277	0	12
Common land - - -	50,063	1	28
	54,241	0	0

Boys are not generally employed on farms under 10 years of age ; but, with few exceptions, the work is done by the farmer and his own family. Girls are not usually employed. They are occasionally employed at hay and corn harvest. Women are employed to a very limited extent indeed. Their hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., one hour being allowed for dinner. I think that boys under 10 years of age should not be permitted to work on the land. I am of opinion that it is desirable not to employ females, and especially the young, in agriculture at all if possible.

There is a National school here with a certificated master. There are also other schools partly supported by voluntary contributions and partly by the parents of the children. The parents take advantage of these. Most of the persons under the denomination of agricultural labourers are small occupiers themselves. The cottages are sufficient and well ventilated. There is an abundance of water. The cottages generally have good gardens.

238. Schools on Dartmoor.

1. Dartmeet, used also as a chapel for the labouring classes, between Prince Town and Dartmeet. Highest number attending is 39 out of a population, say, of 150.

2. Postbridge (dame's school). Building being erected to serve as a school and chapel, taking in a population of about 250, including the parish of North Bovey. The children of small farmers attend these schools.

3. Lidford parish, 54,000 acres; 4,037 under cultivation. Tithe rent, 144*l.* Population in 1861, 2,599, exclusive of the warders and prison attendants. The school at Princetown has very few agricultural children, but most of them come from the powder mills.

4. Powder mills school, Matthew Rouse, master, three miles from Princetown, two from Postbridge. Mixed school, 37 on register.

There are a few agricultural labourers' children, but most of them come from the powder mills. They are the children of farm labourers mostly, the other agricultural children are those of farmers. I can keep some children till 12 years of age, but the principal cause of irregularity in the attendance is through preparing peat in the summer.

HORRABRIDGE.

Population, 1,250 or 1,300.

239. *Richard Willis, Esq.*, surgeon.—The cultivation is mixed. Many copper and tin mines have been worked in this neighbourhood, and the children (boys and girls) have been employed upon them on surface work at the ages of 10 and 12 years. Latterly I knew some boys who worked underground as early as 12 years old. There is also a woollen factory in this village at which young girls are employed, although (in consequence of an alteration in the manufacture by the introduction of machinery) not so numerously as in former years. Some of these girls have been worked at night. In this neighbourhood it is usual to employ boys in agriculture as early as 12 years, but earlier if the parents can get situations for them. I do not know any farmer who employs girls on his farm, *i.e.*, in the cultivation of the soil. Very few women work on the farms ; in the summer a few work in the hay fields. I think boys under 12 should not be permitted to work on the land. I think that female labour in agriculture is wrong.

In the ecclesiastical district of Horrabridge there is a school having a certificated master. Some of the cottages in the parish are good ; many very bad. There are now quite sufficient, as the working of many mines has been stopped. They are not overcrowded as a rule, although some are. The village is well supplied with water, but no labourer's house has water supplied to it by a service pipe. Cottages are very badly supplied with privies ; some have no ground on which to throw the ashes and other refuse, and are permitted to be occupied though brought under the notice of the proprietor and board of guardians. Any labourer can have an allotment of land for a garden on application to a landowner in the neighbourhood a quarter of a mile from the village, and many avail themselves of it. Many of the cottages have small gardens attached to them. In my opinion a valuable aid to the improvement of the labourer and the diminution of taxation for the maintenance of the poor would be the establishment of a benefit society under the control of the Government, and attached to *every* post office as the savings bank is, at which any labourer with wages not amounting to more than 20*s.* a week could pay, to receive in sickness a sum being 2*s.* or 3*s.* less weekly than he earned in health, and not being a member of any other benefit society ; the sum so paid for such benefit to include an annuity after the age of 60.

In this and the adjoining parishes four or five benefit societies have failed during the last few years, thus depriving a number of members of benefit at an age when most needed and after many years payment.

Horrabridge School (mixed).

240. *Mr. Wakem*, master.—

Numbers on the books—boys and girls - 124
Average attendance during the past year - 90

The school is under Government, and we get some children from Sampford Spiney. The children do not work much in the field, they go fern gathering on the moor for three weeks in the autumn for their parents, and earn no money. More than one-third of the children work at the factory ; some of the children in the school are farmers' and artizans' children, and very few of them farm labourers' children, and there is no child above 14 years of age in attendance. This parish would not be affected by any law preventing the work before 10 years of age. The best educated lads of 16 and 18 years of age leave the parish for other work than agriculture. The farmers' sons pay 5*s.*, 3*s.*, and 2*s.* a quarter, according to the number that come, but the farmers do not trouble themselves much about education.

Huckworthy Bridge.

School not under Government.

241. *Mary Newman*, mistress.—

Girls and boys - - - 58.
Girls, 35. Boys, 23.

They are mostly children of farmers, and a few of the boys only go to field work. The girls remain at school till about 14 years of age, but the boys go to a free school at Walkhampton to finish off their education. The farmers' children pay 2½*d.* a week, and the labouring class 1½*d.* Most of the parents in this part can read and write, and some few are anxious to improve their children. This district is very thinly populated, and the distance to the school is from one to two miles.

242. *Mr. Davis*, agent to Mr. Newton, of Bridestow.—My neighbourhood is more a tillage district

than that of Tavistock. Children are not much employed, and women only occasionally, in stone-picking or wooding. The education in my neighbourhood is at a very low ebb.

Tavistock Boys' School.

243. *Mr. Soam*, master.—There are a very few children of agricultural labourers in this school. The average age for leaving school was 10 years. I believe the average rate of wages for farm work to be nearer 10*s.* than 12*s.* a week, as stated at the meeting held here. There are a great many children in the town who never get any education at all.

Girls' School.

There are 20 on the books, children of the agricultural labourers, who attend pretty regularly. The payment is 1*d.* a week. Five come a mile and three-quarters, some mile. They generally remain at school till 14 years of age. There is a night school for them, but those who attend the day school do not go to it.

Gulworthy School.

Tavistock parish.

244. *Mr. I. H. Gand*, master.—This school is in the centre of a mining district, mixed, and 130 on the books, with an average attendance between Christmas and Lady-day, 105; between Lady-day and Midsummer, 122 (this is a high-class school).

The children are about 20 per cent. agricultural, a large number miners, and a very few farmers' sons. The attendance begins to decrease at about 11 years old; mostly they go to the mining work, but a few as farm labourers. They are employed in the mines as young as 9 years, above ground, for dressing ore. Farm boys would begin to drive horses at 10 years of age, and they get 4*d.* a day, or 1*s.* a week, and their meat, they also go away for turnip-hoeing and weeding, and are kept at home to do their parents' gardens. I do not think that if the limit for work were placed at 10 years there would be any hardship on the parents; the gain on the children's work is imaginary, the wear and tear of clothes is much more than the earnings. I think that half a day attendance would answer well in agricultural districts, and I should prefer the morning part for the schooling. Alternate days would be difficult to arrange, without taking the children's work out of the hands of the parents or employer. When the children have passed 10 years of age, I think 200 half-times' attendance in the year might be well required; and attendance at night schools up to 16 years of age might be compulsory. The oldest boys in my day schools are from 14 to 16 years of age. The boys are dismissed from school at 3 p.m. The night school was a failure until art and science classes were introduced; the lads are very fond of drawing, &c. The average attendance for reading, writing, and arithmetic was 15, for the art classes I had 40 to begin with. The class is open from September to the end of May every night, except Saturday, for two hours. Some come five miles, even at the tender age of 9 and 10; there are several lads of 18 or thereabouts, and one of 25. As an instance of the advantages of this school, a lad of 14 came quite uneducated to the night school, he is now well up in drawing, &c., is able to teach his master, a stonemason, the proper setting of stones, &c., is now a paymaster, and high up in his work. The school draws from a population of quite 2,000, still there are a great many children in the district who never get any schooling at all; their parents are careless about it, but very few are too poor to pay the 1*d.* a week. I think the application of the principles of the Industrial School Act would be difficult to carry out, the informer would be in a very invidious position, and it would be necessary to have a paid man.

Lewis Woodley, age 14, works underground in mines, attends school either half-day or in the evenings; gets half-time schooling five days in the week.

HIRTON, near TAVISTOCK.

Population, 800.

245. *R. Parker.*—The cultivation is chiefly pastoral. Boys are employed from about 10 years old, and generally as indoor servants, through the year. Girls generally go to service. Women are employed in the fields to a very small extent. On my farm the young persons have to go a quarter of a mile, on the average, to their work; in the parish I should say half a mile. They work from 7 to 5.30. An hour is allowed for dinner. I would place the limit of age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land at 10 or 12 years, according to health and strength. I think the place of the young is in the house, and not in the field.

There are two schools for the poor, the school in connexion with the Church of England, and the chapel-of-ease school, in another part of the parish. The children in both are taught by females. A great many of the older boys go to the town of Barnstaple, to the Wesleyan day school. The cottages in this parish are in general in pretty good condition. They are sufficient for the labourers, and are conveniently situated on the whole. They are not overcrowded. The water is good. I believe all have gardens, and *some* allotments also.

LAMERTON.

Population, 1,500.

246. *Rev. H. Philpotts.*—The parish is 13 miles long, and the greater part of it is grass land, and some part of it is very thinly populated.

The women and children do not work in the fields, the former are employed in the mines, and the boys in breaking stones for all at the mines.

The farms vary from 200 to 250 acres in extent, and the farmers will not employ more than two or three labourers. A labouring man's wages are 11*s.* a week.

There are many good schools in the neighbourhood, and the children attend pretty regularly. The payment to our schools is 1½*d.* a week for each child over 6 years of age. The pence realize from 30*l.* to 40*l.* a year.

Many parents complain that they cannot afford to pay it, and some would not send their children in consequence at all.

After 10 years of age the children can probably get six months' schooling in the year. Night schools do not answer; we could only get nine to attend. The marriage register is still frequently signed with a mark. The cottages are very indifferent, and there is a great want of good houses at reasonable rent, and there are either gardens or allotments attached to each; the allotments are the eighth of an acre each, rented at 8*s.* a year. We have a savings bank in operation.

Lamerton School.

247. *William Peddle*, master.—The oldest boy in the school is 16 years of age; he is in the fifth standard; he only lately entered the school, and is the son of an agricultural labourer. On an average the boys leave school from 9 to 10 years of age, mostly for the mines. I am in favour of compulsory education with a penalty on the parents, who are often very indifferent about the attendance of their children, though they do not complain much of their inability to pay the school pence.

248. *Davey*, 15 years old.—I have been at work 2½ years all the year round, leading horses at 6*d.* a day; I lived at home. My father is a farm labourer; earns 12*s.* a week; has a house and garden rent free. I come to school four miles every day.

249. *Wm. Swailes*, a sower.—I earn from 9*s.* to 12*s.* a week by piecework. My cottage has one room downstairs, two bedrooms, garden, and pigstye, rented at 4*l.* a year.

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250. *Williams*, carpenter.—I own 10 tenements averaging under 4*l.* a year, payment is quarterly. The cottages are not crowded ; there is only one family in each, and sometimes a lodger is taken in. The cottages do not pay me very well, as the repairs absorb a good deal of the rent, and I have a mortgage on them.

251. Cottages belonging to Lord Fortescue.—Two rooms and storeroom on the ground floor, three bedrooms first floor ; with a garden ; rent 4*l.* 10*s.*

252. Greenfield cottage (Brookes'). — One large kitchen and one small kitchen, coal-hole, ground floor ; two bedrooms on first floor, attic above built for a lodger ; garden 40 yards ; 6*l.* a year rent. The lodger pays 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for his room and attendance. The garden is worth about 10*s.* a year rent, and I have to pay rates 12*s.* There is a closet and pigstye, but no outhouse for firing or straw, and a tank to catch the rain water. My husband gets 2*s.* a day working on the roads.

MILTON ABBOTT.

Population, 1,062 - Acreage, 6,300.

253. *Rev. Sir St. Vincent Hammick, Bart.*—The cultivation is chiefly pasture with arable. There are no private gangs. I may say there are no children, young persons, or women employed in agricultural labour, except boys living in farmhouses. Their work is the usual work of a farm. They are not ill-treated, and their health is not injuriously affected by their work. I find that farmers will not employ boys until they are of an age to be really useful.

The school charge for labourers' children is 1*s.* a quarter ; if there are many children in one family of age to go to school, the clergyman gives them help, which, with his ordinary subscription, makes a very heavy charge. In a populous neighbourhood payment on results, with the children's pence and a few subscriptions, may support a school ; but in an agricultural district, with a sparse population, a very heavy deficit must be met by the clergyman.

Many of the cottages in this parish are deficient in accommodation—damp, dark, unhealthy holes. There is not a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms. The village is well supplied with water, but it is not brought into the cottages. Many cottages have a garden or a small allotment piece. The cottages belonging to the Duke of Bedford are fair ; those owned by other smaller landlords very bad. From the cottages in some adjoining parishes (close parishes) being allowed to fall some poor large destitute families have come in, and occupy cottages which are too bad to be inhabited by the old established families of the parish. Almost all the children attend school. There are two evening schools in the parish. Each is open 20 weeks in the year, during the winter season. They are open for two hours two nights a week. In one school there are three children under 12, in the other none. There are on the register of one school 33 above 12, and in average attendance 26 ; in the other there are 18 on the register, and 14 in average attendance. The scholars are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, with a little elementary instruction in geography and grammar. The chief difficulty in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school is the Government requiring the school to be under a certificated teacher, and not allowing scholars under 21 to be presented for examination. In my larger school I have engaged a certificated teacher, and, therefore, can hold out to the scholars the stimulus of an examination, with prizes given by myself to those who appear to me to pass well. I am always present, and although the certificated teacher is most attentive, I believe the school could be conducted by myself with help as well. In the smaller school there is a want of that stimulus as in the former ; the average attendance is not so good ; there is not the same spirit shown in their work although the teaching is just as good.

The wages fixed are 11*s.* a week ; a man can earn by piecework, hedge-making and turnip-hoeing, from 14*s.* to 15*s.* a week. There are two girls' schools belonging to the parish. I carry on a night school at Chillerton with from 25 to 30 pupils, of ages varying from 14 to 30. Most boys go to school, but not regularly ; the irregularity of attendance is the great difficulty I have to contend with. The farmers do not help their servant lads in their education. There is a want of some premium to be held out to well educated boys in agricultural districts ; in mines or factories there are places of trust and prospects of promotion which act as a spur.

There is a savings bank in Milton Abbott under my management ; depositors of a penny and upwards, but no person allowed to have more than 5*l.* in all ; the money is then transferred to the Post Office Savings Bank, but the depositor may continue to pay to the penny bank if he chooses, or a shilling at a time to the Post Office Savings Bank. Interest on every 10*s.* deposited before the 1st of July and 1st of January in each year, and remaining in the bank for six month after each of these dates is paid at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

There is a club-room in the village well frequented, open day and night, when newspapers are supplied and coffee at a penny a cup ; I found that this keeps the people away from the public-house. We have allotments in sufficient quantity, but I do not think they should be too large.

254. *J. Horswell.*—The cultivation is mixed. Boys of 11 and 12 years of age are employed all the year round. No girls are employed, and women to a very small extent. The children and young persons have to go about half a mile to their work. They are employed eight hours a day, except at harvest time. I would not let boys under 10 be employed on the land. Restrictions on the employment of females are not necessary in this district, as but few are employed, and these only in harvest. There are two schools for boys and two for girls here, all of which have very efficient teachers. Great interest is taken in the education of children in this neighbourhood. There are also evening schools for boys and young men in the winter months, which are of great value. These are supplemented by four Sunday schools, which also are well attended. We are generally well supplied with cottages, and they are very conveniently situated. I have no man that has to walk more than half a mile, except in particular cases. A large portion of this parish is the property of his Grace the Duke of Bedford, who pays great attention to the condition of the cottages. All the cottages are furnished with gardens or allotments of land.

Milton Green School.

255. *Mr. Christy*, master.—Boys, only 75 on the books, including 10 boarders. Average attendance for the year, highest, 50 ; lowest, 45. The highest weekly attendance, 56 in October ; the lowest, 34 in January ; the worst time of attendance is after the harvest. Boys of 7 and 8 years of age leave school for work for hire, but not for the whole day. They usually get their food only, and go where their fathers are employed. If the limit for work were placed at 10 years, and the loss of earnings were struck up to 15 years, it would not be at all serious to the parents.

The want is, not a larger supply of schools, but some mode of getting the children to the schools that now exist either by direct compulsion and by a penalty on the parents. The Government grant might be devoted to a system of rewards for attendance instead of towards the maintenance of the school ; and for the purpose of making some reimbursement to the parents in the case of compulsion.

Boys can pass the sixth standard at 11 years of age if they attend regularly. Many come back to school at 15 or 16 years of age, and pick up what they have lost. Night schools would answer, if only as supplementary to day schools, on a more advanced scale of teaching. Some boys come from distances

at a diameter of six miles. A shortening of the hours for schooling in the afternoon, by giving only half an hour for dinner, would give time for poor boys to do odd jobs afterwards. This school does for many small parishes for boys. A calculation of the supply of schools should be made on the acreage of the districts and the amount of schools supplied on a given radius. Boys go to farm service as young as 10 years of age in the case of a large family, and are hired by the year. They begin with meat and lodging, then meat and clothes, and then the advance of 6*d.* a week besides. I would not allow children to be hired without a certificate of attendance at school for so many days in a preceding year. Lads of 18 live in the farm house at 9*l.* a year. A small farmer holding less than 200 acres has two men and a boy regularly employed, and generally a skilled farm labourer in the house by the year. The number of men employed varies according to the amount of pasture or tillage. The weekly wages of a labouring man average 11*s.*; jobbing wages by the day, 2*s.*

256. Extract from a letter to the Honble. E. B. Portman from the Rev. G. W. Proctor:—

Bradstone Rectory, Tavistock,
DEAR SIR, 20th March 1869.

I HAVE learnt it is easier to make suggestions than to suggest what would be a real improvement, and more free from evils than what one deplores or from some cause dislikes.

Our aim should be a better public opinion both in the employers of labour and in the employed. I suspect nothing would prevail or produce with rapidity the desired effect among the latter but compulsory education of the young, which means education provided by the State out of a rate assessed on all kinds of property and not only on land, or, which would be with the same result, rates assessed on houses only, and on no other property. I have grown out of my former fears of an elementary school education under the direction and at the cost of the State. Under it a little more labour might be laid upon the members of the church, lay and clerical, but that would call forth exertion, and the results to morality and to religion would probably be more satisfactory than at present. We cannot hope for more from the farmers as a body than they do now, perhaps it would be unreasonable to look for more. The employment of hands by them depends on the capital they can command more than on anything else. Not a few carry on their business with borrowed capital, and very many only keep afloat by unceasing care and watchfulness in the management of their capital. Some are, notwithstanding the risk they incur, but little better off than the labourers they hire.

Faithfully yours,
(Signed) G. W. PROCTOR.

Women and children are not much employed in the fields. The state of education is very low, few can read the New Testament with ease. The cottages are very indifferent; many, however, are being now pulled down.

KELLY.

Population, 217 - Acreage, 1,721A. 2R. 1P.

257. *A. Kelly, Esq.*—The cultivation is mixed. Boys are generally hired as farm servants by the year, entering on service for the most part about 8 or 9. Girls are employed only as farm servants; they are employed from 8 or 10 years old. Their employments are generally in the farm houses, and on the farm premises. A few women are employed at certain times of the year. They do not have to go more than a mile to their work. The hours for women are from 8 to 5; for boys, from 7 to 6 in summer, and from 7 to dark in winter. Boys are rarely employed but as farm servants. I do not think boys should go out to work before 12 years of age. In this damp climate exposure in all weathers must be prejudicial to health in the case of mere children, independent of the limited means of education which such a practice involves. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of women in agriculture, except perhaps in the case of married women having children under the age, say, of 2 years. I am now going beyond my own parish, in which women are so little employed; but accidents to very young children in consequence of the absence of the mother are, I understand, not uncommon in other counties, and there is the same risk everywhere.

There is a parish school here, conducted by a mistress, which is taken full advantage of by the people of this parish, as well as by the neighbouring parishes of Bradston and Dunterton.

The majority of the cottages here may be considered as in good condition, and the remainder are in a fair state. They are conveniently situated, not overcrowded, and well supplied with water, but there is no mechanical provision for ventilation, except in three lately rebuilt. All the cottages have either gardens or allotments, and in some instances both gardens and allotments. In this parish there is a field for the pigs of the cottagers.

KELLY SCHOOL.

258. *Susannah Wright*, mistress.—

On the books - - - -	50
Average attendance from Michaelmas to Christmas - - -	37
Average attendance from Christmas to Lady-day - - - -	35

Boys leave school at 11 or 12 years of age, and do not go to work very young. Girls do not work at all in the fields, and leave school at 14, some for service, some to stay at home. The school payments are for labourers' children, 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a quarter, journeymen tradesmen's children, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per quarter, and farmers' and tradesmen's, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* If three of one family come, the third pays half price, and for a fourth he comes free. There is no difficulty in getting in the payments. Some come three miles to school.

HOLSWORTHY.

Population, 1,724 - Acreage, 8,826.

259. *Rev. G. W. Thornton.*—There are no private gangs. There are scarcely any women employed in field work. There are no children regularly employed; the farming class usually employ their own children at odd times as their services seem to be required. There are a few boys between the ages of 11 and 14 or 16 at work. The women pick stones, and boys attend to the cattle at certain seasons. The hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. when regularly employed, with two hours allowed for meals. There is no injury to health, nor are any restrictions necessary in this neighbourhood. One cottage per 100 acres is sufficient. The majority of our cottages are in the town. They are generally built of cob, with thatched roofs, and consist of one kitchen about 10 feet square and 7 or 8 feet high, and pantry (sometimes); and above two small bedrooms, or one divided by a curtain or wooden partition; floors of lime ash, rough paving stones, or slate; drainage none; water supply is fair, and there are gardens to most of the cottages. The owner is usually the landowner, but cottages have in many cases been built on ground rented for 60 years, or during three lives. Rent varies from 2*l.* to 6*l.* a year.

There are very few young persons who cannot read, write, and do elementary accounts. There is no night school.

Devonshire.

Mr. Portman.

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260. Extract from Letter from Rev. G. W. Thornton to Hon. E. B. Portman.

Holsworthy,
June 15, 1869.

DEAR MR. PORTMAN,

* * * * As to schools, if we could have attendance enforced up to 10 years of age it would be well. Few can afford to keep their children at school after 11 years of age, and after that time it would be a hardship to compel them, unless by a happier arrangement of things higher wages could be given to the labouring classes. Our chief want here is a resident proprietary. * * * * For the labouring classes—indeed for many of the farmers—dwellings, food, and education are at present much defective, the consequences are too apparent, ignorance, disease, and immorality. I do not see how this state of things is to be remedied except by a much larger circulation of money among us. At present our farmers have too little to spend on the land either in draining, manure, or labour. For the latter 10*s.* a week is the maximum wage, and it is as much as the work done is worth ; for the most part men do not get sufficient food of a good quality to enable them to do such a day's work as is done in other parts, and they can only afford a small sum for weekly rent ; and consequently our cottages, except a few in the town, are very poor and much deficient in arrangements for cleanliness and ventilation.

Yours, &c.
G. W. THORNTON.

261. *Mr. J. Parsons*, Holsworthy, guardian.—The district is a poor one, farms are small, and there is a great deal of bad land. Wages for men are 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, 10*s.* a week. Children are not so much employed in agriculture since the system of ploughing has been changed.

The children in the union are better educated than many farmer's sons. The will for education is not wanting among the farmers, but they have no capital, and are obliged to keep their lads at home to work on the farm.

Children of parents receiving out-door relief are expected to earn something by 9 years of age.

The cottages in the district are very bad.

262. *Mr. Higgs.*—Wages for men are 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week. Women are very little employed and girls not at all in the fields ; the latter go to service at 12 years of age. No children are employed under 10 years. There is gloving work here sent from Torrington.

There are two schools, one National and one Wesleyan day ; there is no workhouse school, but the children attend the National school. There is no means of education for farmers' children. The want of a middle class school is much felt in this district.

The land in the neighbourhood is very poor ; the number of acres held by a farmer cannot be taken as a criterion of the holder's wealth. The farmers employ their own children a great deal.

In some cases the labouring class save money. They usually have a garden with their cottage and keep a pig ; occasionally they hire a plot of ground for a cow, or run one in the lanes ; they have potato ground from the farmer free if they find the manure. The grist corn system in this union is dying out. Out-door relief is withdrawn from children of 10 years of age if they are strong, but there is no strict rule on the point.

A compulsory system of education would not, in my opinion, be opposed by the farmers if they understood that they would themselves gain some advantage for their children.

263. *Dr. Ash*, surgeon.—Children go to work very young, but their health is not thereby affected so much as their morals.

The dwellings of the labouring class are very bad ; too many have only one bedroom, earth floors, and no privies.

PYWORTHY.

264. *School.*—Mixed ; not under Government.

M. Bowden, mistress.—On books 64, average attendance 40 to 20. The fullest time is from Michaelmas to Lady-day ; the farmers' children attend at that time but are kept at home in spring and summer. The payment is 2*d.* and 2½*d.* a week. The oldest boy in the school is 11 years of age. Boys do not go to field work much before 10 years of age. Girls are not at all employed. Women do the weeding and other work on the farms.

265. *Mr. Sanders*, farmer.—I have in my house a boy of 10 years old from the union ; in the winter he trims roots for the cattle. My sons go to school at Holsworthy, they worked on the farm at 8 years of age.

Women take stone-picking by the load, and their children go out to work with them ; they also weed corn. I have three cottages attached to my farm.

My foreman has 10*s.* a week, cottage and garden, potato ground, and firing.

An ordinary labourer has 10*s.* a week, a jobman 2*s.* a day. A woman earns 8*d.* a day ; boys 4*d.* a day and meat. A boy in the house gets for the first year meat and clothes ; when 21 years of age he would get 13*l.* a year, board, and lodging. The labourers here are very bad and slothful ; two Cornish men are equal to four here.

Hours of work for men are from 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with 1½ hour out ; for women from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

The farmers complain that the children of the labourers get a better education than their own ; they are often obliged by poverty to keep their children at home to work on the farms. I think that the labourers' children should be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, but should not have such an education as would put them above the farmers.

CLAWTON.

Population, 549 - Acreage, 3,537.

266. *W. W. Melhuish, Esq.*—The cultivation is—

1,517	acres	arable.
705	„	meadow and pasture.
30	„	orchard.
105	„	woodland.
1,130	„	furze and common and rush land.

Some of the furze land has been converted into arable. There are probably 10 children employed in this parish in agriculture and 10 married women who are employed occasionally. On my farm two married women are occasionally employed. Their work consists of weeding, picking stones, winnowing, planting potatoes, hoeing turnips, hay and corn harvest. They live very near the farms on which they work, probably under a quarter of a mile from them. Their hours are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with an hour for dinner. Their health is not in the least affected by their work, on the contrary those who are occupied in agricultural pursuits throughout the county appear the most healthy and thriving. The females that go out to *daily* labour are certainly not ill-treated. Having acted as a magistrate for upwards of 18 years I do not recollect more than one case of ill-treatment, but although there is such an absence of ill-treatment I rather incline to think *little* boys in farm service (not those who go out to *daily* labour) may be subject to long fatigue though they are not ill-treated ; but this very much depends on the master, whether he is kind-hearted or otherwise. There are certainly no special employments in this neighbourhood injuriously affecting females or the young. I am of opinion that no women in this locality who are employed in agricultural pursuits are corrupted in their morals ; as regards the nature of the employment, if any class of women is more subject than another to immoral conduct I should say

dressmakers, glovers, and young women of inactive habits. I do not think any restriction upon the employment of females is necessary in this parish or the neighbourhood for many miles (say 20 miles) round. One seldom sees young females at labour in the fields, except it be picking stones in the spring season. I would not therefore put any restriction upon the age at which females should be employed. I consider there are no boys or girls who have to go to an unreasonable distance for labour; in fact they go to labour in very few instances, and the nature of the work is so unobjectionable that I consider children are in most instances better out at work at an early age than not when they return to their parents at meals and at night; but I do not recommend boys or girls until 10 or 11 years old going into service in farm houses; and as a general rule I consider that at that age they are better in domestic service than at home with their parents. I do not recommend any alteration in the hours of work as regards this neighbourhood. The means of obtaining school attendance provided by the Factory Act are not applicable to the country. I consider that, from the middle of November to the middle of March, boys and girls under 10 or 11 years old would be better at school, otherwise at such work as it is intended they should earn their living by; of course I allude to labourers' and very small farmers' children (by small farmers I mean those renting under 20*l.*). I consider the school attendance is not much affected generally by the distance the children have to go, except in severe weather. It is more affected, I suspect, by the pecuniary resources of the parents. No efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls.

I consider the cottages generally *very* bad, mostly containing one living room and one bedroom, with an earth floor in the living room; this, I consider, tends to the increase of rheumatism. I believe *mud* (commonly called "cob") walls very dry and more healthy than stone. I consider light and ventilation are not sufficiently regarded in the bedrooms of cottages covered with slate. There should always be two bedrooms at least. There appear to be cottages enough, and they are, generally speaking, conveniently situated. They are, in some instances, overcrowded with members of the family, seldom with lodgers. The construction is bad; the ventilation and drainage are bad. The county generally is well supplied with water. There is usually a small garden. They are generally rented of a landowner; sometimes, and not unfrequently, rented under a tradesman or other person. The rent is about 1*s.* a week, including the small garden. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase of cottage accommodation; one or two landlords are making improvements. The commons in this neighbourhood, though numerous, are in the hands of so many owners that the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. is hardly applicable to cottages in this district. If the owners of cottages would appropriate more garden and orchard ground to the cottages, I think it would tend to improve the comforts of the labourer, and he might thus be able to pay a little more rent; but the comforts of the cottage itself seem to involve a certain amount of outlay in the first instance on the part of the owner, and unfortunately in numerous instances the owners of cottages are as poor as the tenants.

The children of this parish are not all in the habit of attending one school. Some attend a dame school in the parish, and others attend similar schools in two or three other parishes; some the National school at Holsworthy, three miles distant. Probably more than half attend some school. There is no evening school in the parish. I believe evening schools, where they do exist, are very undesirable. Children, after the fatigue of the day, are not in a fit state to learn, and the habit of children and young persons being absent from their parents' homes, and from that of their masters' and mistresses when in service, leads to dissolute and immoral habits, in rural districts especially.

The wages of an ordinary labourer are 9*s.* a week. I am receiver for the Devon and Exeter Savings Bank. The deposits of agricultural labourers and of a few small farmers from the parishes of Clawton, Ashwater, and others near Holsworthy average over 300*l.* a year. Farm servants deposit perhaps more than the labourers.

267. *Nathaniel Heard*, occupier of 500 acres.—Boys are employed all the year round from 10 years old and upwards. Girls are not employed in the fields. Women are hired for light work such as weeding corn and picking stones. The average distance to work is about half a mile. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., but in winter they are mostly employed on job-work. Boys should not be allowed to work before 10 years of age. There is a dame's school and Sunday schools. The condition of the cottages is bad, most of them have only one bedroom; they are on the whole conveniently situated with respect to the farms, and they have good gardens attatched to them.

I began life as a labouring man; I cannot write well, but would give 50*l.* to be able to write a good letter.

TETCOTT.

Population, 289 - - Acreage, 2,181.

268. *Rev. Temple West.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. The school attendance here is very materially affected by the distance the children have to go to school, but not to any great extent by the pecuniary resources of the parents. No efforts are made for the industrial training of girls.

There is not a sufficient number of cottages here with two or three bedrooms and a sitting-room. The cottages generally are badly constructed, particularly in reference to drainage. The water supply is tolerably good. All have gardens. They are under the ownership of landowners, or in some cases the tenant of the estate. The Union Chargeability Act is causing no increase of cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

——	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	18	15
Between 10 and 13 -	12	11
Total - -	30	26
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	15	15
Between 10 and 13 -	11	11
Total - -	26	26

There are none who are neither at school nor at work. Speaking generally, the whole labouring class has insufficient education.

There is no evening school in this parish. The principal difficulty in the way of maintaining an evening school is the irregular attendance.

An agricultural labourer's wages are about 10*s.* a week; they are fairly well off, many of them keeping a cow. The children go to work very young. Farmers' children who work on the farms are able to be spared to attend school in the winter quarter.

The hirings of lads for farm service are by the year commencing at Lady-day.

ASHWATER.

Population, 803 - Acreage, 8,587.

269. *Mr. Oliver*, farmer.—There are three schools in the parish,—

1. Mr. Vesey's for boys and girls, the children of labourers and farmers.

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2. Mr. Cory's day school for children of labourers and farmers.

3. An infant school; also a Church and Bible Christian Sunday school.

The education here is improving, and the parents are becoming more anxious about it. I am opposed to placing any restriction by law on the age at which children go to work; they ought to work as soon as they can do anything, and I think we should not interfere with the parents' control over their own children. I should not like to see a compulsory system of education.

Women are much employed here in the fields; they do not work every day in the week, and keep their houses tidy; they are employed in hoeing turnips and weeding corn, for which they get 8*d.* a day; in in digging potatoes they earn 1*s.* a day, and they take stone-picking by the job at 6*d.* a load.

Children who live in the farm houses get at 8 or 9 years old meat and 6*d.* a week; a boy of 13 years gets 3*l.* a year, board, and lodging; a girl of 12 years, 1*s.* a week, board, and lodging.

The best men get 10*s.* a week, an ordinary man 9*s.*; the men who are regularly employed through the year have privileges besides. The rent of a cottage and garden varies from 1*s.* a week to 3*l.* a year. Of the old cottages a larger proportion have one bedroom than two.

270. *Rev. J. M. Field.*—The majority of the population of this parish are dissenters. There is no church school except on Sundays. It is attended by old boys, and I think there is a desire among the people to educate their children.

It is a very large and scattered parish; the farmers as a rule have but little capital and are very poor; the cottages are for the most part bad. Miss Preston has improved those belonging to her, and I have put three bedrooms in some belonging to Mrs. Melhuish, senior, for whom I act, but the third bedroom is usually devoted to storing potatoes, &c.

Woodpark Cottage,

Property of Miss Preston.

271. *Mrs. Tom.*—This is an old cob cottage which has been raised with fresh cob and a slate roof put to it. Down—a kitchen and one room; up-stairs, two bedrooms. Rent, with 20 yards of garden, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. We have no privileges; my husband gets 10*s.* a week and "sometimes a bit of piecework; us couldn't live "if it was not for that."

I have three small children; I go to work sometimes in the fields stone-picking and turnip-hoeing at 8*d.* a day. I went to farm service when I was 18 years old, but never worked in the fields before I was married. It is not the custom for girls to work in the fields here.

HEANTON,

May 5.

Lord Clinton.
Rev. J. C. Kempe.
Rev. L. Woollcombe.

272. Women are very rarely employed in field work, nor are boys under 10 years of age so employed.

There is a great deal of glove-making both in silk and cotton at per dozen, the price varying according to quality and work; this occupies the women. There is an absence of training of women for domestic life, hence arise discomfort and untidiness in the labourers' homes and the consequent evils.

A compulsory system of education, if attended by a rate, would be very unpopular.

Men's wages (paid by Lord Clinton), 10*s.* a week; there is a garden with the cottage and an allotment of a quarter to half an acre.

Farmers' men get 9*s.* a week; a few give 8*s.* and grist corn and cider.

Women earn 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day from the farmers. Cottages not attached to the farms are rented at 1*s.* a week to 3*l.* a year.

Rev. J. C. Kempe stated that as receiver for the Devon and Exeter savings bank he received in his parish from 200*l.* to 300*l.* a year, chiefly from young men in farm service and from labourers. Clubs are numerous.

Merton Village.

273. Cottages:—

1. Three bedrooms; two rooms down; cob and thatched roof. Rent, 4*l.* a year with garden.

2. Two rooms down; three bedrooms; garden. 5*l.* a year.

3. Two rooms and backhouse down; two bedrooms. Rent, 1*s.* a week.

4. Old and have been altered; two rooms and backhouse down; two bedrooms up; with garden and orchard, 3*l.* 10*s.* a year.

There is an abundant supply of allotments let at 2*l.* an acre.

Merton School.

274. *Mr. Robbins*, master.—Children are absent from the school in spring and autumn for potatoing with their parents. The fullest time is from January to Lady-day. The average attendance last year was 65. Some children come a long distance, the parish being about three miles in length and the school at one end of it.

If boys attended regularly up to 10 years of age I could get them through the fourth standard; they could attend 100 times in the year when earning wages, but not 150 times. Lads of 15, 16, and even 20 years of age come back to school at times.

MERTON.

Population, 821 - Acreage, 3,738.

275. *Rev. J. C. Kempe.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are three males between 10 and 13, and one between 13 and 18, employed here in agriculture. Most live within a very short distance from the farms on which they work; one or two live a little over a mile from their work. They work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and leave home; those that live near, at 6.45 a.m., returning at 6.15 p.m.; and those that live at a distance at 6.35 a.m., returning at 6.25 p.m. Half an hour is allowed for breakfast, and one hour for dinner. They are not injuriously affected by their work. Females are very rarely indeed employed in field labour here, with the exception of a few weeks in the season of harvest. If children under 10 years of age are employed, I think that half time would be desirable.

The method of obtaining school attendance, by "attendance for a certain number of hours during "the preceding six months," is by far the preferable one. About four per cent. of the children are absent through distance, and about 10 per cent. in consequence of the pecuniary resources of the parents. If the parents could afford to send dinner with the children, the distance would affect the attendance but little, unless the weather were very inclement. Girls are taght sewing and knitting only, besides the usual elementary education.

We have here two cottages to 100 acres. This is sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. With but very few exceptions, they are conveniently situated. Most of the cottages in this parish are very suitable for the accommodation of the labourers. Lodgers are forbidden without permission from the landlord in writing. The cottages vary in size, but are sufficiently large for use and health. The ventilation is very good in all new buildings, and very good *generally* in old buildings. Here and there are exceptions. Drainage is carefully attended to. The water supply is good. There are gardens (about 20 yards) to each cottage, and an oven

(a great requirement). There is a pigstye to each cottage; the privies are not sufficient in number, but when erected they are not generally used. The cottages are owned by landowners; in very few instances they are rented for their labourers by the tenants. Rent (including garden) from 3*l.* to 5*l.* The Union Chargeability Act does not certainly cause any increase of cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	46	34
Between 10 and 13 -	12	7
Total - -	58	41
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	22	14
Between 10 and 13 -	8	5
Total - -	30	19

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	43	30
Between 10 and 13 -	19	13
Total - -	62	43
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	23	16
Between 10 and 13 -	10	6
Total - -	33	22

There are about six boys and four girls between the ages of 8 and 10 who are neither at school nor at work. About five per cent. of the males and 10 per cent. of the females are growing up with insufficient education. There are very few of either sex who do not learn to read. The females are less educated than the males in this neighbourhood, as gloving is carried on to a great extent among all the labouring class; hence as soon as a girl can use her needle, she is either withdrawn from school or irregularly sent; and the only education she then receives is given at the Sunnay school.

There is an evening school in the parish. It is open 14 weeks in the year, from October to February. The hours are one and three-quarters for four nights a week.

There are:—

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Under 12 - - -	2	1·3
Above 12 - - -	12	7·26

The subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic. If the young persons would avail themselves of the advantages of the evening school, I think it would adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. The principal difficulties in its way are the apathy of the young persons themselves; the distance of the school from the majority of those in service; the disinclination of the masters to allow their servants to attend; and the frequent inclemency of the weather during winter evenings.

PETROCKSTOW.

Population, 616 - Acreage, 4,000.

276. *Rev. L. Woollcombe.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are about 10 or 15 children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour in this parish. They live generally near the farms on which they work. Some have to go a mile or a mile and a half to their work. Their usual hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; women go to work at 8 a.m. An hour is allowed for dinner. Their work does not injuriously affect their health, and they are not subject to ill-treatment. The employment of females in agriculture is injurious both to morals and to proper training for domestic service. Women are occasionally needed in field work, and many elderly women would be without employment if not so engaged. Boys should certainly not be employed earlier than 10 years old. The mode of obtaining school attendance by a certain number of hours during the preceding six months is preferable, I think, to those provided by the Factory Act. In wet and rough weather the children who live at a distance are generally absent from school. Parents with large families can afford to send but one or two of their children to school, at least want of means is their excuse often for not sending. When the payments are low, it is often neglect.

No efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls.

Many of the cottages here have only one bedroom, which is most injurious to morality and health. Often where there are two bedrooms, lodgers are taken in to occupy one. There are two cottages to 100 acres. This is sufficient. In most instances the cottages are conveniently situated. They are overcrowded. Some cottages are being repaired, and increased accommodation given.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	34	26
Between 10 and 13 -	10	5
Total - -	44	31
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	18	11
Between 10 and 13 -	6	3
Total - -	24	14

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	40	35
Between 10 and 13 -	16	10
Total - -	56	45
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	22	14
Between 10 and 13 -	8	5
Total - -	30	19

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Approximate number of children neither at school nor at work.

In Summer.

Boys :	
Between 8 and 10	16
„ 10 and 13	9
Total	25
Girls :	
Between 8 and 10	14
„ 10 and 13	11
Total	25

In Winter.

Boys :	
Between 8 and 10	12
„ 10 and 13	7
Total	19
Girls :	
Between 8 and 10	11
„ 10 and 13	8
Total	19

There are 25 males and 25 females growing up with insufficient education. They are very ignorant. An evening school is held here 12 weeks in the year, from January to March. It is open five nights a week, $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours each night. There are six scholars above 12 on the register ; about four attend. The instruction is reading, writing, and arithmetic. Negligence on the part of the young people in attending is the principal obstacle in its way.

MONK OKEHAMPTON.

Population, 272 - Acreage, 1,488.

277. *Rev. H. M. Northcote.*—The cultivation is mixed. In this parish there are employed in agricultural labour one male between 10 and 13, three males between 13 and 18, and four married females over 18. Their occupation in spring is leading horses and planting potatoes ; in summer, harvesting ; in autumn, drawing turnips and potatoes ; and in winter, feeding cattle, threshing, &c. They live on or near the farms on which they work. Their hours are from 7 to 6. One hour is allowed at noon for dinner. The work does not injuriously affect the women. I think they are the healthiest in the parish, and are among the best. I think that young unmarried women had better be kept away from the field labour altogether. I would not allow boys under 12 to be employed in field labour. I would make the restriction as to the hours of work dependent on age, not limited as to time beyond the limits already prescribed by the customs of the country. The school attendance is very little affected by the distance the children have to go to school, and to a slight extent by the pecuniary resources of the parents, but " where there is a will, " there's a way." There are no efforts made for the industrial training of girls after their leaving school. Our cottages are too small ; not properly supplied with privy accommodation, but the landlords are poor, and I think the evil arising from the present state is not very great. There are about 32 cottages in all. They are conveniently situated. Very few have two or three bedrooms. They are overcrowded with members of the family. The cottages are small and thatched, consisting of one sitting-room and one bedchamber (sometimes a second small one), a little backhouse for washing, &c. They are indifferently ventilated and drained. There are various owners. Rents are from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum. There is no progress being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. The Union Chargeability Act causes none.

School Statistics.

In Summer and Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10	19	14
Between 10 and 13	1	1
Girls :		
Under 10	16	14
Between 10 and 13	4	4

There are not a great many who are neither at school nor at work. An evening school has been tried and failed. As a general remark, I should say that our district has suffered much from the abolition of the old system of apprenticeship, the evils of which might have been remedied without destroying the good. The young people are foolish and lawless, set at liberty before they have any notion of guiding themselves, and the improvement in education has in no way counterbalanced this evil. They get the knowledge that " puffeth up," and no more.

HATHERLEIGH.

278. *Rev. J. Phelps.*—The cultivation is mixed. So far as the schools indicate there are 15 males between 8 and 10, five between 10 and 13, and five between 13 and 18, employed in agriculture. Females do not appear to be employed. The males employed live near the farms at which they work ; their hours are, I presume, from 6 to 6, with meal hours. I do not think the harvest season is profitable for young women. I think that boys should not be employed under 10 or 12 years of age.

The school attendance here is not much affected by the distance the children have to come to school. There is a general disposition on the part of the parents to give some education, though perhaps at a sacrifice. No efforts are made here for the industrial training of the girls. I could wish the cottage accommodation improved. The cottages here are conveniently situated, but are rather crowded. The rents are from one or two shillings weekly. Not much progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10	31	23
Between 10 and 13	33	20
Total	64	43
Girls :		
Under 10	44	38
Between 10 and 13	19	17
Total	63	55

In Winter.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	32	25
Between 10 and 13 -	50	40
Total - -	82	65
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	36	30
Between 10 and 13 -	34	20
Total - -	70	50

There is an evening school in the parish open for six months in the year; it is open three nights a week for two two hours each night. There are on the register 44 scholars above 18, and there attend on the average about 20. The scholars are instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The school does not adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school. There is a difficulty in obtaining voluntary teachers.

Boys go to work at 10 years of age, sometimes younger. Men's wages are 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week; the labourers are slothful, slow workers, and very untidy in their cottages. There are many farmers very little above the station of labourers.

There are benefit societies of many years' standing and in a flourishing condition.

PASSAFORD.

Population, 1,645 - Acreage, 7,041.

279. *J. H. Veale, Esq.*—Children begin to work about 10 years of age. Women are very little employed in the fields, and girls not at all. It is not necessary to put any restriction on the age for children's work; farmers will not employ them as servants till their services are valuable in field labour or the care of horses, or, in the case of girls, for house work. The amount of labour done is very small, the people are slothful. Farms are small, the average are rented at from 50*l.* to 100*l.* a year, and some of the land is very bad. Men's wages are 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, house, and cider; women, 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day and cider.

There are good National schools with certificated teachers, partially taken advantage of; the great fault is want of regular attendance, parents are too careless in enforcing attendance. A neighbour who employs six boys on his farm arranged that they should work and attend school on alternate days; *they did not go to school.* I think the people would be much opposed to compulsory education.

The cottages generally are not good, they have too few rooms; they are sufficient in number for the supply of labour, and are conveniently situated; they all have gardens or allotments.

NORTH LEW SCHOOL.

280. *Mr. Mills.*—Master; mixed. On register, 83. Average attendance, in winter, 71; in summer, 69. The oldest boys are 12 or 13 years of age. Many go to work at 9 or 10 years, are absent in the summer, and attend school in the winter months. The school has been open for two years; the schoolhouse was built by Miss Woollcombe, and the school is mainly supported by her; there is a lending library for the use of the children who attend the school. Children of all denominations come to day school, at the Sunday school there are 10 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon.

The parish is a large one; population about 1,000; purely agricultural. The parents cannot read or write, and do not value education for their children. There is a night school in winter attended by a few farm lads. Some children come to day school three miles, from Beeworthy and Bratton Clovelly.

The farmers send their children to this school; many of them are very rough and ignorant, and not being able to employ labour they keep their children at home to work on the farm. The school payments for farmers are 8*s.* and 4*s.* a quarter, according to size of farms; for labourers' children, 1*d.* and 2*d.* a week.

There is another school in the parish kept by the former parish schoolmaster; there are 70 children in the parish who never attend any school.

If children between the ages of 10 and 13 were compelled to attend school, 100 attendances in the year is as much as should be required. The farmhouses are at a distance from the village and scattered, it would be difficult to get farm lads regularly to night school.

Men's wages are 8*s.* and 9*s.* a week, part in kind; I have seen bread made from bad grist corn, quite black.

281. *Palmer*, 12 years old, son of a farmer, in the first class.—My father keeps six lads in his house; some are paid by the year, some by the week; they work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the farm; have to look to the horses before 8 a.m., and again after supper about 8 p.m. I have sometimes seen them read a book, but not write. My father's farm is at Beeworthy.

282. *Thomas Wood*, 10 years old, son of a farmer at Ashbury.—My father keeps one labourer, he also employs one woman for stone-picking and dropping and picking potatoes. Women are paid 6*d.* a day for stone-picking and 1*s.* a day potatoing. Men's wages are 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a day. I have worked on the farm, rolling.

DOLTON.

Population, 976 - Acreage, 3,553.

283. *George Arnold*, land agent.—The cultivation is of a mixed character, principally arable. Boys are seldom employed under 12 years of age, and then only in very light work in the summer months. A few young women are occasionally employed in weeding corn in the spring. The women are principally glovers. The few that are employed on the farms have rarely to go above a mile to their work. Their hours are from 8 to 12.30, and from 2 to 6. I think no restriction is necessary upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in agriculture, or upon the employment of females.

The children of this parish have every facility for obtaining a sound education at the National school, conducted by a certificated master. In too many instances the parents, from indifference, do not avail themselves of this advantage.

The cottages are of a varied character. Some are in good order, others are gradually improving. They are well situated with respect to their proximity to the farms. A few are overcrowded, and many require additional bedrooms. They are well supplied with water, and can be ventilated if the occupiers think proper. As a rule they have good gardens; allotments are the exception.

INWARDLEIGH.

Population, 634 - Acreage, 6,281.

284. *J. Vallance*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed. Boys are employed in this parish at 12 years of age as servants; they are not employed *else.* No girls, and scarcely any women are employed. I would not place any restriction upon the age at which boys should work on the land, or upon the employment of females. The children here are sent to school by charity.

The cottages in this parish are very good, and have good gardens.

School.

285. *Miss Percy*, mistress.—On register, 52; average attendance, 44. The best attendance is in winter. We have no Government aid. The school is sup-

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ported by bequests. Poor children are educated free, those of farmers pay 2*s.* 6*d.* a quarter. The attendance of children is irregular ; in some cases the elder ones are kept at home to look after the little ones when the mother is working in the fields ; in others, boys are at work themselves, and girls with their mothers stone-picking as young as 8 years of age in the case of a large family. Women are employed a great deal in the fields ; they earn 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day. A man gets 10*s.* a week, and a boy 4*d.* a day.

286. MEETING OF THE DEVON AND CORNWALL CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.

Plymouth, 27th March 1869.

EARL OF MORLEY in the Chair.

The following resolutions were carried :—

(1.) That no legislative restriction on the age at which women and children are employed in agriculture is necessary in Devon and Cornwall.

(2.) That the education of the labouring classes appears to be at present inadequate, and that it is desirable that the Government should give further facilities for the establishment and maintenance of schools, especially in small rural parishes and in districts where the population is scattered and sparse, and that it is desirable that such schools should be entirely unsectarian.

(3.) That the cottage accommodation in this district is inadequate both in quantity and quality, and that it is desirable that the improvement of dwellings should go hand in hand with education, and that so far as possible cottage accommodation should be provided on the farms.

It appeared to be the general opinion of the meeting, that the Government should not interfere with the employment of children after 10 years of age, but that before that age their education should be cared for.

On the second resolution,—

Mr. B. Snell said there were many instances in the moor districts of whole families being uneducated on account of the distance from their homes to any school. He would like to see neglected children committed to some establishment for education up to a certain age.

Mr. S. Rosewear advocated the formation of local committees to establish good schools, and then apply for Government aid.

Mr. Eld. Brown, chairman of ragged school, said that the parents being themselves most ignorant, take no interest in the education of their children. He expressed himself in favour of compulsion, as in order to obtain the desired improvement of the labouring classes it was necessary to educate a *whole* generation. The funds might be supplied partly by Government, partly locally, including a quota to be paid by the parents of the children so educated.

Mr. Sobey was against a compulsory system, but desired the formation of lay central boards in rural districts for the management of schools, the local centre to be aided by Government for the benefit of outlying parishes.

Mr. Horswell expressed himself in favour of local supervision and management of schools.

On the question of cottages as contained in the third resolution,—

Mr. Pratt thought it desirable that cottages should be placed on the farms and not grouped in villages.

Mr. Soltau said that the present state of the cottages was disgraceful ; that their bad condition caused an increase in the rates ; and that the overcrowding was a fruitful source of immorality. He suggested that these dwellings should be placed under inspection, the inspector to give a certificate of the number of persons that each cottage was capable of containing with due regard to decency and health.

Mr. W. Woollcombe supported the idea of inspection, and thought it very desirable that the Lands Improvement Act should be amended, and more practical and simple modes of obtaining money for rebuilding and repairing cottages should be furnished by Government.

The wages of the district were stated by—

	Upper Man.	Ordinary labourer.
MR. PRATT -	13*s.* a week. Cottage and garden rent free, and 20 yards of potato ground.	12*s.* a week.
MR. SOWTON -	12*s.* a week. Cottage and garden rent free. Potato ground. Piecework. Run of two pigs. Poultry.	12*s.* and cider, and lose no time.
MR. DEWDNEY - - - -		Three able-bodied men average 30*l.* a year. No cottage.
MR. CORK - - - -		2*s.* a day and quart of cider.
MR. ROSEVEAR -	12*s.* a week and piecework.	2*s.* a day.
MR. HORSWELL	Thought 13*s.* a week would be a fair weekly average through the year.	—

287. Letter from Wm. J. Woollcombe, Esq., Solicitor to Hon. E. Portman.

SIR, Plymouth, April 5, 1869.

IN compliance with your request I have now the pleasure to submit the following remarks on the Act 29 Vict. c. 28., to which you directed my attention in connection with the subject of cottages for the labouring classes.

I have not had the advantage of a perusal of the rules, which under clause 4. of s. 4., the Commissioners have (as I presume) laid lown for the working of the Act (and upon which in my opinion much of its efficiency must depend), nor am I aware of the practical results which have been obtained from its adoption ; but it appears to me that the principle of this Act might be advantageously applied in rural districts.

What is wanted is, I think, to afford to landowners the greatest possible facilities for the erection or improvement of labourers' dwellings without large expense, and without any further interference than is actually needful to secure the due expenditure of the money lent for this purpose.

In order to secure this it seems to me essential that the loan should be on such easy terms as would enable the landowner to let his cottages when built at low rents ; and further that the Act should extend to trustees and persons having limited interests, *e.g.*, tenants for life, persons to whom sec. 4. of the present Act does not appear to me to apply.

The subject is full of difficulties, which become all the plainer the nearer they are approached, for whilst on the one hand I am sensible that landowners would be very sensitive if any attempt at *pressure* in the matter of providing increased or improved cottage accommodation were attempted by the Legislature, yet, on the other hand, I greatly fear whether any improvement on a large scale will take place in rural districts, no matter how simply facilities are provided, unless some sort of control is exercised, not only as to the *quantity* and *quality* of the accommodation provided, but also as to the number of occupants ; as to this it is possible that the appointment of a public inspector might be ventured on, but I suspect we are hardly ripe for that yet. I venture, however, to think that an Act of Parliament extending to rural districts and to the persons I have alluded to might, if worked inexpensively and under rules clogged as little as possible with mere formal regulations, be even now adopted and worked beneficially.

I am, &c.

WM. J. WOOLLCOMBE.

CORNWALL.

LISKEARD UNION.

Liskeard District.—No. 1.

288. *R. Famblin*, relieving officer.—Children are first employed at about 9 years of age. Their work consists of driving horses, drawing turnips, cutting weeds, picking stones, &c. Women are employed in the fields. The cottages in some parts of my district are crowded.

The schools at Menheniot and Liskeard Borough are under Government inspection. There is an evening school at Menheniot.

The average rate of wages for agricultural labour is, for men, about 2*s.* a day; for women, 9*d.*, and for children, 6*d.* a day.

Liskeard District.—No. 1.

Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools * in the Parishes of—

In Summer.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Boconnoc	30	10	17	18	25	8	15	12
Broadoak	9	5	11	6	8	4	8	5
Cleer, Saint	22	10	15	3	22	10	15	3
Keyne, Saint	5	1	1	—	5	1	1	—
Liskeard Borough	13	14	4	2	13	14	4	2
Liskeard Parish	2	3	1	—	2	3	1	—
Menheniot	10	26	25	4	5	3	4	4
Neot, Saint	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pinnock, Saint	10	—	7	1	10	—	7	1
	Total Boys, 170.		Total Girls, 115.		Total Boys, 133.		Total Girls, 82.	

In Winter.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Boconnoc	30	10	17	18	25	8	15	12
Broadoak	9	5	11	6	8	4	8	5
Cleer, Saint	22	10	15	3	22	10	15	3
Keyne, Saint	5	1	1	—	5	1	1	—
Liskeard Borough	13	14	4	2	13	14	4	2
Liskeard Parish	3	6	—	—	3	6	—	—
Menheniot	10	26	25	4	5	3	4	4
Neot, Saint	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pinnock, Saint	10	—	7	1	10	—	7	1
	Total Boys, 174.		Total Girls, 114.		Total Boys, 137.		Total Girls, 81.	

* Of all denominations, and whether public or private.

Looe District.—No. 2.

289. *Geo. Milton*, relieving officer.—Children are not employed under 10 years of age. They do different kinds of work; but are not so much in request as formerly, the use of oxen in farm work being nearly discontinued. Women are employed in the fields, but not to the same extent as they were 20 years ago.

Some cottages are crowded with members of large families, and many houses have but one sleeping apartment. I was lately in a labourer's cottage in the parish of St. Martin where the family consisted of nine persons, with only one room.

The schools at Lanreath, Lanteglos, Morval, and St. Veep are under Government inspection. Lanreath and St. Veep have night schools.

Men whose whole time is engaged get 10*s.* a week and a cottage rent free; other labourers, who lose time from wet weather, &c., get 2*s.* a day. Women earn 8*d.* a day. Boys earn from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day when hired by the day, but this is very seldom the case, they are more generally hired by the year, and reside with the employer.

Cornwall.

Mr. Portman.

h.

Looe District.—No. 2.

Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools * in the Parishes of—

In Summer.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Duloe	16	1	9	2	13	1	6	2
Lanreath	12	10	10	10	9	8	8	
Lansallos	There is only a small school for very young children in this parish, and kept by an elderly woman, who is receiving parochial relief.							
Lanteglos	12	3	5	—	8	5	—	—
Looe, East	There is no school in East Looe but that is kept by females; the boys go to the Endowed School at West Looe.							
Looe, West	1	No girls in the school; a large number of boys not agricultural labourers.						
Martin's, Saint	6	3	8	3	6	3	8	3
Morval	12	8	16	4	8	5	13	2
Pelynt	12	14	16	1	10	9	13	—
Talland	8	Boys of other classes—25 in this school kept by a private person.						
Veep, Saint	14	7	13	12	7	4	9	8
Herodsfoot Ecclesiastical District.	School kept by a female teacher, and the children belong to miners.							
	Total Boys, 139.		Total Girls, 109.		Total Boys, 96.		Total Girls, 72.	

In Winter.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Duloe	19	4	8	6	15	3	5	4
Lanreath	11	9	8	8	9	8	7	7
Lansallos	*See* above. Some boys in this parish attend the school in Talland (*private school*).							
Lanteglos	There are two schools in this parish, one is kept by a female teacher; the children belong principally to sea-faring people and mechanics or tradesmen.							
Looe, East	*See* above.		—	—	—	—	—	—
Looe, West	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Martin's, Saint	The children in this parish school are taught by a female teacher.							
Morval	14	4	16	5	10	2	10	3
Pelynt	19	13	13	6	13	8	7	4
Talland	8	About six boys of farm labourers from Lansallos attend at this school.						
Veep, Saint	17	9	11	13	9	5	7	8
	Total Boys, 128.		Total Girls, 94.		Total Boys, 82.		Total Girls, 62.	

* Of all denominations, and whether public or private.

Callington District.—No. 3.

290. *Relieving officer.*—It is very seldom that any children are employed in farm-work under the age of 10 years. They are then chiefly employed in tending cattle, occasionally driving horses in the plough or harrow, drawing turnips, going errands, &c. Girls would not be employed till they were much older, except occasionally for picking stones and such like work with their parents. Women are employed in the fields. The cottages in my district are not crowded. The schools under Government inspection are St. Dominick, St. Ive, Callington, and South Hill. At Callington, Linkinhorn, and St. Ive there are night schools in the winter.

The average rate of wages is 2*s.* a day for men; 10*d.* a day for women. Children seldom go out at day work; when employed by farmers they are generally taken to live in the house at wages varying from 20*s.* to 30*s.* a year, and their board provided by the employer.

CALLINGTON DISTRICT.—No. 3.

Approximate Number of Children of the Agricultural Labouring Class in attendance at Elementary Schools * in the Parishes of—

In Summer.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Callington	8	6	5	2	5	4	3	1
Dominick, Saint	28	24	8	5	19	16	6	4
Ive, Saint	8	4	5	6	6	3	3	5
Linkinhorne	9	11	6	7	6	7	3	4
South Hill	7	4	2	5	6	2	1	3
	Total Boys, 109.		Total Girls, 51.		Total Boys, 74.		Total Girls, 33.	

In Winter.

—	On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
	Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Under 10.	10 to 13.
Callington	8	6	5	2	5	4	3	1
Dominick, Saint	30	31	12	8	22	23	9	10
Ive, Saint	8	4	5	6	6	3	3	5
Linkinhorne	15	21	10	14	10	14	6	10
South Hill	7	4	2	5	6	2	1	3
	Total Boys, 134.		Total Girls, 69.		Total Boys, 95.		Total Girls, 51.	

* Of all denominations, and whether public or private.

MORVAL.

291. *Mr. Roberts*, steward.—Men's wages are 12*s.* a week, without privileges. In harvest they get meat and cider extra. All the labourers' cottages are let at 1*s.* a week, with a garden, linney, and pigstye, and mostly have two bedrooms. One boy of 18 years of age gets 9*s.* a week on the farm. Another 15 years old gets 7*s.*, and looks after the cattle from half past 6 in the morning and fodders up at 8 p.m.

292. *Mr. Grigg*, Barton-of-Portlooe (farmer).—Boys of 8 or 9 years of age go to farm service for their meat, and sometimes lodging; this is generally in the case of large families. When the boy arrives at 12 or 14 he gets meat or 40*s.* a year. These boys go to Sunday school, but not to the night school. Their occupation is driving cattle and pulling turnips. An ordinary labourers' wages are 12*s.* a week and cider. A man who looks after the cattle gets a house rent free extra. A head man has other privileges, such as a pig, milk from the farm, &c. In harvest time they get their meat extra. A woman gets 8*d.* a day, and 1*s.* in harvest; and they work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at stone-picking and weeding. Cottages when attached to the farms are reckened at 1*s.* a week, with a garden, and 20 yards of potatoes at 1*s.* a yard. Hardly any of them have two bedrooms, the one bedroom being divided by a screen. I have built some cottages for 50*l.* a piece. Girls are very seldom employed; and I think that soon there will be very few women to work at all in the fields. Turnips are hoed by the piece; and there is other piecework for men. The earnings for the year of an ordinary labourer would be 32*l.* in money, and meat for the harvest month, say equal to 3*s.* a day. Some few lads put money in the savings bank. I know this because several of them are looking out for small farms of 20 or 30 acres, of which there are some in this part. There is a large allotment field at Looe, which is a fishing town.

DARLEY.

Population, 2,551. Acreage, 7,899.

293. The cultivation is mixed, arable and pasture.

Mr. Dingle, vice-chairman of the Liskeard Board of Guardians.—A man's wages are from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a week, and at harvest he will earn 1*l.* a week. Women get 8*d.* a day, and at harvest 1*s.* 8*d.* a day. Men's hours are from 7 in the morning till 6 in the evening, and a woman's from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Boys do not get any schooling after they once go to permanent service.

This, Linkinhorn, is a very large parish, and has several Sunday schools and private schools; the principal school has an endowment of 30*l.*, it used to have a grant which is now discontinued. There is a considerable mining population. Some parents are very indifferent about the education of their children, and the system of compulsion would be good for this. There is a great division of opinion among the farmers on the subject of compulsory education; they are afraid of a rate.

There are some farmers, holding from 20 to 30 acres, whose children, as a rule, are very badly educated, and are taken to work very young indeed, and do harder work than the agricultural labourers. The rent of cottages, with a garden, varies from 50*s.* to 5*l.* 5*s.*; for the most part they have two rooms up and two rooms down, sometimes with an outhouse. The drainage is not good, and there is not a sufficient supply of privies. The dwellings are worse in the district towards Petherwin and Launceston.

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Boys are employed at all seasons of the year, from 10 years old and upwards. Sometimes in the summer girls are employed to some little extent, from 14 years of age and upwards, in picking stones, harvesting, and turnip-hoeing. Women are very rarely employed, perhaps during five or six weeks in the course of the summer. They go to work to distances of a quarter of a mile to, perhaps, in some cases, two mile. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land in this neighbourhood, as boys never work until after 10 years of age. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There are schools here in which children are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic at fees commencing at 1*d.* a week. Most of the children are sent to these schools. Early labour does not prevent the attendance of the boys before 10 years of age, or of the girls scarcely at all.

There are cottages enough for the supply of labour in this parish. Some are very good, but in many cases they are too small, and have not sleeping rooms enough for the separation of the sexes. I have not observed much direct evil results to morality in consequence. Water is plentiful in this neighbourhood, and generally within easy reach of the cottages. The only means of ventilation is by opening the windows. They have generally good gardens. The allotment system does not prevail here.

LOSTWITHIEL.

294. Mixed School not under Government. *Miss Joanna Williams*, mistress (uncertificated).

There are 175 on the books in winter, and 190 in summer. The average attendance in winter is from 110 to 120; in summer, 135 to 140. I have only one teacher to help me. The attendance is very irregular. The parents are very indifferent about their children's education, and keep them at home for errands or for work. The payment to the school is one penny a week. We have no Government grant, and no inspection, diocesan or otherwise. The greatest distance to the school that any child comes is a mile. There are children of all classes, miners', bargemens', artizans', and agricultural labourers', of ages varying from 2 to 12 years, and some few girls as old as 13 and 14. The education has been much neglected. In this town a night school was tried and given up. The Sunday school is very thinly attended. The dissenting Sunday schools are full. Prizes are given for regular attendance.

I think 10 years old would be too young a limit to fix for the purposes of education. The farmers are decidedly against any system of compulsion. We have six girls on half-time system, who go to service in the morning and to school in the afternoon; they get on pretty well if they come regularly.

The number of children who attended 200 times during the past year is 104, viz. :—

First class - - -	31
Second ,, - - -	19
Third ,, - - -	23
Fourth ,, - - -	12
Infants - - - -	19
Total - -	104

295. *Mr. Vivian.*—Job men are employed barking oak, they get 20*s.* a week for a month. The harvest also is done by the job. Bodmin men go down to Fowey for harvest, which is a month earlier than that near Bodmin. The average earnings of these men is not higher than those of the regular agricultural labourer, as they lose so much through bad weather. The people here are very improvident, and are not fond of staying at home if they can get work elsewhere.

296. *Mr. Kidd*, master of Lostwithiel Grammar School.—Farmers are very negligent about the regularity of their children's attendance at school. Compulsory school attendance is necessary to secure regularity. I would suggest that Government aid should be given to night schools for 10 years to come, so as to make up the gap in the education of the present generation. Farmers are afraid of education as likely to raise the wages, or to necessitate a rate. They are also afraid of the labourer getting above them. Farms are small in this neighbourhood.

In the last 20 years farming as a trade has improved 30 per cent.

Commission of Enquiry at Lostwithiel.

297. *Sir C. Sawle* stated, in reply to the Assistant Commissioner, that the age at which children were first employed in agricultural pursuits depended very much upon their physical capacity. The parish of St. Austell, with which he was intimately connected, could scarcely be regarded as an agricultural district, inasmuch as the people generally were employed in clay-works and mines. No child under ten years of age was sent out to work; but in the event of a boy of that age being in robust health, Guardians usually expressed an opinion that it was almost time for something to be done; and when a boy arrived at the age of 12 he was always expected to be following some kind of occupation.

The *Rev. J. V. Vivian* remarked that in the Bodmin Union it was quite an exceptional thing for a boy to be set about farm labour at 10 years of age, the rule generally observed being to send him out at 11. There were, however, instances in which a child had been sent to work so early as 10 years.

Mr. Rundle said he was not aware that any definite rule was observed in the parish in which he lived, St. Veep. When a matter of that description was brought under the notice of the Liskeard Board of Guardians they did not act upon a fixed principle, but used their own discretion. The age at which boys were generally sent to work was, he should think, between 11 and 12. Children were not even accustomed to driving cows before that time.

The *Rev. J. Hawksley* observed that, so far as his knowledge extended, the age at which boys commenced farm service depended very much upon the position of the parents.

Sir C. Sawle wished to explain that the boys to whom he had referred were not in the habit of going to their homes at the completion of their day's work and return on the following morning; they were kept permanently at the farmhouse, and did other things besides driving cows.

Mr. Portman.—If a boy were sent out at 10 years of age, what renumeration would he then receive?

Sir C. Sawle.—I do not know of a case in which a boy has been employed so young.

Rev. J. V. Vivian.—They are usually found their meat and clothes for a considerable time after the commencement of their services; but, I should add, it is almost invariably the custom with the Board of Guardians to supply a boy with clothes if he be sent out from the workhouse.

Mr. Rundle said that boys were very rarely employed as day labourers; they were usually hired from year to year, and kept altogether at the farm house. The system of agriculture was so different at the present time to what it was a few years ago that a little boy was now comparatively useless on a farm.

Mr. Portman.—When the parents are engaged in job work do the children usually work with them?

Rev. G. Hext.—Very rarely. It is not at all the rule.

Mr. Rundle.—My experience has taught me that if a farmer wanted to remove the stones from two or three fields in his possession he would get all the women, boys, and girls he possibly could to go about the work, going himself, or putting a hand or two of his own, with them.

Mr. Portman.—Do the farmers pay those children so much per day?

Mr. Rundle.—The amount which is paid them ranges from 3*d.* to 6*d.* per day; while the average wages of an able-bodied agricultural labourer is 12*s.* per week.

Mr. Portman.—Are there any perquisites in addition to that sum?

Mr. Rundle.—When a man is what is called a permanent labourer he receives a few perquisites; but when he has to take his chance for employment he does not, of course, get any.

Mr. Foster.—What is the general hiring—by the month or by the year?

Mr. Rundle.—The hiring is generally by the year; but the labourer is paid weekly wages. When the man is allowed to occupy a cottage on the farm he calculates upon retaining the place for a year.

Mr. Portman.—Is there any possibility of the boys who are employed on the farm attending school?

Mr. Rundle.—It would be rather inconvenient.

Mr. Portman.—I suppose you mean inconvenient to the farmer?

Rev. G. Hext.—I might state, in order to show that it is possible for something of that kind to be done, that during the past winter I have had a night school, which has been attended by 10 farm lads. In that case their work during the day is no hindrance to their attending school at night.

Rev. J. Vivian.— I can bear Mr. Rundle out that in many districts such a thing would be most inconvenient, not only to the lad, but to the farmer as well. In the parish in which I reside it would be utterly impracticable, for the parish consists of ten thousand acres, and the houses are so scattered that it would be impossible for boys to attend a night school.

Rev. G. Hext was convinced that a great deal of the success of any educational scheme which was not compulsory depended upon the parents of the children. In some instances he had found parents utterly indifferent as to the education of their children, but he thought at the same time that things had improved to what they were a few years ago, as the older generation were beginning to discover that education was beneficial to their interests, and were now anxious that their children should be instructed, if only in the rudiments of learning.

On the question of fixing by law a limit of age for the work of children and the probability of such a restriction being injurious to the parent or employer,

The *Rev. Mr. Hext*, was strongly of opinion that it would be injurious to both. He did not believe that the limit was at all abused at the present time.

Mr. Taylor also believed that it would press very hard upon small leaseholders.

Sir Charles Sawle said he was satisfied that, as a rule, no children were sent to work under 10 years of age. Eleven was about the age.

The *Commissioner.*—Then if that is so, in what way would it press hardly either upon the parent or the employer?

The *Rev. Mr. Vivian* explained that it would only be injurious in individual cases, and not generally. In some cases children might be employed for a few moments after school hours to drive a cow belonging to their parents, and that would be held to be illegal, and that was where the hardship would be.

Mr. Foster said thare were a great many young people who were so employed, and he found unfortunately that a large number of them did not go to school at all.

A desultory conversation followed, and the expression of opinion that was elicited was that boys under 10 years of age should not be employed in agricultural labour, but that at the same time there might be individual cases in which legislation upon the matter might cause hardship to the poor. With respect to girls it was stated that they were seldom or ever engaged at farm work, although perhaps for a week or so during the year they might be employed in stone-picking and potato-dropping. It was further stated that in several parishes a large mass of children never went to school at all, although there were many schools, both day and night, at which they had an opportunity of going. Sir Charles Sawle expressed his belief that children from 12 to 13 years of age were anxious to be educated, but that there was negligence on the part of their parents.

In answer to a question from the Commissioner,

Mr. Blewett said he had frequently visited the cottages of the poor, and he was of opinion that there never ought to be a cottage constructed without at least three bedrooms, one for the parents, another for the boys, and a third for the children. There should be one room in front, and another behind. He had seen much misery and wretchedness amongst the poor, but he was satisfied that many of them might improve their condition if they would only exert themselves a little more. They might, if they liked, put their children to school. The cottages in the Lostwithiel district were in a very bad state indeed; many of them had only one bedroom, and were without any conveniences whatever; they were, in fact, a disgrace to the times in which we lived. He had seen three or four beds in one room. It was very seldom he had seen a cottage with three bedrooms in it.

Further information was given to the commissioner that the agricultural labourers were not in the habit of contributing to any benefit club; that their rent varied from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* a year, and that their hours of work were from 7 in the morning to 5 or 6 in the evening.

The Assistant Commissioner then said he gathered from what they had said that they were not in favour of any legislative interference at present, but that they thought with the existing facilities in their district for education that labour and schooling might be combined during the earlier portion of the labourer's life —(hear, hear).

GULVAL.

Population, 1,742 Acreage, 4357.

298. *Rev. W. Wingfield.*—The cultivation is mixed. There is extensive market gardening. There are no private gangs in this parish. About 400 children, young persons, and women are employed in this parish in agricultural labour. They are employed of all ages from 7 or 8 upwards. Their work in spring is potato-planting; in summer, potato-drawing, fruit-picking, and weeding; in autumn, weeding and harvesting; in winter they are but little employed. Probably, one-third come from adjoining parishes. They work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. They are allowed 1½ hour in summer, and one hour in winter for meals. I think the girls are injured by the demand upon their physical powers in many cases. Females are not subject to ill-treatment; but I think they and the young generally are injuriously affected by brocoli-cutting in wet weather. A girl working in the fields is subject to the worst influence on her morals, and becomes unfit for and dislikes domestic duties and service. I should limit the employment of females to those of a certain age, because it would probably not be practicable to abolish it altogether in this district. I should recommend a school qualification, after the form of the Print-works Act. I would not permit boys below 9 to be employed in farm labour. I think that children and young persons should not be employed more than six or eight hours a day, according to the nature of the work, and the season of the year.

The two modes of obtaining school attendance contained in the Factory Act would prevent progress, and injure school discipline. The mode provided by the Print-works Act would certainly be best. The school attendance here is not materially affected by the distance the children have to come to school; children often come two miles on the average as regularly as those close by. It is also very little affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents; payment of the penny or twopence per week is not

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the reason why children do not attend. The girls here are trained in needlework, knitting, and housework.

Cottage accommodation is very insufficient here and bad. To this cause I unhesitatingly attribute much of the immorality of the labouring classes; it hinders education, and is certainly the cause of disease and discomfort. So many miners live in this parish that I cannot say how many cottages per 100 acres would be sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land. Some of the cottages are conveniently situated; more are not. There is not sufficient bedroom accommodation. They are often crowded both with members of the family and with lodgers. There is great variation in the construction of them. Some, recently built, are good; but much more frequently they are bad in plan, in repair, in requisite conveniences, and outhouses. There is no artificial water supply, but many rivulets and springs. Rents range from 4*l.* to 6*l.*; for 4*l.* very little would be got. Very slight progress is being made towards increasing the cottage accommodation. The evils that the Union Chargeability Act was designed to remedy did not exist here. I do not see how good cottage accommodation can be provided on self-supporting terms.

An evening school is well attended; but little is effected where the pupils have not had early instruction. There are very good mixed and infant schools, both under certificated teachers, besides other private and dames' schools. The parish schools have some 160 on the books, but we cannot get an average of more than two-thirds. Work in the fields is *in part* the cause of this, but a still larger number of children are kept away from school wholly or partially by the utter indifference of the parents to education.

Gulval School, Mixed.

299. *Mr. Martin*, master.—The children have been out lately putting down potatoes. Some boys of 8 years old have been out, and some girls. Small holders of land work their children very young, *e.g.*,—

William Row (7 years old) has been out putting down potatoes for two years for his father who holds four fields, two in grass for his cow, and two in gardens. The boy looks after the cow, and when he cannot his sister does, who is 9 years of age. He is very irregular in his attendance at school.

If any law was made for enforcing school attendance, I should like the penalty to be put on the employer as well as on the parents in case of neglect. I think that attendance at school should be encouraged, as well as absence from work compelled.

300. *T. Oliver* (7 years old).—I have been out putting down potatoes; got fourpence a day; worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., half-an-hour being allowed for dinner.

301. *Ellen Pierce* (11 years old), very irregular in attendance).—I have been out pulling radishes at 7*d.* a day, hours of work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I go home to dinner from 12 to 1 o'clock. Men, women, boys, and girls all worked together potatoing; we were seven girls, five boys, three women, and one man to fill in the drills; the women get 10*d.* a day. The older girls go away early from the morning school to cook or carry dinner for their mothers in the gardens. My aunt works in the gardens, gets 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week. 10*d.* a day is the wage for day work, and 1*s.* a day for tut work. In my cottage we have one kitchen, one bedroom, and a dairy, where mother, aunt, grandmother, and myself live together.

302. *John Hoskins* (10 years old).—My father is an agricultural labourer; gets 13*s.* a week, and pays for his cottage.

303. *James Williams* (12 years old).—I went out for the first time this year in the gardens; got 6*d.* a day, and worked from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the month of March. I live a mile and a half from the school, and go to chapel school on Sunday.

304. *Mr. Thomas*, Gulval (a holder of market gardens).—The garden work is mostly taken by the piece, fruit picking by the gallon. A man's wages are 2*s.* a day at the lowest; a steady man gets from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week. Women get 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day. Girls begin at 9 or 10 years of age, and get 6*d.* a day. The hours of work are from 8 to 6, and 1½ hour out for dinner. Boys begin as young as the girls. Women can earn by piecework a day and a half's wages in a day. I think it would be very just to keep boys from working till they were 10 years of age, such a limit would not inflict any injury on the employer, but might possibly do so to the labourers' families. In the potato season a man's wages are 1*l.* a week, mostly all money, few give drink. The best land is let at 10*l.* an acre. My holdings vary from 4*l.* to 10*l.* The cottages are very bad, the average rent is 4*l.* a year. The labourers do not save much, they lose a good many days' work, and the women have to work very hard.

In the case of a "take" a few labourers agree together, and they all consider themselves a party to the contract. Men do not employ women. Men and women will take separate "takes;" the two rarely mix together, the heavy work is done by the men, and the light by the women.

305. *Cottages*, Gulval:

No. 1. One room down, one up; small garden. Seven people living in it. Rent 4*l.* a year. The children go out potatoing at 5 or 6 years of age in the summer.

No. 2. One room up, one down, at 1*s.* a week. Widow and children on the parish.

306. *Mr. Corin*, Tolver.—I hold market gardens. The land is held on my life. Children begin to work at 9 years of age, and at a year younger potatoing. Women work on to 70 years of age. They do as good a day's work as a man, and are much cheaper to be employed; still they do work that ought to be done by men. I think little girls should not be allowed to go to work; it is a shameful thing to see them working so young; and they should be left at school till 14 or 15 years old. The wages are 12*s.* or 14*s.* a week for a man in summer, 15*s.* sometimes. Labourers cannot save anything; the benefit clubs are mostly going down. To make children learn anything they should be kept at school till 14; between 10 and 12 years of age they lose all they have previously learned.

307. *Simms.*—Cottage of cob in bad repair; two rooms down, two bedrooms, and garden of 20 or 30 patches; rent 6*l.* 10*s.* a year. I have worked at farming gardens. Farm wages are 12*s.* a week, losing wet days, and a little "tut" work. Boys and girls begin to work at 8 or 9 years of age; and the little ones earn 6*d.* a day; young women 10*d.*, and at summer 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a day, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., with an hour allowed for breakfast and an hour and a half for dinner, and then work till dark, that is in the potato harvest. The Cornish range in the cottage cost 8*l.* 20 years ago, and burns one hundred and a half of coal in the week.

ST. ERTH.

Population, 2,557. - Average, 4,092.

308. *Rev. A. Mills.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs employed. The work of the children, young persons, and women employed in agriculture is, in spring, picking stones and other field work; in summer, weeding and hoeing; in autumn, harvest work; and in winter, barn work. They live near the farms on which they work. Their hours are from 8 a.m. to 12, and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; from 12 to 2 being allowed for meals. Their work does not injuriously affect their health, but does them good. They are not subject to ill-treatment. The employment of females in agriculture is against their proper training for domestic duties.

I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females. I think that children under 13 should go to school altogether. There is not in this parish a sufficient number of cottages for the accommodation of the persons employed upon the land. The proportion is $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 100 acres; it should be 3 to 100 acres. They are conveniently situated, and have sufficient bedroom accommodation. They are not overcrowded. The ventilation and drainage are bad. There is an average water-supply, and all have gardens and privies. They are owned by landowners, and the rents are 50*s.* to 80*s.* a year.

309. Meeting at the Old Library, Penzance, March 8, 1869.

PRESENT:

T. S. Bolitho, Esq.
Captain Arthur.
Rev. P. Hedgeland.
Hallet Batten, Esq.
G. Wilson, Esq.
Rev. R. Malone (St. Paul's vicarage).
Rev. J. P. Vibert.
T. Cornish, Esq.
Mr. R. Chergwin.
Mr. Laity, Perran, } Farmers.
Mr. Laity, St. Hilary, }
Day Le Grice, Esq.
W. Borlase, Esq.
Rev. W. Wingfield.
The Mayor of Penzance.
Rev. A. W. Mills.
Mr. Hosking, &c. &c. &c.

Children are employed in the gardens for potatoing, and for stone-picking in the fields; they are not much employed in agriculture under 9 years of age, or, except occasionally, under 10. Boys come to drive horses at 6*d.* a day, but are not taken to live in the farm-houses under 14 years of age. Young boys work for 9 hours a day, but no evening work. Children under 10 years of age are not paid by the farmers, but go to help their parents in stone-picking or other piecework; the amount of earnings by them is of no real importance to the parents. A limit of 10 years for work would be no hardship to the parents or the employer. An agricultural labourer's wages average throughout the year, including perquisites are 12*s.* a week. Piecework is given to the better men, whereby they can earn a higher average. The average wage in the market gardens for a man is 15*s.* a week.

It was agreed that a combination of labour and education, with a view to secure continuous education for the labourers' children, is necessary. Mr. T. Bolitho suggested that a certificate of school attendance for some hours during the preceding week should be demanded every Monday morning, and if not produced the child should not be employed by anyone; attendance at night school or Sunday school to count. Mr. Chergwin thinks that boys who had to attend school for five or six hours in the week would be all the better for it, and none the worse for the purposes of the farmers. Night schools were thought to be the best mode of securing continuous education after a certain age. The difficulty of maintaining it is the scattered nature of the population and the distance from the school in agricultural districts. It was stated that in the Penzance Union a penny a week is deducted from the weekly relief by the officer (overseer) to pay for the children's schooling when the parents neglect to do so; and that this custom has prevailed for some time. There is no rule as to the cessation of relief when children attain a given age. Cottages are reckoned at 1*s.* a week in wages by the farmer, and are rarely let under 3*l.* a year. Generally those with two rooms and a spence (wash place) are let at 1*s.* a week. Mr. Laity, of Perran, does not think that there is a cottage in his parish with less than four rooms, two up and two down. Those with two rooms are often crowded. There is usually a garden with each farm cottage. The labourers do not now keep so many pigs as they did five or six years ago. The cottages are for the most part on leases for lives. The land is also often on lives as well as the cottages. The dwellings in this neighbourhood are not alone and scattered; the people like to congregate in villages. It was thought that an improvement in the dwellings of the poor must go hand-in-hand with any system of education, otherwise education will not have the desired object. It was said that the best men go to mining and fishing, not only on account of the higher rate of wages, but because there is a prospect of promotion and a rise in position.

Undivided holdings were said to be one cause of bad cottages. An undivided holding is a joint holding by two or more persons, the annual value of the estate being divided according to the shares. Each holder can sell his share, but no one partner can take a portion of the land absolutely.

ST. BURYAN.

Population, 1,428 - Acreage, 6,964.

310. *Rev. T. B. Coulson.*—This is a purely agricultural district. The attendance of the children at the school is irregular, principally on account of the distance to the school and the bad weather, and at almost every season there is some work to keep the young children away at times from school. The wages of an agricultural labourer are 12*s.* a week, or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. Some of the farmers are only just above the class of labourers. They employ their own children in potatoing, dropping, and weeding turnips, &c. The parents of these children will not make any sacrifice of the earnings. There is a dairyman class here who sometimes become farmers. The west of Penzance has more cows than any part of the county. Women and girls are employed in the field. Very few women come to be married who are not in the family way.

Some cottages are attached to the farms; the unattached labourers live in the church town, where the dwellings are often very crowded. The cottage rent, with garden, varies from 2*l.* to 4*l.* a year. The men often rent a piece of potato ground from the farmer. There are clubs, but there is a great want of thrift among the people, they will not make use of the savings bank. We had a night school last year which did very well, and I got a grant for it. I think that compulsory attendance at school would necessitate giving up school fees. The children will not come in bad clothes. I think that if restriction were placed on the work of children before a certain age there might be some hardship on the heads of the families, and I doubt whether such a restriction would be followed by a rise in men's wages.

Return.—There are no private gangs in this parish. It would be difficult to ascertain how many children, young persons, and women, are employed in agricultural labour. Their work in spring is to help in putting in potatoes, weeding, and hoeing; in summer, harvesting and a little work in connexion with the steam threshing machine; in autumn, threshing and pulling mangolds and turnips; and in winter, dropping early potatoes. They live from a few yards to two miles from the farms on which they work. They work about eight hours a day. From the time of leaving home to the time of returning their hours are, for those who live near, nine, and for those who live at a distance, 10. One hour is allowed for meals in winter, and two in summer. They are not injuriously affected by their work. The common impression among women here is that domestic service resembles farm service. They prefer what they consider the liberty which they enjoy in working in the fields. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females in agriculture. Very young boys are not employed here in the fields. As far as I am able to judge

Cornwall.

Mr. Portman.

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I think that a certain number of hours attendance at school per week should be insisted on. The school attendance here is not much affected by the distance the children have to go to school. Some parents, caring but little about their children's education, plead want of clothes as a hindrance. With few exceptions, I believe, where there is a will there is a way. No efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls.

Some few of our people are occupied at times on the fisheries, and sometimes at quarry work.

The cottages are very fairly situated with respect to the farms on which the work has to be done. In some few cases the cottages are overcrowded. Cottage property in St. Buryan will not pay three per cent. If a reasonable rent were offered there would be no difficulty about cottage accommodation.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	35	23·3
Between 10 and 13 -	23	18·2
Total - -	58	41·5
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	40	34·8
Between 10 and 13 -	22	17·8
Total - -	62	52·6

In Winter.

Boys :		
Under 10 - -	35	20·3
Between 10 and 13 -	21	13·9
Total - -	56	34·2
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	38	23·7
Between 10 and 13 -	25	14·6
Total - -	63	38·3

There is but one elementary, and that a National school, within the limits of the parish. Just over the border, in the parish of St. Levan, is a Wesleyan school. Possibly from 15 to 20 children attend from this parish.

SENNEN.

Population, 600.

311. *Rev. G. Woollcombe.*—No children are employed here in agricultural labour. About 10 young persons and 12 women are so employed ; the males between the ages of 13 and 18 ; of the females, four are between 13 and 18, three over 18 and married, five over 18 and unmarried. Girls are but little employed, principally by their fathers who are small farmers or dairymen. Women are employed in stone-picking, potato-dropping, and weeding. Their hours are not over long, nor are the distances they live from their work great. Their hours in summer are from 7 to 6, and in winter from 8 to dark. They are allowed a short time at 11.30, one hour for dinner, and a short time in the afternoon. Their health is good. Neither females nor the young are subject to ill-treatment. This parish has a fishing population as well as an agricultural one. Out of the population of 600, quite 200 are supported by fishing. Among the fishing population, on account of the distance from school and the irregularity of employment, the education of young persons is indifferent. I have tried a night school for them with tolerable success.

The children are, for the most part, at some school. Compulsory education is hardly necessary, but if determined on, the plan of "school attendance for a "certain number of hours during the preceding six "months" only is possible. In this parish the distance of the National school keeps some children from it, but they go to a private one nearer, but more expensive. The school attendance is affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents only in the case of large families ; but even then one or more children, after the first, are admitted to the National school at a cheaper rate than one would be. No efforts are being made in this parish for the industrial training of girls.

The cottages here mostly consist of four rooms, two downstairs and two upstairs, or sometimes only one downstairs. The drainage is very indifferent. Water is obtained from wells, which are often common to many cottages. Gardens are small, if any ; but potato ground is attached to many, to some a part of wages, to others at a low rent, say 1*s.* a strip. The cottages sometimes have an outhouse. They, for the most part, go with the farms on which they are situated. The rent is 1*s.* a week. Progress is being made towards increasing the accommodation, but principally in the fishing part of the population.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

—	On the Register of some School.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	27	23
Between 10 and 13 -	8	7
Total - -	35	30
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	21	16
Between 10 and 13 -	3	3
Total - -	24	19

In Winter.

Boys :		
Under 10 - -	21	17
Between 10 and 13 -	9	7
Total - -	30	24
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	18	14
Between 10 and 13 -	3	4
Total - -	21	18

The ordinary wages for a labourer are 12*s.* a week, in some cases 7*s.* a week, with dinner. Cottage and potato ground extra. The cottage and potato ground given in lieu of harvest wage. Children do not work much under 10 years of age, except with their parents in the potato season. The district is well supplied with schools. There is one at St. Leven and Sennen, with an uncertificated master. One at St. Buryan, mixed, certificated master. Two at St. Paul's, one certificated. One at Sancreed, certificated. One at St. Peter's, Newland, uncertificated. One at Madron,

endowed. One at St. Just, certificated; besides which there are sundry dissenting and private schools. I do not think that the people neglect education, except parents in the "Cove," which is a fishing village. We had a very good night school last year, but the attendance has rather fallen off. There are some farms of 200 acres. Every large farm has a dairy, and there is a class of dairymen.

TRELOWARREN.

PRESENT :

Sir Richard Vyvyan.
Mr. Shaw, agent.
Mr. Appleton, doctor.
The Rev. — Bloxam.

312. The farmers have the control and repair of the cottages attached to their farms. It was thought to be a better system than keeping all the control in the hands of the landlord. Leases on lives are very common in this district. The average rent of a cottage, with a garden, is 3*l.* a year; they usually have two rooms down and two up. Sir Richard Vyvyan charges 2*s.* 6*d.* a month, with a month's notice. The average size of farms is under 100 acres. Wages of an ordinary labourer 12*s.* a week, including perquisites. Farm lads of 16 years of age get 12*l.* a year, with board and lodging. At 17 or 18 years of age 16*l.* a year. Boys' wages begin at 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day. The district is well supplied with schools, which are used by the farmers' sons.

Boys' School.

313. *H. Skewes*, master.—Not under Government. Seventy-seven on the books. [On the 19th of April only 27 in attendance, it was said to be a busy time at barley tilling.]

The bigger boys are away a good deal, either working for the farmers, their masters, or for their fathers. Some go out to work at 9 years of age. The fullest time for the school is in the months of May and June. The winter attendance is much affected by distance and weather. The population is thin and scattered. I do not think that half time or alternate days at school and work would answer in agricultural districts. Boys between 9 and 11 years of age are not employed regularly throughout the year, and they might perfectly well attend school 150 times during the year without any injury to the parents by the loss of earnings. The oldest boy now in the school is 12 years. The school draws from a distance of three miles, from the parishes of Mawgan, St. Martin, the Edge of St. Keverne, and from Wendron. There is no payment by the children.

314. *Sir R. Vyvyan.—Return.*—The cultivation is mixed. Strong healthy boys begin to work from 10 to 12 years old, and are employed occasionally throughout the whole year, and when not employed are allowed to return to school at any time. In many cases the boys work and go to school on alternate days or weeks. Girls are not employed in agriculture here. A few women are employed in the spring and summer, and there is employment for more women than are now disposed to go into the fields to work. Their cottages are either on the farms or very near where they are employed. Eight hours is the longest time they work, except a few days at hay and corn harvest, when it may be more. It is not necessary to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, but the time should be decided by the parents and the employer. No restriction is required in this parish upon the employment of females in agriculture.

There are two good free schools in this parish, which are well attended by the labourers' children, one for boys and the other for girls. They are quite distinct from each other, and are maintained at the expense of Sir R. R. Vyvyan, Bart.

There is a sufficient number of good cottages for the labourers, with accommodation favourable to health and morality. There is an ample supply of good water. All the cottages about us have gardens attached to them sufficient to supply the families of the labourers with vegetables and small fruit. They are allowed ground in the fields to grow potatoes enough for the use of their families, and to feed their pig.

The rent of the cottage and garden is usually 3*l.*; Sir R. Vyvyan's 2*s.* 6*d.* a month, and a month's notice.

The wages of farm servants are, of those of 16 years, 12*l.* and upwards, board and lodging; of 17 or 18 years, 16*l.* Ordinary labourers get 12*s.* a week, including perquisites.

GRADE.

Population, 339.

315. *Rev. F. C. Jackson.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. No females are employed here except in farm household work. There are five males between 10 and 13, and 10 between 13 and 18, employed in agricultural labour. They are employed in driving plough horses and harrowing, and doing other light works. In winter they feed stock. They live on the farms chiefly. They work so long as it is light. One hour is given for dinner. They are not injuriously affected by their work. I have always considered that the lax way in which farmers entrust the driving of cows to bull to boys is as prolific a parent of ill as well can be devised. Too often, in the absence of any man on the farm, some servant girl turns out the bull. This may seem a trivial matter, not the sort of thing to mention, but the question as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals, if it deserves an answer, must be answered fairly. Should boys be employed under the age of 12 years, they should be allowed or the master should be forced to let them attend afternoon school; thus in very poor families the children would not of necessity grow up, generation after generation, in utter ignorance.

The cottage accommodation is decreasing annually, the population (chiefly on account of the Serpentine Factory) increasing. The cottages are crowded; men sleep together in the same bed, and children, half grown up (in some cases quite so) sleep in the same room. There is no facility given for building. People want to build. Landowners will not grant land. This, however, is not a fault to be imputed to me; the ill effects of such a state of things is apparent everywhere, and those who are responsible will have, I suppose, to answer for it.

The approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work is,—

In Summer and Winter.

Boys :	
Between 8 and 10	12
Between 10 and 13	7
Total	19
Girls :	
Between 8 and 10	2
Between 10 and 13	2
Total	4

There is no evening school in this parish. Those who do not go to school have insufficient education. The difficulty in the way of an evening school is want of funds. There was one in this parish last year, started by the schoolmaster, but the attendance was small and the pay insufficient. The education of the children has cost me, independent of my own subscription, 30*l.*

Cornwall.

Mr. Portman.

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GRADE AND RUAN-MINOR SCHOOL.

316. *Miss Nicholls*, certificated mistress (school mixed).

In winter quarter number on the register, 88.

Average attendance from 60 to 68.

In the summer of 1867 on the register, 78.

Average attendance, including the Lizard children, 66.

There is now a school at the Lizard. The parents are indifferent about the children's schooling, and grumble about the pay. The children are often kept at home very long, and sent to school late, and in a rough state. The payment for the first class is 5*s.* 3*d.* a quarter; for the second class, 4*s.* The little ones pay one penny a week. The principal occupations of the girls and women are net making and stocking knitting. There is a daughter of a small farmer, 5 years of age, who has been in school since Christmas, but never learned to write before she came.

317. *John Carter* (10 years of age).—I was out at work last and this year for a farmer driving horses and putting in potatoes. Got a penny a day and three meals. Milk for breakfast; meat and no drink for dinner; bread and milk for supper.

318. *Mr. Nicholls* (father of schoolmistress, and under-steward for one of the properties; an old man).—Boys go out to work at 9 years of age and younger. Women and girls hardly go at all. A boy of 9 years of age would get 1*s.* a week and his meat, or 2*d.* a day by the day. An ordinary labourer gets 2*s.* a day, and during the harvest month 3*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.* a day and meat and drink. Boys are hired by the year into the farmhouses, and begin from 3*l.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year, with board and lodging. A woman gets 8*d.* a day for weeding, and 1*s.* a day and meat in harvest. There are not more than five or six women in the two parishes who go out to work. The restriction on the employment of children under 10 years of age would do good. I would vote strong for education. Boys don't get any after they go out to service. The pilchard fishing from the end of July to the end of November brings in a good deal of money, and the potted pilchards are a great help for the food for winter; they are either sold at 1*s.* 6*d.* per 120, or sometimes given away to the very poor. The cottages are not very bad. They have mostly two bedrooms. The rent, with garden of 5 to 15 yards, is 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year. The labourer can also get potato ground from the farmers at per yard, if they want it. The farms are small and the rent high. There may be one or two farms up to 100 acres in the parish, but they are more often from 50 downwards. The small farmers are worse off than the labourers.

I do not think the labouring class would object to compulsory school attendance.

MAWNAN.

319. *Rev. W. Rogers*, *A. Rogers, Esq.*, and *Mr. Pender*.—The wages of an ordinary labourer, 12*s.* a week; of a hind, 13*s.* and a cottage. The carter also has a cottage free, as he works on Sundays, and he has firewood for the cutting. Potato ground is let at 2*l.* an acre if hired. Women are very little employed, except in spring at stone-picking, and in autumn in turnip-cutting and potatoing; they earn 8*d.* a day. The boys are not employed under 10 years of age, but they rarely remain at school after that age. The cottage rent without garden ranges from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. The allotment system here is very rare. The gardens with the cottages are very small. We have had a night school kept by the schoolmaster, and farmer's children attend the parish school up to 11 or 12 years of age, and afterwards sometimes go to a town school. The labourers are inclined to take pains with their education. The savings bank is much used, but only in rare cases does an agricultural labourer save enough to take a farm. There are a few cases of dairies being let at 9*l.* a cow. One-eighth of an acre per cow given for tillage for roots for that sum. Some of these men become small farmers. Most of the cottages are leased on lives.

Any legislative enactments as to the age for work would not affect this district.

320. *Mary Ann Cock*.—I have one child. I began to work in the fields at 12 years of age, and I have worked in them pretty regularly ever since. I work now at stone-picking, weeding corn, potatoing, and taking up turnips and mangold. I have had bad health. I was very ill when I was 14 years of age, and the doctor said I had injured my health by working so young in the fields. I have been often very wet in weeding corn. At first I got 6*d.* a day, now I get 9*d.* a day. I live at my father's, and the earnings pay for my clothes. Girls do not go out as much now to regular field work. Those in farm services are used occasionally for outdoor work. I think it a bad thing to send a girl to the fields. I would never do it myself. My cottage with two rooms down, two bedrooms, and a small bit of garden, rents at 3*l.* 10*s.* a year.

MAWNAN SCHOOL.

321. *Mr. Wilkes*, master.—The oldest boy in the school is 12 years. The average age of the first class is 10½ years. Some of the boys work for their parents, but none for pay. We had a night school four nights a week in winter; I have had 14 in, in one night, mostly farm lads who have been at day school, but the average is four or five. There is generally an interregnum of two or three years between the time of leaving the day school and coming to the night school. Those who attend at night school soon pick up what they have lost and take an interest in their work. It is difficult to get any attendance at school after the boys once go to farm service, as they are employed all the year round, and are tending the cattle morning and evening.

MR. PETER'S COTTAGES.

322. No. 1.—*F. Downing*, agricultural labourer.—Earns 11*s.* a week. No firewood or grist corn; gets potato ground free by putting the manure in the land himself. One room down, one up, and garden. No privy. Rent, 3*l.* 3*s.* and "outs" equal to 6*s.* a year. Most of the cottages in the parish have two bedrooms, but there are a very few privies in the village.

No. 2.—One room down, one up. Garden. Rent, 3*l.*, and 6*s.* rates.

No. 3.—Two rooms and a backhouse down. Two bedrooms, with garden. 4*l.* a year, and rates. No privy. In bad repair. Inhabited by a man, a boy of 15, a girl of 14, a young man and a woman, and a lodger; each room being about 11 feet by 9.

CONSTANTINE.

323. The population is chiefly employed in the granite works. The cottages are held on leases for lives, and some are very deficient in accommodation, having only one bedroom.

ST. KEVERNE.

(A large parish with a scattered population.)

324. *Rev. E. Griffith* and *Mr. Pearce*.—Very few children of 10 years of age are employed in the fields; they may be used occasionally for driving carts, &c. Women are not much employed, except for stone-picking, weeding corn, and potatoing occasionally. The wages of an ordinary labourer, are 12*s.* a week. The farm lads, 14 years old, living in the house, get 5*l.* or 6*l.* a year, board, and lodging, and rises as they get older. A boy of 14 would earn in the fields from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day. Women get 8*d.* a day. Head carters get cottages rent free, besides their wages. The cottages are not sufficient in number. In some parts of the parish the average rent is 3*l.* a a year. There is a great deficiency of gardens and

no allotments. A few labourers get potato ground, for which they usually pay 1*s.* a last, equal to 18 square yards. There is a great want of privies in the village. There is a school in the church town, and some dames schools, but not sufficient for the population. The attendance at school after 10 years of age is very irregular, and the parents are very indifferent about the education of their children. The children might perfectly attend school in winter months, but it would be difficult to carry out any system of half time or alternate days, and the feeling would be against compulsory education. Most of the property is leasehold.

About 35 males between the ages of 10 and 13, and 25 between 13 and 18, are employed in agricultural labour in this parish. They live principally on the farms. They work 10 hours a day, and are allowed three hours for meals. Very few females of any age are employed in field-work. They are not injuriously affected by their work.

SCHOOL STATISTICS.

In Summer.

	On the Register of the Parish School.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	26	20
Between 10 and 13 -	35	25
Total - -	61	45
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	10	9
Between 10 and 13 -	11	7
Total - -	21	16

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	26	20
Between 10 and 13 -	46	40
Total - -	72	60
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	14	10
Between 10 and 13 -	17	12
Total - -	31	22

325. *T. Joyce*, schoolmaster.—The children in the school are those of farmers and labourers. There are some labourers' boys at 11 and 12 years old, and one girl of 14. Boys between 10 and 13 years of age come to school in the winter, and work in the spring and autumn. Some children come three and four miles to school. You could not carry out the half-time system in the agricultural district.

326. — *Jordan*, 10 years of age.—I have been out driving horses for farmers for 2*d.* a day and three meals. Pie for dinner, bread and milk at the other meals. This year I got 4*d.* a day and the same meals. I go to work at 7 a.m. and leave off at 6 p.m.

327. *Thos. Wren*, 12 years old.—I was out last year driving horses and harrowing. I got 2*d.* a day and meat. I was out three or four weeks in the year; came to school in the winter, and am now in the first class.

328. *John Tripcony*, 17 years old.—At 11 years of age I went out to farm service, and got 3*l.* a year, board, and lodging; at 14 years of age I got 4*l.* a year; at 16, 8*l.*, board, and lodging. I came back to school last Christmas, but I have not saved any money.

329. LETTER from GEORGE APPLETON, Surgeon, to HON. E. PORTMAN.

SIR, St. Keverne, May 17, 1869.

I REGRET that I have been unable before to give you the particulars desired (*here follows a list of names*).

All the above have risen from agricultural labourers by their industry and frugality without any legacies or other assistance. Many might be named now holding farms whose fathers were originally agricultural labourers, but by industry became renters of land and left their stock, &c. to the present holders. their sons.

BUDOCK

(part of St. Gluvias parish).

Population, 3,000 - Acreage, 3,900.

330. *Mrs. Spargo.*—Boys go out to work at 9 years of age for driving horses, cutting turnips; sometimes even younger. They get 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day. My husband works at the granite works. I have nine children. I think it would be a good thing to keep them rather longer at school. No child ought to go to work before 12 years of age, though I think in some cases it might be a hardship on the parents to forbid children to work under 10. Agricultural labourers' wages are 12*s.* a week. The cottage rents have lately risen to 4*l.* and 5*l.* Our cottage has one room down, and two bedrooms, with a small garden; rent, 3*l.* a year. Women work in the fields at 8*d.* and 10*d.* a day. Some girls of 12 years old will earn 6*d.* a day. There is not so much work for women as there used to be.

331. BUDOCK SCHOOL (Mixed).

Mr. Roberts, master.

On register 1868, May to July -	148
Average attendance - -	109
Number to January on the register -	140
Average attendance - -	88

The low average in the winter is caused by the distance that the children have to come. There are 36 children over 10 years of age on the books. Agricultural labourers' children are away in spring putting in potatoes, driving horses, and tilling; and in the autumn in getting up potatoes, &c. Some of the children come a distance of three miles, and the attendance is fairly regular. If a restriction is to be placed on the employment of children I should like the limit to be put at 11 years. I had a night school for two winters, and the number dwindled away until it became useless to attempt to keep it on.

332. *C. Thomas*, 9 years old, son of a labourer.—I have been out putting in potatoes for my father for a few days at 3*s.* a week, and worked from 8 to 6, with an hour allowed for dinner.

333. *W. Houghton*, 10 years old.—I have been charlick pulling at 4*d.* a day and dinner at the farmhouse. Trimming turnips at 6*d.* a day and meat. I went to charlick-pulling with my brother. Boys and girls do not work together.

334. *Miss Bone*, schoolmistress.—I have been for 11 or 12 years in the school, and always lived in Budock. Girls very seldom work in the fields, and women not so much as formerly; they now get 10*d.* a day stone-picking and weeding. Boys are not so much employed by the farmers, since the system of ploughing has been changed. The labouring class care more for educating their children now. Many of the grown-up people cannot read or write, but all the children can. We had a night school, but it was discontinued. The cottages of women who work in the fields are, in my opinion, less tidy and well kept than those who have been in domestic service.

Cornwall.
Mr. Portman.
h.

335. *Thomas*, farm labourer: cottage, one room down and one up; rent, with a garden, 4*l*. a year. Man and wife and five children. The jobbing man gets 2*s*. 6*d*. a day and no privileges, and loses wet days; a regular man on a farm gets 12*s*. a week.

336. *Tallack*, agricultural labourer, with a grown-up family.—They began to work on their own land at 7 or 8 years of age. I should have liked to have kept them at school; they forget what they have learned very soon when they have left it; there is no occupation to make them keep up their education. "They are all the better for it, and are qualified for better occupations than without it." I think it would be difficult to carry out a law for fixing the limit of age, and it would be hard on some families. The cottage has one room down, and two up stairs, with garden, 4*l*. a year rent.

337. *Bowden*, stonemason; lives in a cottage in a row belonging to an agricultural labourer in Mr. Bulmore's employment; rent, 4*l*. 10*s*., and 10*s*. "outs;" one room and a back house down, two bed-rooms up, and a garden.

338. *Mr. Bulmore*, farmer.—A lad of 16 would get 10*l*. to 12*l*. a year, board and lodging in the farmhouse, and mending done out. I would not take a boy into the house under 12 years of age. I am opposed to any compulsory system of education, and far prefer voluntary aid. The average wages of an agricultural labourer, 12*s*. a week, beer and crousts, or 2*d*. a day, meat and beer through the carrying time. The holdings are small. A man on the farm who looks after the cattle has a house rent free, a bit of potato ground, and fuel, which make his earnings up to 14*s*. or 15*s*. a week. Owing to the changes in the method of farming operations, such as driving with reins, in ploughing and harrowing, boys are less employed than formerly, and women less in consequence of the introduction of machinery in mowing and reaping. Boys are not capable of doing the weeding fairly, it is done generally by women, if they can be got, if not, by men. Very few labouring parents take much care about their children's schooling unless they are looked up.

339. *R. W. Fox, Esq.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs here. Very few young persons, children, and women are employed in this parish. They live generally near the farms on which they work, not often at a distance exceeding a mile from them. They work from 8 to noon, and from 1 to 5. They are not injuriously affected by their work. I do not think any restriction is needed in this parish upon the employment of females in agriculture, or upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be so employed. I see no reason for placing any restriction upon the distance to which children should go to work. The school attendance of the children is not commonly interrupted, except at hay and corn harvest time. The school attendance is not much affected by the distance the children have to go to school; several children come from neighbouring parishes, a preference being given to a National mixed school, in this parish, to schools nearer the homes of the children. In some cases probably the parents do not send their children to school through poverty. A few girls have been sent to a good training school at Falmouth, to be prepared for service, with satisfactory results. Better cottage accommodation is very desirable, especially in the case of large families. A sitting room and *one* bedroom only is more general than *two* bedrooms and a sitting-room. The construction of the cottages generally is good. There are stone and slated roofs. The rooms are too small, and the drainage is often very defective. Water is often inconveniently distant. Rents are 4*l*. to 5*l*. a year, and upwards.

340. *J. G. Falck*, farmer.—Of the 3,900 acres in this parish 236 may be deducted for highways and waste land, much of Budock being bounded by the sea, and the measurement being taken at low water. The cultivation is mixed. Boys are employed from about 12 years of age; but since the system of guiding the horses by reins has been adopted, there is little employment for boys. Girls are very seldom employed in agriculture. They usually go to service to Falmouth and Penryn. Women are employed very little. They seldom live above a mile from their work. Their hours are from 8 to 12, and from 1 to 5. I would not place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work upon the land, but I think it would be desirable to have recourse to the apprenticing system (as in the Act of Elizabeth) in the case of such children as have parents who are unable to support them; but I think the period of the apprenticeship should be shorter, say from 12 to 19; at this age they would be quite capable of earning their own livelihood. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females.

There is a large school in the centre of the parish, which is well attended not only by the children living in the parish, but also by some that live in the adjoining parishes. The cottages are generally pretty good, and are more than sufficient for the agricultural labourers; many of them are occupied by mechanics and others employed in the adjoining towns. In most cases, where the cottages are single, they have gardens; but where they are grouped, they have not.

PROBUS.

Population, 1,449 - Acreage, 8,113.

341. *W. Trethewy, Esq.*, and *H. Tresawna, Esq.*—The cultivation is chiefly arable. Boys are employed from 7 years of age. They would be employed in picking stones for about a fortnight in the month of May, and they would be annually employed about the same work until they arrive at the age of 10 years, when they would be altogether employed on the farm. A few girls may be employed for about a fortnight in the month of May in picking stones on the arable land; age from 7 to 13. On an average not 30 women are employed in this parish in agricultural operations. The distances they have to go to work vary from half a mile to two miles. Boys work from 7 to 5; girls from 8.30 to 5. Boys ought not to be altogether employed in field-work until they are 10 years old. The females in this parish, as a rule, do not care about farm work.

The means of education provided in this parish are, in the first place, an infant school, at which about 40 children are in average attendance; secondly, a mixed school, at which there would be an average attendance of 40 girls and 40 boys. We think that nearly all the children in the parish attend school.

The cottages are generally in a fair state, and are sufficient for the supply of labour required. They are situated for the most part in a village, and distant from the farms from half a mile to two miles, and are not overcrowded. They are also well supplied with water, and the ventilation is good. They generally have gardens attached, but for the convenience of those who have no gardens there is an ample supply of allotment land. Wages in this district are 12*s*. a week.

ST. COLUMB MINOR.

Population, 2,025 - Acreage, 5,562a. 3r. 3p.

342. *R. Cardell*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed. No boys are employed under 10 years of age, except in the month of April for stone-picking; and girls are employed at the same time for the same purpose. Women are employed during the summer months for stone-picking, weeding, haymaking, and harvesting. They have to go about a mile to their work. They work from 8 to 5, but are allowed an hour for dinner. No restriction is required in this district upon the age at which boys should be allowed to work upon the land, or upon the employment of females in agriculture.

We have three schools in this parish (and a new one is being erected), very well attended; the labour does not at all interfere with the attendance.

There are quite sufficient cottages here, but they are not in good condition. They are not on the farms. They are not overcrowded. They have a good supply of water, but are not well ventilated. In general they have very good gardens. There are allotments of land for potatoes in addition.

I farm nearly 400 acres. I employ women and children of all ages, from 6 and 7 years upwards, in large numbers for stone-picking; they are paid 6*d.* a day each all round; they work on an average four days a week, not in bad weather, and are employed perhaps for three weeks in the spring on different farms. This work has to be done quickly, and all hands are useful, but at other times of the year children are very rarely employed. The stone-picking is sometimes done by the piece, at which a woman will earn 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Wages for men are 12*s.* a week, not all in money; grist corn and potato ground are given in lieu of money. I should prefer paying them in full money.

If any restriction by law is placed on the employment of children under a given age I think a discretionary power should be vested in the magistrates to allow children under that age to work where an emergency arises.

343. *Rev. H. F. Chudleigh*, vicar.—There are about 130 children, young persons, and women employed on the farms for four or five weeks in the year, whose ages are,—

Males.—Under 8, 5; between 8 and 10, 15; between 10 and 13, 20; between 13 and 18, 4. Total, 44.

Females.—Under 8, 5; between 8 and 10, 8; between 10 and 13, 50; between 13 and 18, 22; over 18, married, 6; unmarried, 4. Total, 95.

They are employed for stone-picking, weeding corn, and hoeing turnips. The hours of work are from 8 or 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with an hour allowed for dinner. There is no injury to their health arising from such work; in fact rather the contrary. I have no reason to think that the morals of women are much affected by field-work.

I would not place any restriction on the employment of women and boys. The latter are not employed till they are of service.

Attendance at school is affected by the poverty of the parents, but they could send their children to school if they were more provident.

Cottage accommodation is generally good. They have mostly four rooms of 10 to 12 feet square. They are owned by landowners, tradesmen, and others. The rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* a year.

One cottage per 100 acres is enough for the labourer and his family, the lads residing in the farm-houses as servants.

The schools in the parish are,—

NEWQUAY.

		No. of Children.
1. Mr. Reed } 2. Miss Hubben }	United Methodist	20 24
3. Mrs. Marshall - -		30
4. Wesleyan School -		25

A National school is being built here, capable of holding 150 children.

In other parts of the parish, exclusive of Newquay, there are,—

	No. of Children.
1. Wesleyan - - -	60
2. United Methodist - -	50
3. Bible Christians - -	50
4. Church Day School in Church Village - - -	40
5. Elementary Writing and Ciphering School in Church Village - - -	50
6. Trencuick Village - -	30
7. Quentral Downs - -	12 to 15

The parish being a scattered one there are schools in all parts. There are also Sunday schools.

I have a night school in winter open for two hours on four nights a week, where writing and ciphering are taught.

CARNANTON.

344. *Humphrey Williams, Esq.*

Girls' School in the Park.—70 on the books, many of whom come four miles to school. Their writing from dictation was good and quick, and the spelling very correct. Most of these girls go out to service. There is an infant school at Mawgan, where 14 attend, and a boys' school at Mawgan; number in attendance, 40.

Mr. Williams thinks that there *is* a desire among the labouring class to avail themselves of a good school, and if means of education are given them they will take advantage of them.

345. MEETING at St. Columb-Major, April 29, 1869.

The chair was occupied by Mr. R. H. S. Vyvyan, and amongst those present were—Messrs. G. B. Collins, St. Columb; the Rev. Mr. Williams, curate of St. Columb; Moorman, St. Columb; W. Menhennick, jun., Trelil; W. Hocking, Pengelley; T. Key, jun., Boddellick; W. Rowse, Trebridannon; John Rowse, Trebridannon; T. Hicks, Tregamere; W. Williams, Hill-head; M. D. Broad, Rosurrants; J. Henwood, Trewince; R. Cardell, Trebelzue; J. Searle, Legonna; W. Johns, Trethingey; J. Rowe, Trenissick; J. Hellyer, Trevuzza; M. Richards, Trewinion; E. S. Carus-Wilson; G. Tom, Trethewey; J. Ruudle, Trethewiel; J. Hicks, Trevilgas; T. Hawkins, Tredinnick; R. Cobeldick, Gluvian; J. Steeper, Denzil; R. Williams, St. Merryn; W. T. Hellyar, St. Merryn; T. Rowe, Cargoll; W. Rickeard, Trenance; John Williams, Porthmissen; J. H. Key, Treravil; J. Tredwen, Cross House; W. Brewer, Churchtown; J. L. Hicks, Rostiggon; J. Clemo, Padstow; J. Hawkey, St. Issey; J. P. Davies, St. Columb; W. Langdon, St. Enoder; W. Gatley, St. Columb; T. Andrew, St. Columb; W. Bennetts, St. Stephens; J. Robins, Withiel; F. Paynter, St. Issey; Rashleigh, St. Columb; Cornish, St. Columb, &c.

Mr. Moorman, surgeon, said he was of opinion that the employment of children in agricultural pursuits did not injuriously interfere with their health, but he thought there was great reason why young children should not be employed on farms where machinery was used, because of the danger to which they were exposed. He was further of opinion that children should not be put to work under the age of 10 years.

Mr. G. B. Collins remarked that as a rule in the St. Columb district the labourers did not save anything out of their wages, although there were instances in which it was done. With regard to the dwelling-houses, his belief was that generally they did not contain more than two bedrooms, but he was strongly of opinion that no cottages should have less than three. There were cases in which there was only one bedroom in a cottage, and in cases of that kind it must be apparent that the effect upon the different members of the family of both sexes must be most demoralizing. He had no doubt in his own mind that a great deal of the illegitimacy which prevailed arose from that state of things. Mr. Portman had alluded to the fact that he had seen a large number of women and children at work picking stones, but it so happened that that gentleman had visited the neighbourhood just at the very time when the women and children were employed. It only lasted for two or three weeks, and they were not so engaged during any other part of the year. He did not think that in the St. Columb district there was any necessity for legislative interference. There was a want of schools throughout the district.

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h.

Mr. Carus-Wilson agreed with Mr. Collins that schools were wanted in the district, for it was a sad truth that there was scarcely an efficient school in the whole place, and he hoped it would soon be remedied. There was very little employment of women and children out of doors excepting just at this time of the year. As to the cottage accommodation he did not think there was any very great complaint to be made respecting that.

Mr. Cornish asserted that the majority of the cottages in the parish contained only two rooms, one upstairs and the other down, and the boys and girls of the family all laid down in one room. It was a shocking state of things, and something ought to be done in the matter.

Mr. John Rowse considered that if Mr. Cornish had extended his visits to the cottages of the labourers throughout the district, instead of confining himself to St. Columb only, he would have formed a different opinion as to their condition. He agreed with the other gentlemen who had spoken, that the means of education in the district were difficult, but at the same time he did not think that any legislative interference was necessary. Very few boys were employed under the age of 12 years, and as for women and girls it was with great difficulty that they could be got at all. Their ordinary wages were 8*d.* a day. The hours of the labourers were from half-past 7 or 8 in the morning until 5 in the evening.

Mr. W. Rowse was of opinion that every cottage should have three bedrooms, but he would have an Act of Parliament preventing the people from taking in lodgers.

The *Rev. Mr. Williams* considered that education in St. Columb was very defective. There were no schools there at all, with the exception of that which was called the National school, and the dissenters objected to send their children there, and he believed they never would succeed in getting good schools until unity existed among the inhabitants. He bore out the statement of Mr. Cornish respecting the dwelling houses of the poor. The floors were as damp as the roads outside; they were in a most abominable condition, and were a disgrace to those to whom they belonged.

Mr. Rowe was of opinion that any system of education introduced by Government should be non-sectarian.

Mr. J. Hawkins, of St. Ervan, stated that in Rumford, part of the parish of St. Ervan, there were 15 cottages with only one room down and one bedroom; and that the school established under Government regulations is now closed. He thought there was great need of a better system of aid for education.

The following resolution was carried:—"That it "is not desirable that children under 10 years of "age should be constantly employed in agricultural "pursuits."

The question of requiring a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance, or of certain attainments to be produced by any child previous to employment was discussed, and it was the opinion of the meeting that such a scheme would not be acceptable.

Mr. J. H. Vyvyan stated that he had built a block of five cottages of stone, with slate roof, for 200*l.*

ST. COLUMB MAJOR UNION.

Population, 16,552 - Acreage, 71,126.

346. *G. Collins*, union clerk.—In the spring children of either sex and of all ages are engaged in picking stones for a week or two; but, with this exception, boys are but little employed before 11 years of age, and girls rarely or never. Women are employed a little in the spring stone-picking with the children, and weeding in the hay and harvest fields. They are employed occasionally in summer, upon the root crops in autumn, and in the barns in winter. They have to go about a mile to their work. They work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is quite unnecessary to place any restriction upon the age at which boys should be permitted to work in the fields, or upon the employment of females.

The means of education are very limited throughout the union, and I consider not so much used or appreciated as they might be.

Cottage accommodation is very indifferent as a rule. Few have more than two bedrooms, many only one. This must necessarily have a demoralizing effect. There is no rule as to gardens, and many are without any. The allotment system does not prevail in the district, but labourers generally take land for their potato crops every year. There is a Cottage Garden Society in the district, at which the cottagers compete for prizes; and they produce wonderfully fine vegetables.

347. *Mr. Broad*, farmer.—Girls are very seldom employed for farm work. Women are employed for stone-picking, weeding corn, &c. at 8*d.* a day. I employ two all the year round root cleaning, and working in the barn in the winter. Children also are employed for stone-picking a day or two on a farm at 6*d.* a day.

Wages for men are 11*s.* and 12*s.* a week, without corn.* A man living in a cottage on the farm, and employed all the year, gets 10*s.* a week with corn (harvest included), cottage rent free, 30 yards of garden, potato ground free, sometimes a cow to milk; he keeps a pig, and the manure goes to the garden.

This district is very badly off for schools, and even where they do exist there is great indifference on the part of the parents as to the education of their children. I do not think that if children under 10 years were forbidden to work the loss of earnings would cause any hardship to the parents.

Some cottages are built of cob and thatched. There is a great want of privies for the dwellings of the poor.

ST. COLUMB MAJOR.

Population, 2,875 - Acreage, 12,000.

348. *T. Allanson*, farmer.—The cultivation is mixed. Boys are employed occasionally at 10 years of age, but more generally at 11 and 12. Very few girls work on farms, except for about a few days, in the spring of the year, picking stones. They are then joined by their mothers and children, sisters. Young females do occasionally weed corn in the spring, and occasionally assist in the harvest fields, both at hay and corn harvest. Women are employed four or five days stone-picking in the spring; a day or two in the week in the barn threshing corn, from September to April; a week or two at turnip-hoeing in July; two or three weeks in the harvest; and a few days in the fall and winter in turnip drawing and cleaning. They seldom live more than a mile from their work; oftener they live on the farm, or in the village connected with the farm. Their hours are from 8 to 5. No harm accrues to any children here by over-work at an early age, but if any restriction were made, it should be that no boys should be allowed to work on the land under 10 years of age, except for a few days for stone-picking, or for driving plough horses. They often do service by driving the horses in threshing machines. I would not place any restriction upon the employment of females. No immorality or bad health arises here from the employment of females in agriculture.

Education is badly provided for. Early labour seldom prevents any from going to school. The cottages are sufficient in number, and conveniently situated. They are not generally overcrowded. Occasional instances of immorality seem to have resulted from overcrowding. There are gardens generally attached to the cottages. There are also allotments of land for potatoes.

* A Cornish bushel is equal to three imperial.

St. Columb Major.

Population, 3,000 - Acreage, 12,046.

349. *John Rowse*, farmer.—The central portion of this parish is chiefly rich grazing land, surrounded by some useful arable and pasture lands. The outskirts contain large tracts of, what was till recently, waste land, but a considerable number of acres is now in course of cultivation. Boys are employed from 11 to 12 years of age. They are employed in the winter in cattle yards, and, during the summer, weeding and picking stones on land recently cultivated. Girls are occasionally employed during the summer, about the same age as boys, picking stones and weeding. Women are mostly employed with the girls about similar work; they are also, to some extent, employed during hay and corn harvest. They seldom have to go more than a mile to their work. They work from 8 to 5, with an hour for dinner. I do not think it desirable to place any restriction upon the employment of females, or upon the age at which boys should be employed in agriculture.

The means of education here are very defective. There is what is called the National school, but this is a disgrace to the parish, and is badly attended. The parish is extensive, and about one half of the inhabitants live in the central part of the town, and the other portion in villages scattered about. There is the Established Church and no less than 11 dissenting places of worship in the parish, with a Sunday school attached to each, and most of the children are taught to read the Scriptures.

Some of the old cottages are very poor, but they are quite sufficient in number, and mostly conveniently situated. In a few cases they are much overcrowded, and some instances of gross immorality have resulted. There is an excellent supply of water throughout the neighbourhood. Nearly all the cottages in the country parts of the parish have large gardens, and those labourers who are in regular employment have potato ground in addition on the farms.

In the southern part of the parish a great many labourers are employed on the china clay works in this and the adjoining parishes; many boys and girls, from the age of 11 and upwards, are also employed.

350. *Rev. J. Williams*, curate.—The parish of St. Columb is seven miles long. There is one bad school in the church town, a small school at Quoit, and a dame's school at Talskitty. Education is at a very low ebb, and progress is stopped by the question of religious instruction.

St. Columb School.

351. *C. Coade*, master.—There is no endowment, and no Government grant in aid.

On register, 88. Average attendance for year, 50–60. There are very few boys or girls above 10 years of age in attendance. Many of both sexes are now out stone-picking. I have no record of the age of the children. Children of all denominations are admitted. There is a Sunday school. I once tried a night school, but it did not answer; the boys came in the first winter, some as old as 16 and 17 years, and after that the attendance gradually decreased. The payment was 3*d.* a week. One and a half mile is the longest distance that any child comes to the day school.

ST. MINVER.

Population, 1,100 - Acreage, 8,000.

Cultivation chiefly arable, with occasional meadows and cliff runs.

352. *Thomas Liddell, Esq.*—I employ one or two boys all the year round. They are seldom less than 10 years old. Boys are generally employed in the parish at a proportion of 1 to 100 acres. Girls are also employed in about the same proportion and at about the same age. In the winter the girls assist in the barn, and in the spring and summer they are employed in weeding, hoeing, haymaking, and harvesting. Women are more largely employed than girls, say two to 150 acres. The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The distance to work averages under a mile.

Wages for a man are 10*s.* a week, and wheat at 6*s.* 8*d.* a bushel, wood for the cutting, and 20 yards of potato ground; for women, 7*d.* and 8*d.* a day; boys and girls, 6*d.* a day. Lads living in the farmhouses from 12 to 13 years of age begin with 2*l.* 10*s.* a year, and board and lodging, and the pay is raised perhaps 1*l.* a year as they get older.

I am not in favour of legislative interference with, or of any legal restriction on, the employment of children.

There is a very good school in the centre of the parish, with upwards of 100 names on the books; but there is no great desire for education among the parents of the labouring class. In some farmhouses the lads are taught a little in the evening; but they are generally too tired after their work to read much.

The condition of the cottages is not all that could be desired. They mostly have two bedrooms, but few have privies. There are sufficient for the supply of labour, and they are tolerably well situated for the work of the farms. No evil results from overcrowding have come under my knowledge. Rent, with garden, 40*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* a year. Nearly every cottage has a garden, and in addition the labourers obtain ground cultivated in the fields for the growth of their potatoes.

There are some farms of 300 and 400 acres; also some of 50 acres and under.

One man who lived with me for seven years saved money, and now farms from 50 to 60 acres. Another who lived with me for three years and then went to the mines now has a farm of 100 acres.

Tredrissick School.

353. *John W. Anning*, master.—A mixed school. No. on register, 112. Average attendance about 78. They are mostly agricultural children. The longest distance to school is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The oldest boy in the school is 14 years of age. They generally go to farm service at 12 years. The thinnest attendance is in the spring, when the boys go out to the fields for potato-dropping.

The night school was so badly attended that it was discontinued.

A compulsory system of education would not be liked in this district.

354. *Joseph Mably*, 10 years old.—I have been out potato-dropping and stone-picking for two years. I began by earning 3*d.* a day; I now get 6*d.* I have been stone-picking with two women and four other boys.

ST. KEW.

Population, 1,182.

355. *Rev. J. Every.*—This parish is a very large one, with a very small population round the church, but containing many scattered hamlets. The good and industrious people send their children to schools; but the idle parents will never do any good for their children, even if they were paid to send them to school.

St. Kew School.

356. *Jacob Stone*, certificated master.—On register, 90. Average attendance, 50. I have been at work here 10 months. When I came there were 15 children on the books. The oldest boy here is 15 years of age. I have had some of 18 and 19 years. I tried a night school, but it did not answer. Girls of 6 and 7 years old go out stone-picking, and earn from 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day.

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The parents seem disposed to send their children to school, except when they can earn anything in the fields.

N. Bray, 13 years old.—I have been in farm-service. I got 3*l.* a year.

WADEBRIDGE.

357. *R. Pollard*, large farmer.—In the Bodmin Union relief for children ceases at 10 years of age if the health of the child permits it to work. There are no gangs in this district. Small children earn 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day stone-picking. I do not think such employment is bad either for their health or their morals.

The wages of a man in regular work are 10*s.* a week, and a cottage rent free, fuel, and potato ground. Wheat at 20*s.* and barley at 10*s.* the Cornish bushel. The men and their wives ask to have the corn. The regular men are better off than the jobbers at higher wages. Women and children are employed to a great extent for stone-picking, pulling charlock, &c.

There is a class of small farmers who are in many instances worse off than the labourers, and cannot spare children's work for the sake of education. It is very desirable that the Government should give grants in aid of education to small rural parishes, whether the teacher be certificated or not. I am opposed to compulsion or quasi-compulsion. The voluntary system is working well. I believe the desire for education to be increasing among the labouring class, and all that is wanted is some furthur assistance in the poorer districts.

Any legislation as to the employment of labour in agricultural districts should be elastic.

PADSTOW.

Population, 2,489 - Acreage, 3,239a. 1r. 29p.

358. *J. Hocking*, land agent.—The cultivation is mixed. Woman and girls are not employed. I think boys should not be permitted to be employed in farm work under 11 years of age. There is a National school here, which the parents avail themselves of.

The cottages here are good, sufficient in number, conveniently situated, not overcrowded, and well supplied with water. Some have gardens, some allotments.

359. Extract from letter from C. Prideaux Brune, Esq., to Hon. E. Portman :—

Prideaux Place, Padstow,
April 22, 1869.

Sir,

There are really in this parish no women or children employed permanently in agriculture; a very few women are employed occasionally in picking stones and weeding. The fact is, that the great majority of boys are apprenticed to shipbuilders and other tradesmen, and the residue are sent to sea. If we require a farm labourer we have to introduce him into the parish, and we find that he in his turn disposes of his family in the manner before mentioned.

Your obedient Servant,
C. G. Prideaux Brune.

MICHAELSTOW.

Population, 216.

360. *Rev. J. Kingdon.*—Children are employed in groups in stone-picking on the farms at 8*d.* a day each. They are also employed very young at the Delabole slate quarries in St. Teath parish, and their education is very much neglected.

Boys go to farm service at 10 or 12 years of age and live in the farm houses.

There is a great scarcity of labour in this parish. Wages for a regular man are 12*s.* a week, for a job man 15*s.*

The attendance at the school is larger in winter than in summer, but the children are taken away too young owing to the indifference of the parents about their education. There is a night school in winter attended by farm lads.

Women do not go to field work, probably on account of the high wages earned by the men.

In the neighbouring parish of St. Bernard there are large granite works.

Cottages are substantial and good; they mostly have two bedrooms; there is a garden attached to all, privies are wanting; the material, slate and granite, is at hand. Rent 1*s.* a week to 3*l.* a year. I think an Act for regulating the employment of children is much to be desired, and for securing education compulsion is necessary.

The hours of work are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer, and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter.

LANTEGLOS.

Camelford.

361. *Rev. J. J. Wilkinson.*—The cultivation is mixed. There are no private gangs. The persons employed in agricultural labour live at an average distance of a mile from this work. The men work from 7 to 5; the women from 8 to 5. They are allowed one hour for dinner. No efforts are made here for the industrial training of girls.

The cottages here are conveniently situated in little hamlets, and scattered. They are overcrowded. There is not sufficient bedroom accommodation. Most have small gardens. Rent is on the average 1*s.* a week. They are not held on lives as a rule; many belong to small tradesmen.

School Statistics.

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys :		
Under 10 - -	6	4
Between 10 and 13 -	4	4
Total - -	10	8
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	3	3
Between 10 and 13 -	3	2
Total - -	6	5

In Winter.

Boys :		
Under 10 - -	7	5
Between 10 and 13 -	5	4
Total - -	12	9
Girls :		
Under 10 - -	5	3
Between 10 and 13 -	8	4
Total - -	13	7

There has been an evening school in this parish but it is discontinued. Attendance falls off after a short time when it ceases to be a novelty.

Women and children are very little employed in agriculture in this district; some few go out stone-picking and weeding corn in the spring. Wages for an agricultural labouring man are 1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* a day, for women 8*d.* a day, for children 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day.

There are some small holdings under the Duchy, where the moors are being reclaimed.

A restriction on the employment of children under 10 years of age would not much affect this district. The farmers are opposed to much education for the labourers, and I think there would be a difficulty in carrying out any system requiring the production of a certificate of school attendance previous to hiring.

KILKHAMPTON.

362. *Rev. A. C. Thynne*, diocesan inspector of schools.—The district is partly in Devon and partly in Cornwall; it contains 29 parishes in which there are 11 schools under inspection, six being in Cornwall; nine parishes decline inspection.

Cottages.

363. Row of eight, property of the Rev. Lord John Thynne, built of stone with slate roof, brick floor. Down, two rooms and backhouse; up, two good bedrooms, ceiled and with one fireplace; woodhouse, pigsty, and privy, small garden. Rent 3*l.* a year, and outs 6*s.* a year.

The two end houses of the row have two rooms on ground floor, the kitchen being rather larger than in the other cottages.

Two cottages property of a carpenter. Down, one room and backhouse; up, two bedrooms, no fireplace; with a garden, no privy. Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* a year.

Row of four (Lord J. Thynne), lately built, stone and slate, very good. Down, two kitchens and pantry; up, three bedrooms, with one fireplace; privy, pigsty, and woodhouse. Rent with garden 3*l.* a year.

364. *Mr. Trickey*, Stowe Farm.—Boys are not employed in the fields before 10 years of age; any restriction on such employment before that age would not affect this district.

An agricultural labourer's wages are 10*s.* a week if paid all in money, or 9*s.* with cottage and garden, or sometimes 8*s.* a week and corn at a fixed price. I prefer paying all in money.

I have some cottages attached to my farm and let with it; two new ones have each three bedrooms though rather small.

The hiring day for yearly servants is Old Christmas day; the lads or their parents go round to the farm houses seeking employment.

Women earn 4*s.* a week in fieldwork. I do not think women's labour would be so very much missed as far as the cost of farming operations is concerned, if it ceased altogether; there are a few small jobs such as weeding corn and stone-picking which they can do as well as men. Girls are very rarely employed. Hours of work are from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Cornwall.

Mr. Portman.

h.

365. *Mrs. Walter* and *Mr. Galsworthy*, farmers.—Boys lodge in the farmhouses, as there are not enough cottages; they are hired by the year and generally change places every year. Women are not so much employed in the fields as they used to be, you can't get them to go out. Sometimes children as young as 7 years of age are employed, but as a rule few are taken under 10 or 11 years.

Wages for yearly lads 4*l.* 10*s.* to 8*l.* and 9*l.* a year according to age; for an ordinary man 9*s.* and a bag of corn a week, for a carter 10*s.* a week and cottage free; wood for the cutting drawn for them, broth and milk at dinner. Wages are paid once a month unless the men wish for it weekly. With a good master we think the privileges are a great advantage to the labourer.

The best educated young men go away to the police and other employments than that of the farms; "those who have got any brains get away."

Lads in farm service do not take any pains to keep up their education, they have no heart for learning. Mrs. Walter said she had often offered them pen and ink and writing materials, but they won't use them. There would be great difficulty in carrying out any system of compulsory attendance at night schools on account of the distance from the farms to the village and the necessity of having the lads to do up the horses and cattle from 8 to 9 in the evening. Any restriction on the employment of children under 10 years of age would not affect this district.

366. *J. F. Delmar, Esq.*, Stratton.—The cultivation of this district is four-fifths arable and coarse pasture.

There are no private or public gangs. Boys are generally taken on the farms about 10 years of age and are employed to clean cattle-sheds and to take the cows to and from the field.

Women and girls are employed in the fields in spring and summer in planting potatoes, picking stones, cutting weed in the corn.

Hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with one or one and half hours for meals and rest. The distance to a dame's or National school is under two miles.

The cottages in the district are very indifferent; in one instance a landlord has been improving, but the others do but little for them; it is a poor district. The present mode of borrowing money under Lands Improvement Act is very cumbrous and expensive, the expenses being much and unnecessarily increased by surveyors' visits and during the progress of the work.

Legislation as to the employment of children under 10 years of age would not affect this district. Any system of compulsory education would be distasteful to the people.

APPENDIX.

Education of Agricultural Labourers.

Important Meeting, January 1869.

The *Callington* Club and Institute have just held meeting at which the education of agricultural labourers was discussed in connexion with the Government inquiry into the employment of women and children in agriculture. There were present the Earl of Morley, Colonel Coryton, Major Strode, Messrs. W. H. Pole Carew, D. W. Horndon, R. Foster, jun., H. Jackson, J. Kempthorne, the Rev. Sir St. Vincent Hammick Buck, J. B. Kitson, Dr. Fletcher, C. Rodd, R. Martin, F. V. Thornton. C. M. E. Collins, E. F. Glanville, J .Coryton, Hullah, Vigor, Bush, Fenwick, Messrs. J. Peter, jun., E. Nicholls, W. Snell, J. W. Dingle, Clemence, Trehane, and many others.

The *Rev. F. V. Thornton*, having been voted to the chair, in opening the meeting said that the Callington Club and Institute had selected this subject for discussion at their annual meeting because of its pressing importance, and had invited others to the conference because the chambers of agriculture had selected other subjects for discussion. That they were right in doing so was made evident by the large numbers present, and the regret expressed by those who were unable to attend. He read the letters from the Earl of St. Germans, Lord Eliot, Lord Northbrook,

Cornwall.

Mr. Portman.

h.

Sir J. S. Trelawney, M.P., Messrs. T. J. Agar Robartes, R. Kelly, and others, expressing hearty concurrence in the objects of the conference. He said that the history of the movement was soon told: the success of the Factory Acts led to the repression of agricultural gangs as soon as attention was called to the scandals connected with them. This led to inquiry into private gangs, and generally into the evils connected with agricultural labour. Whether legislative interference was necessary or desirable was one part of the question before them; the other part being whether more could not be done to remedy those evils by the voluntary agencies already at work. In this matter the individual experience of each would, if told to all, help on the common work. He had been connected with evening schools for thirty years, and had found them meet the evil in many cases. In his parish in Hampshire the farmers had been persuaded to employ no boys under 10 nor girls under 15 years of age. The boys at 10 had acquired such a foundation in a school unusually good that they made great progress in the evening schools, and he had always found boys able to work in the winter in evening schools as the hours of labour are then shorter than in the summer. After a few years the farm boys were to a great extent boys born in the parish, for the farmers preferred the educated boys, and the boys preferred remaining near their school. But there were four large farms close to the school, so that the circumstances were unusually favourable. In the same parish there was a farm only three-quarters of a mile off with a good road, and until the farmer began to employ the boys who had been in the village day school he never succeeded in persuading one boy to come to the evening school from that farm; while those employed in a more distant farm could have had no instruction had not the lady of the house, the farmer's sister, been able and willing to teach them. In more scattered places the difficulties in the way of efficient evening schools were very great, and a part of the business of the day was to suggest ways of overcoming those difficulties.

The *Earl of Morley* remarked on the importance of these preliminary meetings to prepare the public for the visit of the Commissioner, and to facilitate his operations. The Commission had been issued in consequence of the scandals of public gangs, and the scope of its inquiry had been extended in consequence of other evils which were more widely spread. The inquiry must of necessity be general, as if there be any legislation on the subject it should be uniform throughout the kingdom. The general results arrived at by the inquiry as far as it had gone were that children are not often employed permanently on farms until 10 years of of age, but that they are very frequently employed irregularly from 7, or even earlier; the very early age at which some worked impaired their health in after life, while the frequent absences from school hindered them from making progress. The school age ends at 10, sometimes at 9. In Yorkshire 74 per cent. of the school children are under 10. In Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire 63½ per cent. are under 9, only four per cent. over 13 years of age; and in the opinion of the great authority, Mr. Fraser, the age had been steadily diminishing. It is true that in Devon and Cornwall very few children comparatively are employed at so early an age. (Applause.) The number of children in these counties examined in the higher standards (from four to six) is above the average. It is 31 per cent., while in the rest of England it is only 24 per cent. But, on the other hand, these counties suffer from another evil, and that is irregular attendance. In Devon and Cornwall only 67 per cent. of the children in school are daily attendants. Now, the result of this early labour must be bad for the health of children, and it is impossible but that their irregular attendance and early withdrawal from school should prevent their getting any real education. No one need be afraid of over education. He was not an advocate for over education; all that he pleaded for was a fair amount of reading, writing, and power to use the elementary rules of arithmetic. (Applause.) Even this is not yet attained, and the causes are in some cases the need of labour; in others, and much more frequently, the apathy of parents, who being uneducated themselves do not care for education for their children. But there are also two other causes which require attention. The one is the poverty of parents; in those counties of the north where the wages of the agricultural labourer are the highest these evils are much less than where the poverty of the parents compels them to desire that their children should earn wages as soon as possible; and the other is the distance at which many families live from the nearest school. There can be no doubt that the present state of things is not what we should desire; and the question is whether any legal remedy would be an unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the subject. Now the Factory Acts establish the principle of State interference in some cases; a great outcry was made against them at first, but they have worked well. The remedies therein applied are, however, not applicable to agricultural labour. The half-time system appears to be impossible, from the scattered position of the population, as well as from the difficulty of inspection and irregular character of out-door work. When one labourer is wanted all are wanted. (Applause.) The Workshops Regulation Act is equally inapplicable; but it is possible that something like the Printworks Act might be of use. That Act requires 150 hours' attendance at school in the year. It would on the whole be desirable to have some legislation on the subject, such as would restrict the employment of boys under 10, would ensure regular attendance before that age, and would enable a child to give some time to school for two years more; and it is possible that some such scheme could be framed which would not interfere unduly with the requirements of the employers of labour or with the necessities or rights of parents. (Applause.) At the same time it is clear that there are great difficulties in the way of framing and also of enforcing such a law. Any statement of difficulties will be valuable, and one thing is quite clear, that the inquiry is important, and that the Commissioner ought to be assisted in that inquiry. He therefore moved "That "every help be given to Her Majesty's Commis- "sioners in their inquiry into the employment of "women and children in agriculture with a view to "ascertaining whether any of the provisions of the "Factory Acts should be extended to such persons." (Applause.)

Mr. W. H. Pole Carew seconded the motion. He was himself very jealous of legislation, especially where it touched not only the rights employers, but the rights of parents. Some of the worst evils did not exist in that neighbourhood, and the poverty of the parents made it unjust to deprive them of the additional earnings of their children. (Applause.) He would rather look to the influence of public opinion to correct the evils which did exist. He disliked any approach to the French system of perpetual interference on the part of the State. It was possible that the evils spoken of might be much worse elsewhere than here. If so, those greater evils might be stopped by law. It was possible for the legislation to be applied there only where it was needed. But this did not affect the desirableness of inquiry, and he was sure that the Commissioner would find everyone ready to give him all the information in his power. (Applause.)

Mr. H. Jackson, fellow and lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, said that he had one difficulty in speaking on the subject, which was that he knew little from personal experience of the condition of the agricultural labourer. But it might be worth while to hear what those thought on the matter who like himself were engaged in education as a profession. He not only read of it, but saw the superiority of the labourer in the north and in the towns over the ordinary agricultural labourer, and this superiority was owing to education. (Applause.) He believed himself that some scheme of compulsory education

was necessary. [Here a voice in the crowd asked, "Who is to pay?"] What is the good of asking for ever who is to pay? (Laughter.) We are to pay, you are to pay. We are paying for something every day. Why not for this as well as for other things? some of them occasioned by not paying for this. (Applause.) He had not seen much of English agricultural life, but he had been staying in Bohemia, where they had compulsory education. No circumstances could be more unfavourable. The two divisions of the people were of different races, not speaking the same language, and they were very poor, far poorer than any in England, and yet they were enabled through the arrangements made for them to obtain a fair amount of instruction. One thing he could answer for, that those who had made education their profession would do all in their power to help any measure for its extension. He regretted that in the University local examinations the agricultural class were scarcely represented. He trusted that this would no longer be the case.

Mr. W. Snell believed that State interference was not needed to assist the spread of education. (Applause.) He found that his servants now could read and write sufficiently; if they were better educated they would want to go off as local preachers or teetotal lecturers. (Laughter.) For his part he was not there to oppose education, but he must say that the best servants he ever had could neither read nor write; they were the best educated too, for they understood the whole of their work and could do it. Farmers might be philanthropists, but they must be men of business, and they wanted men who could do their work. (Applause.)

Dr. Fletcher said that he rose to protest against the assertion of the last speaker, that a man was not a better labourer for being an educated man. He had much to say on the general question, but would now confine himself to the point before the meeting. A large amount of education was needed in this neighbourhood, and he trusted that the inquiry now making would end in the removal of some of the difficulties in the way of that extension. He thought that 11 years of age was a good age for boys to begin work on a farm. It was the age fixed in the Unions in this part of the country.

Mr. E. Nicholls said that he had no doubt that every facility would be given to the Commissioner in his inquiry, nor should there be any objection to legislation on the part of those resident in this county. The noble lord had said that legislation must be uniform throughout the country. Two other speakers had deprecated legislative interference as not needed in this part of England. It appears to him that both could have their way. A general law which repressed evils which existed elsewhere but not here could not affect the people of Cornwall, and they certainly ought not to oppose legislation which would not affect them, and would benefit others. He believed that these evils would not be removed without some scheme of compulsory education; but he was surprised that men should object to this on the score of rates. The great mass of our criminals could neither read nor write, and if education were extended the diminution of rates for gaols and other dealings with criminals would more than cover any probable educational rate. The farmers might lose their cleverest lads, but they would have a higher class of labourer than they had now. He was brought up in a farm, and used to teach the farm labourers, and one of them had now risen to a high position in the Post Office. He ridiculed the notion that compulsory education was un-English, and said that it would only affect the bad and neglectful parents, and this would be no hardship. (Applause.)

The *Chairman*, in putting the motion, said that he could not agree to the impression of some, that there were no evils in this neighbourhood to correct. He knew many of 15 and 16 years of age who could not read or write on account of the early age at which they had been sent to work.

The motion was then put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. R. Foster, jun., said that the gentleman who had been startled by the interruption of "Who's to "pay?" had evidently not spoken often in Cornwall on the subject. He had often had to meet that question, and it had been an ugly one; but he was no coward, and if there were an awkward question he liked to look it in the face, to get it into a corner, and make it give an answer. Now since he had been in that room he had received an answer to this question, and it was a very satisfactory one. He would tell them what it was. The Chairman had said that in an outlying farm in his parish in Hampshire the farmer's sister had held an evening class for the boys on that farm. There was nothing to pay. (Great applause.) Several societies would help to supply books; and if they all, all in that room, with all their wives and all their daughters, would give themselves to the work, it would be done, and done well. If they said they would not give their labour and their time, then he was afraid they must give money. But they must not quarrel with this, as a way had been pointed out to them of doing the work without paying anything. (Laughter.) He knew how much could be done by evening schools. They had a large one at Lostwithiel; it had been going on for seven years, and they had 93 men and boys in it. Some of their earliest scholars were now their best teachers, and some had risen through the instruction received there; one lad had, through his good writing, become a lawyer's clerk, and was doing very well. He agreed with the Chairman, that boys were not often too much tired for work. The change of occupation relieved them. Every now and then he saw a yawn, and begged the boy to go home and go to bed. They never went though, and were generally all the brighter next time. He had great pleasure in moving the second resolution, "That efforts be made to ex-"tend the benefits of evening schools and classes to "all young persons, especially to those engaged in "agriculture." (He sat down amidst continued applause.)

The *Rev. Sir St. Vincent Hammick, Bart.*, seconded the resolution. His experience differed from that of the last speaker, for he lived in a country district. His parish was widely scattered, but there were two centres which were available for the purpose. In each of these he had an evening school for two evenings in the week, and the progress made by the scholars was to him marvellous. When one considered the time, it was so short. Twenty-five evenings at an hour and a half gave but the same time for learning as one week and a half of a day school. What could be learned in eight days? And yet those who attended the evening schools regularly did learn, and he must say that he had found the attendance regular. In one of his evening schools his average attendance was 32, out of 36 on the books; and he was sure that a little tact was all which was needed to carry on such a work successfully. (Applause.)

The motion was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Hampshire.

Mr. Portman.

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HAMPSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.—EDUCATION FOR THE AGRICULTURAL CLASSES.

(*From the* Hampshire Chronicle *of Saturday, April* 17, 1869.)

Mr. Parsons.—The subject to which I have the honour to invite your attention is one of great importance to the interests of agriculture, though but incidentally connected with politics. It is "Educa- "tion as needed by and suited to the Agricultural "Labouring Classes." Now, it must be granted, that, with whatever of justice or injustice, the parties most interested in the prosperity of agriculture have been regarded (with the exception of the clergy) as constitutionally opposed to the promotion of education amongst their servants. In fact, that agriculture and education are bodies of heterogeneous principles, that like an acid and an alkali, or fire and water, they never can be made to amalgamate or coalesce. I am persuaded the speaker is not the only one present to whom the remark has frequently been made,—"Oh, "you farmers are always opposed to education." Now, Sir, it would be useless to assert that this charge is altogether groundless—that there is no foundation in fact for an opinion so widely extended and so firmly maintained. But the important inquiry to which I would invite earnest attention on the present occasion is—whether there may not have been something in the mode in which so-called education has been hitherto conducted which has led to this result. If there be in the agricultural mind such a prejudice against popular education, may not, at least, some part of that prejudice be ascribed to the inefficiency of the various systems hitherto adopted to raise the character and increase the efficiency of farm labourers? It is believed that such is the case, and that it is not an impossible, though, doubtless, a most difficult task to introduce such a system of training for the rural poor as shall tend to the improvement of their condition and the satisfaction of their employers. But in order to this, some great and radical change in the systems of instruction hitherto practised must be adopted. Before we enter more fully into the discussion of this subject, it may be well to review the position in which we stand at the present moment. An outcry has been raised that as respects the general intelligence and particularly the scholastic requirements of our operative ranks, we, in enlightened England, are far in arrear of Scotland, of the United States, of many counties on the continent of Europe, and even of Ireland itself. And the irresistible fiat of public opinion, as expressed in the leading journals of the day, and as recognised by our legislature, has gone forth that some more comprehensive and even stringent system of instruction for the people at large is required and must be supplied. Under this impression, the late Government very laudably set inquiries on foot, which will doubtless be carried on by the present one, as to the mode of achieving an education of the rural poor, which, while it shall raise their intellectual and moral character, shall not interfere with their social condition, nor prove inimical to the interests of their employers. For this purpose, the Hon. Mr. Portman recently visited this and adjacent counties, and an opportunity was afforded to our cultivators to express their opinions and to make suggestions for the consideration of the Executive Powers. This opportunity was but partially embraced by those interested in agriculture in this neighbourhood, and therefore it has been thought that the first meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture in Andover could not be more profitably occupied than in a discussion on this important subject. In introducing it to your notice it may be necessary first to define the word "education," as, unless we agree in our definition of the term, we shall be but fighting in the dark in our further consideration of the question. The word education is derived from two Latin ones, *e duco*, signifying to lead out of, and by this derivation I understand that its object is to lead the young (who, according to Scripture, are born like wild asses' colts) out of the state of ignorance and incapacity inherent to them by nature into a state of fitness for the discharge of all those duties in life allotted to them by an All-wise Providence. Now, if this definition be accepted, it will follow of course that the cry of being over educated, as applied to our operatives, labourers, or domestic servants, must fall to the ground, since it is obviously impossible that any can be too well qualified for the performance of the duties of life. It is not that they are over educated, but imperfectly educated, as we hope presently to show. It will be seen, too, that education means something more than instruction, for we believe that the confounding of these two words, and using them as synonymous terms, has led to much of the error and failure which has attended hitherto our systems of popular education, and which has given rise to the assumed prejudice against it in the agricultural mind to which we have already referred. It will follow, also, that whilst some parts of education may be carried on advantageously in the school, there are other and at least equally important parts in the training of boys for the various departments of cultivation, which can only be accomplished outside the walls of an academy. In order to gain a clear and definite idea of what is included in such an education as we should desire to see carried out amongst our rural population, it may be necessary to imitate the chemist, who makes us to know the real nature of bodies by making an analysis of their component parts. Education so analysed, we believe, will be found to consist of five separate branches, to each of which we must give a brief passing notice. These I regard to be 1, physical; 2, mental; 3, moral; 4, professional; and 5, spiritual. In the systems of education hitherto adopted, the second of these, or mental instruction, has been cultivated, if not to the exclusion of the others, yet with a prominence which has cast them into the shade; and thus education has been presented to the agricultural mind as a distorted thing. It has resembled the caricatures in *Punch*, which are almost all head, and have but the feeblest apologies for body or limbs, hands or feet. Now we all know that in the animal frame perfect health and vigour as well as beauty can only coexist with a symmetrical construction of the whole body. Is it to be wondered at, then, that systems of education so partial and defective should have failed to accomplish their intended purpose, or to enlist the sympathies and secure the co-operation of the agriculturists of this country? Moreover such a system as stimulates the brain only, and requires no exercise of the hands and feet, not only leaves the practical duties of life untaught, but it positively weakens the system, and disqualifies for success in after life. If we breed for flesh, form, silky coat, early maturity, and fattening properties, we must reckon upon some deterioration in milking qualities. It is equally true that a system of education which seeks the development of the mental powers only will not only neglect, but positively obstruct, the attainment of those physical and professional capacities which are essential to the efficiency of an out-door labourer. This truth may be elicited more fully by a brief survey of the five several branches of education just indicated, and in the harmonious combination of which its real success and highest value can alone be found.

I. *As to Physical Education.*—The training of the muscles, the limbs, and general constitution of the youthful peasant for the laborious duties and constant exposure to weather which are to be the lot of his future life. I presume no one in this assembly is so refined and sentimental as to deny that this is a matter of great importance. How many are the failures, disappointments, and early deaths which in

the higher walks of life have resulted from the neglect of this branch of education! The young aspirant for legal honours, whose knowledge of law and powers of eloquence qualify him for a high post indeed as a barrister, and even for the woolsack, yet as the result of too hard study and close confinement, has to drag his debilitated frame abroad, and spend his precious time in continental towns to repair the mischiefs wrought in his system. And very frequently a student comes forth from his college richly endowed with those literary stores and spiritual qualifications which would render him of eminent service as a minister of religion whose friends, having rejoiced in the success attending his first efforts, have too soon had to mourn his enfeebled health and premature death. Supposing that the Cambridge boatmen should spend their time till the day of the great race in close and ardent study, while the Oxford men should daily strengthen their nerves and muscles as well as increase their skill by practice on their noble river, it would require no prophet to foresee on whose side the victory must lie. And yet there have been found some advocates for school teaching so ardent, but withal so misguided, that they would have our country boys confined to the hot and close atmosphere of a schoolroom until the age of thirteen and upwards, and then sent out into the fields to perform the task of farm labourers. With what amount of success must be apparent to everyone. As well might you take the petted and pampered racer from his heated stable, strip him of his clothing, and expose him to all the toils, privations, and hardships of the costermonger's cart. If a compulsory form of education, then, be forced upon us, it will become the paramount duty of all who favour the agricultural interest to see to it that it be not extended beyond the age of ten years, and that even before that age every encouragement be given to out-door exposure and exercise. For this purpose I would have every schoolhouse to stand in an ample playground, and every playground to be furnished with appliances for gymnastic exercises and athletic sports. Much good might also be done by inculcating in the minds of parents the duty of seeking, by personal cleanliness, free ventilation, moderation in food and drink, and active exercise, to promote the future vigour and competency, and consequently the real welfare of their children.

II. *Mental Education.*—It can never be imagined that our Divine Maker, in distinguishing man from all the lower orders of creation by the endowment of an intelligent mind, capable of great achievements, but requiring exercise and instruction for its full development, ever intended that this intelligent mind should remain dormant and inactive. Solomon says, "That the soul be without knowledge it is not good." Indeed, we may say that man, if his mental powers be altogether stagnated through inaction, is in a worse position than the brutes, as their instinct affords them all the knowledge essential to their existence, while to place man in a similar situation some measure of teaching is requisite. It is true that this requisite degree of knowledge may be acquired without any book learning. Instances have occurred of individuals being very proficient in their callings, and highly exemplary in their moral character, without any measure of what is generally called education—that is to say, without school instruction. The best carter that ever I had, and the best domestic servant, were father and daughter, and neither could read nor write. On the other hand, the worst shepherd lad was one who had made the greatest proficiency at school, and had obtained prizes and honours there. Probably many present could relate a similar experience, and perhaps there may be some who would argue hence that we should have better servants without any education at all. Now, I do not believe that to be a sound inference at all. I do not believe that it was the inability of the carter and his daughter to read and write which made them such excellent servants ; on the contrary, I consider that with the same moral qualities and professional skill they would have been still more intelligently efficient had their minds been properly trained. Nor do I think that it was the book learning of the shepherd which made him so worthless, but the neglect of other branches of education essential to his success as a shepherd. That a reasonable amount of mental cultivation does not unfit for the duties of an agricultural labourer is proved from the character of such labourers in those counties to which I have referred as having outrun our own in the spread of education. In the United States the farming help is not heard to cry out as many of our men do, "Oh, I don't "know how to do that," when set about any work just without their usual routine, but to be expert in every part of farming labour, and moreover in some districts to spend many of the hours of their long chilly winter in performing the crafts of the blacksmith, carpenter, and harness maker. In Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria, the concurrent testimony of many competent witnesses attests that the classes employed in field labour are not only more intelligent, but also more active and industrious than with us. And those who have visited Scotland will probably have observed that, notwithstanding the evils of the bothy system, and that their fare is principally oatmeal porridge, potatos, and milk, still the stalwart highlanders will get through an amount of work which we might in vain expect from our southern labourers. By all means, then, let mental cultivation have its due share of attention. And this may certainly be accomplished, by the aid of night schools, Sunday schools, and free libraries, without the necessity of confining our boys to study so long as to unfit them for the duties of after life. In the mode of conducting this mental instruction some improvements might possibly be effected. I would have no boys taught at the public expense such things as are useful for mental training only, and afford no information which shall be valuable in after life ; such, for instance, as algebra, Euclid, or foreign or dead languages ; and above all, neither boys nor girls accomplishments which must be regarded as luxuries only, as fancy work, music, or drawing. Might not the mind be equally well trained in acquiring some knowledge of common things, and, in the case of more advanced pupils in the night schools, in the rudiments of mechanics, physiology, and botany, which might be turned to account in their future career ? After all, I believe that the failure of education as at present conducted to meet the requirements of the class before us arises not so much from the mode of conducting the mental training as from its exclusiveness. At Abbott's Ann we have the advantage of a clergyman of whom it may truly be said that for his intrinsic worth, faithful discharge of the duties of his sacred calling, and earnest devotion to the cause of education, he merits, as he enjoys, the highest respect and esteem of his friends and parishioners, and of a far wider circle throughout the country. The school there has been for many years most efficiently sustained by competent masters under the direct supervision of the rector. But if we were to judge of the merits of the system pursued there by its effects in improving the character of our agricultural labourers, it must be admitted to have proved a failure. This is not a mere matter of opinion, but is based upon incontrovertible facts. By far the larger proportion of the pupils trained there seek the engagements of their future life otherwise than in the pursuits of farm labour. Some become pupil teachers or enter gentlemen's service, or enlist into the army, and many obtain employment in the adjacent foundry. The consequence is that very few of the native youth hire themselves to the farmers as yearly servants, and the supply of these necessary helps has to be sought from the adjacent parishes. Now it is but reasonable to suppose that in those parishes where the young men and their families are so well known, the best hands are secured at home, and the less competent and worthy find their way to Abbott's Ann, so that

Hampshire.

Mr. Portman.

h.

our supply of really good servants is injured rather than benefited by this influence of our excellent school. I know well that I shall be told that this arises from the fact that good education, such as at our school, is the exception, and that when all other parishes are equally favoured this discrepancy will cease, and the proportion of supply and demand find its appropriate level. But we may at least retort that the tendency of the system is to disincline for farm labour, and that, though necessity may compel to accept such employ, yet the effect of such an education must be always to lead the pupils to seek situations in life in other spheres, which are at least supposed to confer greater ease, comfort, and respectability. Now let it not for a moment be supposed that I mean to infer that the school at Abbott's Ann is more to blame than other schools in this respect. I have heard it as the saying of some great man that if you want to know how to make a good cup of coffee you must visit every hotel, café, and refreshment-room in London, and then go home and make one just as they do not. Now I would say much the same as to schools for fitting lads for agricultural service. We have National, British, workhouse, and other schools, but in none of them may be found a system which promises success in this direction.

III. *Moral Education.*—Let me endeavour to illustrate my meaning here. It will be within the recollection of many present that upwards of 30 years ago, in a time of agricultural depression, when work was scarce and wages consequently low, a spirit of insubordination sprung up amongst the labourers of this and neighbouring counties. Mobs formed, and with riotous clamour went from farm to farm where a threshing machine was to be found, demanding its surrender into their hands to be summarily demolished. Not only have machines for threshing been multiplied and improved since that time, so as almost to supersede hand labour in that department, but machinery to lighten human toil has been introduced into other departments also. But at present we are in no danger of a visit from Swing, for the men have learned to look upon a new machine as a friend, relieving them of the hardest portions of their work, and introducing a new class of skilled labour which is more highly remunerated. Experience has in this case taught our peasantry a moral lesson, of which, in our present quiet security, we are reaping the benefit at this day. And surely the mind might be trained while such moral maxims are imparted. I have read that in the palmy days of slavery no religious teaching was allowed to be imparted to the negroes in the Southern States of America, but the duty of abject submission to their masters, and contentment with the station in which God had placed them. Now, I am not about to advocate such a narrow code of morals as this, but surely more prominence might be given in our teaching to the obvious fact that all immorality is not only a crime against society, but redounds to the injury of him committing it. This principle might be applied with profit to strikes, trades-unions, and all other unlawful combinations, the tendency to which is but too apparent at present. Much benefit might also result from a more careful supervision of the children when out of school, preventing much immoral influence being exerted the one upon the other.

IV. *Professional Education.*—It must be evident to all that casting up sums can never fit a boy to guide a plough, nor translating Horace for the higher branches of presiding over an intricate machine. We must learn to dig by digging and to plough by ploughing. And in no other department of labour is early introduction so essential as in labours on the farm. A person leaving school at 15 or 17 may be well initiated into the routine of a shop, the mysteries of a craft, or the duties of a profession; but it is not so with him whose duty is to be the care of horses, cattle, or sheep. Skill in these matters is well known to all farmers to partake more of the character of an instinct than a science. If the poet be born and not made, equally true is it that the skilful carter, or herdman, or shepherd, must have a natural fondness for the animal which he tends. Dutifulness may lead to the performance of the work required, but only devotion can furnish that interest and pride in the animals committed to his care which will ensure excellence, and this can never be attained except by a very early acquaintance with such duties. The failure of our workhouse schools to furnish servants useful in husbandry may be accounted for in this way. They are kept in the school too long to acquire tact and skill in farm labours. On the formation of the Frome Union, I, as one of the first batch of guardians, was invited to meet Mr. Weale, and consult as to the best mode of conducting the industrial training of the boys and girls. It was suggested that the trades of shoemaker, tailor, and carpenter, might be taught in the house; but a difficulty was felt in this was, that if we taught them to be skilful artizans an injustice would be inflicted on the children of the independent poor, while, on the other hand, if they were not made competent for self-support, it was but time and labour thrown away. I suggested that the workhouse should be assimilated to the cottage so far, that the boys should go out to work for any person who would employ them, and in any kind of work which they might prefer, their wages being received by the guardians, and one-third part reserved for a fund for an outfit, the boys meanwhile to receive instruction in the winter evenings and at other opportunities. This suggestion Mr. Weale did me the honour to lay before the central board, and sometime afterwards I was informed that the board considered this plan the best ever devised for making the boys self-supporting without doing injustice to others; but the danger was, that we should not keep the boys long enough to give them an education, and, moreover, it would be incompatible with the routine of the house. So red-tapism and routine prevailed here, as in multitudes of cases, over plans of practical benefit. I thought, in my simplicity, that the sooner the boys became self-supporting and independent of the rates the better. Now, Sir, I submit that in the rejection of this plan, and the non-adoption of some similar one, a monstrous injustice has been done to the agricultural interest. I knew a schoolmaster who used to send the boarders every Saturday afternoon to a neighbouring coppice to cut a bundle of sticks to be used on their own backs during the following week. Just so, the proprietors and occupiers of land have been called on to pay the largest proportion for the maintenance of pauper boys, and for their teaching by a system which excludes all the necessary professional training, and therefore unfits them for farm labours in after-life. The farmers themselves will be responsible for the success of efforts to promote this early professional training amongst our country juveniles. I know that it is not a pleasant thing to see a pack of boys breaking the hedges in their search for birds' nests, or interrupting the labourers in their work; but if we would have our lads to possess that deep interest in animals and rural affairs which is essential to their efficiency as farm servants, we must not be too severe with the youngster who is riding home from the field on a spare horse, nor drive others away too rudely from their gambols with the young lambs. Especially it will be incumbent on us to see that all boys are provided for, at remunerative wages, at the very earliest period at which they may be emancipated from enforced attendance at school.

V. *Spiritual Education.*—I have placed this last, not because I think it of least value, for indeed I regard it as of supreme importance, and believe a spiritual influence to be essential to the success of every means which may be employed for raising the character and promoting the real welfare of our labouring classes. But then I regard religion as the relation which subsists between a man and his Maker, and therefore as an influence to be felt rather than a science to be taught. As in our country districts there are few to be found who deny the divine

authority of our Holy Scriptures, I presume no objection ought to be felt to the reading of a portion thereof as a part of the school exercises of each day; but I would not have the Bible used as a class book, nor more especially would I have the committing portions of it to memory used as a punishment, and I would object to the teaching of creeds and catechisms of every kind as being calculated to excite disgust rather than respect, and to hinder rather than promote the cause of true spiritual culture. This branch of education, then, must be left mainly to the efforts and prayers of parents, of ministers of religion, and of every section of the Christian Church, to enlarge the sphere and promote the efficiency of their Sunday schools. For myself, I am opposed to compulsion both in education and religion; but if the attendance at the day schools be made imperative, I do not see that enforced attendance at some school on the Sunday would be an injustice. And now allow me to say a few words on the way in which this improved system of education should be made available to promote the interests of youthful farm labourers; and this I suggest should be by means of certificates, but differing in character from those which relate to school proficiency only. It is no slander on the tenant farmer to say that if a lad of the age of from 14 to 17 coming to him to be hired as a shepherd or carter should present a splendidly embellished certificate of prizes and honours gained at school, the result would probably be that the farmer would say, "Oh, you know too much for me," and close the door against him. But supposing this testimonial to include regular attendance at school, good moral character, and especially if it should comprise professional competency for the situation which he sought, I presume the case would be altered, and his certificate would tell for rather than against him. The certificate might be given first at the age of ten, and must at that time be confined, of course, to the character which the lad had borne at school; but it should be so framed as to extend over a period of four or five years, in which the holder might, if he had entitled himself to it, have an entry made each year by the teacher of the Sunday or night school which he had attended, and by the master whom he had served of his fidelity and proficiency whilst in his employ. With such a document in his hand I cannot but think that the youth would be regarded with favour and his services sought as an acquisition. I thank you Mr. President and gentlemen, for the patience with which you have listened to my rambling remarks. They lay no claim to merit in themselves, but may serve as decoy birds, to bring more valuable fowl into our net, and to elicit more important suggestions from those who shall take part in the discussion which is now invited, and from our able Chairman in his concluding remarks. I can only assure you that in bringing this subject before you, the speaker has been influenced by no other motive than the desire to promote the improvement of the labouring classes, the welfare of agriculture, and, through that, the peace and prosperity of our beloved country. It now only remains that I beg the adoption of this resolution:—"That in any measure of education which may be adopted for the benefit of the poor in rural districts, whilst mental instruction is not neglected, it is essential that prominence be given to such moral and practical training as shall fit them for the duties of after life' [loud cheers].

Mr. Norman.

i.

EVIDENCE accompanying Mr. NORMAN'S REPORT.

*** [I have arranged this evidence accompanying my report as follows, viz.: Section A. contains miscellaneous evidence. B. contains evidence relating to education mainly; a good deal which relates to education will, however, be found in other portions of the evidence, but so mixed up with evidence relating to other matters, that I have been unable to separate that relating to education from the rest. C. contains medical evidence. D. contains the evidence of labouring men, their wives, and children. E. contains the answers given to the questions contained in the printed circulars which I distributed. The evidence contained in each of these divisions is again subdivided into the portions relating to each particular county; and these subdivisions are printed in the alphabetical order of the counties from which they come, viz., Herefordshire, Surrey, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, and Worcestershire. The evidence relating to each county is printed according to the alphabetical order of the places from which it has been obtained. At the end of each section, except D., will be found a list of those gentlemen from whom I have obtained evidence which I have thought it unnecessary to print, because their opinions are substantially similar to the opinions expressed by other witnesses whose evidence has been printed.—F. H. N.]

INDEX TO EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX A.—MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Bosbury.
1. Rev. J. E. Cheese, Mr. A. J. Burrows, and Mr. R. Hickman.
2. Mr. J. Pitt.

Bridstow.
3. A. Armitage, Esq.

Brobury.
4. The Rev. S. Clark and Mr. J. Vaughan.

Bromyard.
5. Rev. N. Stephenson.

Clodock.
6. Rev. C. L. Eagles.

Dorstone.
7. Rev. D. Powell.

Eardisland.
8. Rev. J. Barker.
9. Mr. G. Yeld.

Felton.
10. Rev. H. T. Hill.

Fownhope.
11. Rev. T. West, Mr. J. Apperley, and Mr. C. T. Lechmere.

Hentland.
12. The Rev. W. Poole.

Hereford.
13. Mr. Edwin Day.

Kington.
14. Meeting.

Pipe-cum-Lyde.
15. Mr. J. Bosley.

Sellack.
16. Mr. T. Duckham.

Withington.
17. Mr. W. Taylor.

Whitney.
18*a*. Rev. H. Dew.

APP. A.—*cont.*

SURREY.

Abinger.
18*b*. Rev. J. W. Powell.

Addington.
18*c*. Mr. M. Walker.

Addlestone.
19. Rev. W. Pidcock.

Albury.
20. Rev. G. R. Portal.

Bramley.
21. Rev. H. B. Power.
22. Mr. W. Drewitt.

Byfleet.
23. Rev. N. L. Spicer.

Camberwell.
24. Mr. W. Barnes.

Carshalton.
25. Edward Galtland.
26. Mr. C. Simm.

Capel.
27. E. Kerrick, Esq.

Chobham.
28. Mr. F. Daborn.

Clandon.
29. Mr. R. Drewitt.

Cranleigh.
30. Mr. T. Street.

Dorking.
31. Rev. J. S. Bright.

Farnham.
32. Mr. J. Nash.
33. Mr. C. Carmichael.

Frensham.
34. J. Simmons, Esq.

Guildford.
35. Mr. T. Drewitt.

Godstone.
36. Mr. W. Chater.

Limpsfield.
37. Mr. H. Cox.

APP. A.—SURREY—*cont.*

Puttenham.
38. Mr. J. L. Hewitt.

Reigate.
39. Mr. R. Clutton.
40. Letter from do.

Ripley.
41. Major Onslow.

Seale.
42. Rev. W. L. Beynon.

Thorpe.
43. Rev. G. Drury.

Wanborough.
44. Rev. G. Chilton.

Windlesham.
45 (*a*). Rev. F. C. Fitton.
45 (*b*). Mr. J. Waterer.

Woldingham.
46. Mr. W. Harrison.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Alveston.
47. Sir R. N. Hamilton, Bt. and Mr. W. Gibbs.

Babington.
48. Mr. H. J. Carter.

Barford.
49. E. Greaves, Esq., M.P., Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Reading.

Bickenhill.
50. Mr. J. Smith.

Bishops Tachbrook.
51. Meeting held Dec. 8, 1868.

Chilvers Coton.
52. Mr. T. P. Evans.

Cubbington.
53. Mr. R. Bass.

Charlcote.
54. Mr. W. Dilworth.

App. A.—Warwickshire—*cont.*

Claverdon.

55. Rev. E. A. Kempson.

Eatington.

56. Mr. W. Lowe and Rev. G. H. Biggs.

Exhall.

57. Meeting.

Harbury.

58. Meeting.

Kenilworth.

59. J. Isaacs, Esq.
60. Rev. W. F. Brickmore.
61. Mr. T. Harris.

Kinwarton.

62. Rev. R. Seymour.

Meriden.

63. Board of Guardians.
64. J. Darlington, Esq.

Milcote.

65. Mr. J. C. Adkins.

Oxhill.

66. Mr. J. G. Ward.

Radford Semele.

67. Mr. E. Lythall and Mr. T. Horley.

Rowington.

68. Rev. B. P. Brodie.

Solihull.

69. Rev. P. M. Smythe.

Southam.

70. Meeting.

Stoneleigh.

71. Hon. and Rev. J. W. Leigh.
72. Mr. G. Jones.

Stratford-on-Avon.

73. Mr. J. S. Leaver.

Tysoe.

74. Rev. C. D. Francis.

Warwick.

75. Board of Guardians.
76. Mr. Thornett, Mr. Bone, and Mr. Stephens.
77. Chamber of Agriculture.

Whitnash.

78. Rev. J. R. Young.

Wellesbourne.

79. Mr. Ford, Mr. J. M. Mordaunt, and Mr. J. Moore.

Weston.

80. Mr. F. Wells.

Wiltshire.

Amesbury.

81. Mr. W. Long.

App. A.—Wiltshire—*cont.*

Ashton Gifford.

82. Meeting at Mr. Ravenhill's.
83. Rt. Hon. T. H. Sotheron Estcourt.
84. Do. do.

Avebury.

85. Mr. G. Brown.

Bishopston St. John.

86. Mr. E. Dibbins.

Bramshaw.

87. Mr. W. Rawlins.

Broughton Gifford.

88. Rev. J. Wilkinson.

Burbage.

89. Archdeacon Stanton.
90. Mr. W. H. Gale.

Calne.

91. Rev. J. Duncan.
92. Mr. J. Spencer.

Castle Combe.

93. Mr. B. Blake.
94. Rev. R. C. Christie.

Chippenham.

95. Mr. E. Little.

Downton.

96. Lord Nelson.

Draycot Cerne.

99. Rev. C. R. E. Awdry.

East Grafton.

100. Mr. Stagg.

East Knoyle.

101. Mr. J. C. Corbin.

Great Durnford.

102. Mr. S. Smith.

Heytesbury.

103. Mr. T. Wilce and Mr. Snelgrove.

Horningsham.

104. Rev. J. J. Jacob.

Latton.

105. Mr. E. Lane.

Manningford Bruce.

106. Mr. J. Stratton.

Orcheston St. George.

107. Mr. W. B. Canning.

Pewsey.

108. Mr. W. Fookes.

Preshute.

109. Rev. A. G. Bleeck.

Salisbury.

110. Messrs. Rawlence and Squarey.

Savernake.

111. C. G. Bolam, Esq.

Stratford.

112. Mr. E. Waters.

App. A.—Wiltshire—*cont.*

Wilcot.

113. Mr. L. Arnold.

Wilton.

114. Mr. W. Robson.
115. Mr. Eyres.

Winterslow.

116. Mr. W. Whitlock.

Wootton Rivers.

117. Rev. J. W. Brodribb.

Wroughton.

118. Mr. J. B. Bevan.

Worcestershire.

Bengworth.

119. Mr. G. Field.
120. Mr. W. Humphries.

Bransford.

121. Meeting.

Bromsgrove.

122. Meeting.

Broughton Hackett.

123. Rev. W. M. Sherwood.

Churchill.

124. Rev. R. P. Turner.

Claines.

125. T. G. Curtler, Esq.

Droitwich.

126. Rev. W. Lea.

Evesham.

127. Mr. F. P. Webb.

Fladbury.

128. Mr. C. Randall and Mr. W. Webb.

Hanley Castle.

129. Mr. Drinkwater.

Hartlebury.

130. Mr. H. H. Griffin.

Kings Norton.

131. Meeting.

Malvern.

132. Mr. H. Lakin.
133. Rev. J. B. Wathen.

Madresfield.

134. Rev. G. S. Munn.

Martley.

135. Rev. H. J. Hastings.
136. Mr. Rogers.

Overbury.

137. Mr. W. Creese.

Peopleton.

138. R. Varden, Esq.

Pershore.

139. Meeting.

Rock.

140. Rev. A. James.

Mr. Norman. i.

App. A.—Worcestershire—*cont.*

Stanford-on-Teme.

141. W. H. Cooke, Esq.

Upton Snodsbury.

142. Chamber of Agriculture.

Witley.

143. Mr. W. Morris and Mr. J. Twinberrow.
144. Rev. D. Melville.

Worcester.

145. Mr. Maund.

Appendix B.—Evidence relating to Education.

Herefordshire.

Ashperton.

1. Mr. Moss.

Bishops Frome.

2. Mr. T. Farmer.

Clodock.

3. Mr. J. Farr.

Leominster.

4. Mr. E. Gregg.

Pipe-cum-Lyde.

5. Mrs. Vaughan.

Treville.

6. Mrs. Lewis.
7. Note as to cottages.

Withington.

8. Miss Stride.

Woolhope.

9. A. Watkins.

Surrey.

Carshalton.

10. Mr. J. Bickford.

Cranleigh.

11. Mr. Mousley.

Farnham.

12. Mr. Dewdney.

Godstone.

13. Mr. P. Hardy.

Hatchford.

14. Rev. J. P. Norris.

Ockham.

15. Miss Lushington.

Reigate.

16. Surrey Association for Church of England Schoolmasters.
17. Mr. W. Beale.

Worplesdon.

18. Miss Stapley.
19. Lady Bovill.

App. B.—*cont.*

Warwickshire.

Coventry.

20. Warwickshire Church Teachers' Association.

Exhall.

21. Mr. Duck.

Harbury.

22. Mr. J. Shenston.

Keresley.

23. Mr. J. T. Jones.

Lea Marston.

24. Rev. L. Tuttiett.
25. Letter from do.
26. Mr. S. Neale.

Rowington.

27. Mr. Johnson.

Saltley.

28. Rev. Canon Gover.

Solihull.

29. Mr. D. Bond.

Snitterfield.

30. Mr. I. E. Baker.

Tysoe.

31. Mr. Dodge.

Wiltshire.

Amesbury.

32. Mr. E. W. Flower.

Bishopston.

33. Mr. Knight.

Broad Chalk.

34. Mr. S. Bottomley.

Calne.

35. Mr. J. Brooks.
36. Miss Baker.

Christian Malford.

37. Mr. B. South.

Corssley.

38. Mr. J. C. Turner.

Downton.

39. Mr. G. Pearse.
40. Mr. T. Read.

Great Bedwyn.

41. Rev. G. D. Hodgson.

Longbridge Deverill.

42. Rev. Prebendary Morrice.

Salisbury.

43. Church Schoolmasters' Association.

Swindon.

44. Mrs. Goddard.

Warminster.

45. Mr. Grosse.

White Parish.

46. Mr. W. H. Williams.

Wilton.

47. Mrs. Cope.

App. B.—*cont.*

Worcestershire.

Alvechurch.

48. Mr. Mathie.

Bengworth.

49. Mrs. Webb.
50. Mr. Webb.

Berrow.

51. Mr. Plowman.

Droitwich.

52. Rev. W. Lea.

Evesham.

53. Mr. G. S. Barker.

Great Witley.

54. Miss Greatwood.

Martley.

55. Mr. M. Coleman.

Hagley.

56. Mr. W. Stephens.

Littleton.

57. Miss Wilson.

Madresfield.

58. Mr. T. Gowland.

Worcester.

59. Worcester Church School Teachers' Association.

Appendix C.—Medical Evidence.

Herefordshire.

1. Mr. Lingen.
2. Letter from do.

Surrey.

Carshalton.

3. Mr. Creasy.

Farnham.

4. Mr. Knowles.

Guildford.

5. Mr. R. Eager.

Warwickshire.

Knowle.

6. Mr. J. H. Kimbell.

Warwick.

7. Mr. T. W. Bullock.

Wiltshire.

Amesbury.

8. Mr. C. Pyle.

Salisbury.

9. Mr. W. M. Coates.
10. Dr. Roberts.

Swindon.

11. Mr. G. Gay.

App. C.—*cont.*

Worcestershire.

Alvechurch.

12. Mr. Gaunt.

Upton-on-Severn.

13. Mr. C. Braddon.

Appendix D.—Evidence of Labouring Men, their Wives, Children, &c.

Herefordshire.

Brinsop.

1. R. Lawrence.

Dorstone.

2. Mrs. Wood.

Surrey.

Alfold.

3. Mrs. Matthews.

Byfleet.

4. W. Muggleton.

Farley.

5. J. Gattland.

Farnham.

6. M. A. Hackman.
7. J. Bryant.
8. G. Bryant.

Sanderstead.

9. Mrs. Hook.

Thorpe.

10. G. Taylor.

Wonersh.

11. Mrs. Canning.

Worplesdon.

12. Mrs. Bullock.

Warwickshire.

Allesley.

13. J. Sanders.

Exhall.

14. T. Loach.
15. J. Enser.

Harbury.

16. Mrs. Austin.

Kinwarton.

17. W. Sadler.

App. D.—*cont.*

Sherbourn.

18. J. Bostock.

Stoneleigh.

19. J. Thomas.
20. W. Harris and T. Painter.

Wolverton.

21. Mouser.

Wiltshire.

Ashton Gifford.

22. J. Topp and W. Olden.

Berwick St. John.

23. Mrs. Lush.

Biddeston.

24. W. Woodman.
25. E. Howell.

Bishopston.

26. T. Halliday.

Burbage.

27. M. Blundy and G. Ruddell.

Broughton Gifford.

28. J. Woodham.
29. J. Marks.
30. W. Hurn.

Durnford.

31. Mrs. Viney.

Great Bedwyn.

32. G. Grace.
33. G. Williams.

Horningsham.

34. Mrs. Butt.

Latton.

35. Mrs. A. Howes.

Manningford Bruce.

36. E. Farr.

Stratford.

37. Mrs. Archer.

Wootton Rivers.

37*a*. D. Fubbens.
38. W. Lay.

Worcestershire.

Alvechurch.

39. T. Phillips.

Bransford.

40. J. Salt.

Bromsgrove.

41. W. Nutting, W. Barnes, and G. Dyson.

App. D.—*cont.*

Hartlebury.

42. Mrs. Smith.

Madresfield.

43. Mrs. Summers.

Martley.

44. Mrs. Grout.

Peopleton.

45. Mrs. Dolphin.
46. Stephens.

White Ladies Aston.

47. Cooper.

Appendix E.—Containing the Answers given to the Questions contained in the Printed Circulars of Questions.

1. As to the employment of private gangs.
2. The numbers and ages of the women and children employed.
3 to 16. As to the effect of the field work upon the health of the women and children engaged in it.
17 to 60. As to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals, and on their proper training for domestic duties.
61 and 62. Restrictions suggested as to the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed.
63 to 77. Recommendations as to the distances and hours of work.
78 to 127. Recommendations as to education.
128. Information with respect to the cottage accommodation.
129 to 180. Descriptions of cottages.
181 to 190. Remarks on the subject of cottage accommodation in regard to its effects on morality and education; and suggestions as to how good cottage accommodation can be provided on self-supporting terms.
191 to 198. Opinions expressed on various subjects.
199. School returns—Day schools.
200. „ Night schools.

EVIDENCE.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

APPENDIX A.—MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE.

Herefordshire.

Mr. Norman.

A.
i.

Bosbury.

1. *Rev. J. E. Cheese*, Vicar of Bosbury.

Mr. A. J. Burrows, occupier of 150 acres and guardian.

Mr. R. Hickman, occupier of over 400 acres and guardian.

At present there is rather an excess of labour in this parish, but at certain times we are very slack. People come to work here from a distance during the harvest and hop-picking.

Mr. Hickman finds great difficulty in inducing women to come to work for him; he has four cottages, but the men who occupy these cottages earn a sufficient sum of money to enable them to live without their wives going to work. Mr. Burrows employs two women regularly, but finds that on an average they have not worked more than two and a half days per week each, including the hop-picking season.

The parish of Bosbury belongs to a number of different proprietors; there are about 11 yeomen who farm their own land. It contains 4,516 acres, of which 1,572 are meadow.

There is not much wood; there is not much wood in any of the parishes about here except Ledbury. Some of the women are employed in making gloves, which they get from Ledbury and Worcester. Every farmer grows a few acres of hops, but very few grow as much as 20 acres (*i.e.* hop acres). A statute acre usually contains more than a hop acre. No harm arises either morally or physically from the employment of females. Mr. Hickman and Mr. Burrows think that boys are of little or no use until they are 11 or 12 years of age; and that labourers who have had some education have more pride in themselves and are more useful than uneducated men. After boys once come to work there is continuous employment for them all the year round. When farmers let cottages they usually make an agreement with the women to come out to work whenever they have work for them to do.

There is not enough work here to give employment for children in bark stripping, but where there is more wood children are employed in collecting the bark after it has been stripped. Hardly any potatoes are grown for sale out of this parish. Cider is universally given now, but the men who do job-work drink far more than than those who are regularly employed. There is no market for cider now, and the new trees which are being planted are usually for table fruit. The cider which the men consume is usually worth about 1*s.* per week.

There is an endowed school for boys here with an income of about 107*l.* per annum chiefly in cottage property; there is also a girls' school supported by voluntary contributions, both under government inspection. There is no part of the parish which is inaccessible to the church or school. The boys pay 1*d.*; as a general rule the people are alive to the importance of education, but we think that some means should be adopted to compel negligent parents to educate their children, *e.g.*, if on the application of the overseer or guardian power were to be given to the magistrate to compel children under 12 to attend school and to charge the parents with the cost.

The great defect in this parish is the practice of keeping the girls at home as gloveresses and dressmakers; they generally object to go to service and become greatly demoralized. It was formerly the practice for farmers to lodge their carters, &c., but that practice has now been discontinued.

2. *Mr. J. Pitt*, landowner, Bosbury.—I farm 300 acres of my own land, of which about 160 are grass and 20 hops. The soil round Bosbury is all very stiff clay. I employ three women regularly, and more occasionally. The employment for the three women is pulling and cleaning turnips in winter, hoeing wheat in the spring (but only the more able women can do that), then beating clots, and assisting their husbands to stick up hop poles. The hop tyeing occupies women during May and June until hay time; and after haymaking they are occupied at harvest, hop and fruit picking, and occasionally in winter with the threshing machine. They don't work in frost and snow. All the hop work, the turnip cleaning, and fruit picking is piecework. Extra women are required for hop-tyeing, picking and stripping poles; one woman can tye four acres. I put three poles to the stock, and pay 6*s.* an acre for tyeing with one quart of cider per day; cleaning turnips costs 6*s.* or 7*s.* an acre; for hop-picking I pay on an average 1½*d.* a bushel. Children of 8 or 9 years old can earn 6*d.* a day at picking, and if they were kept from work the women would have to stay at home to look after them. The picking is let out in "cribs," and the pickers come from all parts. I make it part of my agreement with my cottagers that they should come out to pick hops. Those who come from a distance I lodge in buildings, where they sleep on straw. I provide blankets if they dont't bring them for themselves. There are low partitions in the buildings where they sleep to separate the families. We employ boys to drive plough from 10 years old and upwards, and (very exceptionally) for bird and pig tending. We should be put to no inconvenience if none were employed under 10 except in hop and fruit picking. They sometimes come out to help their parents at turnip cleaning under that age, but are not of much use. Boys wages begin at 3*s.* per week; the lowest wages for men now (April) are 9*s.*; carters and stockmen have 11*s.* with a house and garden worth 4*l.* or 5*l.* a year rent free; potato ground is usually provided by farmers for their men, sometimes rent free. When I make a charge I charge 6*d.* per score (a row of 20 yards long). I do all the cultivation except the planting for them. During the hop-picking season the baggers have 6*d.* per bag and can fill six or eight bags per day, and the driers receive 30*s.* a week and their maintenance; that lasts a month or six weeks. I always employ my men wet or dry; they usually have piecework all through the summer. The hop cultivation is done by the acre (of 1,000 stocks) at 23*s.* or 24*s.* per acre; that includes "throwing down" (*i.e.* uncovering the stock in the spring), "spreading the poles" (*i.e.* moving the poles from the bundles to the place where they are to be pitched), "pitching" the poles, "kerfing," "rowing" (raising the earth into a hill round the stock), "stripping and piling the poles." The women assist in spreading the poles. I usually allow three or four quarts of cider a day, but only two in cold weather. I have tried to give up the practice of giving cider, but the men wont work without it. I own about 30 cottages, and let them for from 3*l.* to 8*l.*, usually at about 4*l.* All have gardens of about quarter acre in extent. When farmers let cottages to their men it is usually agreed that the women shall come

out to pick hops, but not to other kinds or work; it is taken for granted that the children shall come out as well, but if they are at work for somebody else I don't expect them to throw up their employment.

BRIDSTOW.

3. *Arthur Armitage, Esq.*, Dadnor, landowner and occupier of 400 acres, and manager of the property belonging to Guy's Hospital, amounting to about 10,000 acres.— The hospital property lies in two blocks, north and south of Hereford, besides a considerable quantity in and around the parish of Vowchurch. Herefordshire contains generally about two-thirds arable to one-third grass, except in the valleys, where there is a larger proportion of grass. Women are very little employed, less than formerly; so many implements are used that they are not wanted as much as they used to be. Farmers do not require young boys, certainly not under 10 years of age; but the parents want the earnings. I have never allowed cider. I pay my ordinary men 12*s.* a week, and let them as much potato ground as they like to have (which I cultivate and manure for them) at 6*d.* a score yards. I sell them as much cider as they like to have at 4*d.* a gallon. I think that farmers maintain the practice of allowing cider for the purpose of getting a market for their inferior drink. I have had no difficulty in carrying on my system. I have done it since 1843 when I began farming. When three or four men come to do a job for me, I allow them to have access to a barrel of cider, of which they keep the key; and when I settle with them, I make a deduction from what I have to pay them for the cider they have drunk. I think that my men drink too much cider, not so much of what I sell to them, as of what they buy elsewhere. I think they buy less of me than they would receive if they were allowed what is usual. I don't think that farmers require boys to work for them under 10 years of age. At present not half the adult population can read; but I don't think that the want of eduction is owing to the demand of the farmers.

Guy's Hospital let a certain number of cottages with their farms; but they have 75 which are let independently. I object to all cottages being let to the farmers, because it gives them too much control over the labourers; a man's labour is his capital, and he should be able to dispose of it as he pleases. The cottages which I let to labourers independently of the farmers are let by the year with a stamped agreement, under a quarterly notice to quit. I think that the labourers about here are rather inferior as workmen; there are but few who can lay a hedge and do the more skilled kinds of work.

Coal costs 14*s.* a ton; it is obtained from the Forest of Dean, and wood costs 8*s.* 6*d.* a "cord" [2 cords= 1 waggon load]. The people usually burn coal.

The rent of the "light land" in this county is about 35*s.*, and of the heavy about 25*s.* per acre, and labour here costs about 30*s.* an acre.

BROBURY.

4. The *Rev. S. Clark*, rector of Brobury and vicar of Bredwardine.

Mr. J. Vaughan, occupier.

The farms here range from 500 acres downwards. About half is grass; there are no hops.

The supply of labour is scarcely sufficient, but there is a large population in Staunton on-Wye, which supplies the surrounding neighbourhood. Women's work consists in picking stones, dressing meadows, hay and corn harvest, picking apples, and pulling turnips. Of these employments picking stones and pulling turnips are piecework and the remainder day work. They scarcely ever bring their children out to help them. Mr. Vaughan thinks that children are simply useless to farmers under 10 years of age even for scaring; and that farmers would not be put to much inconvenience if they employed none under 12.

Jarvis' Charity provides a free education for the children belonging to the parishes of Bredwardine, Letton, Staunton-on-Wye, Brobury, and Monnington, and the children from the last three parishes are clothed as well as educated; the receipt of clothing is made dependent upon their regularity at school. Very few have to come above a mile to school.

There has been a night school for several years at Bredwardine; those who come can sometimes read and write, but it sometimes happens that young men who have been to the school up to the age of 12 cannot sign the marriage register. Mr. Clark thinks that the education would be better kept up if the cottages were more comfortable, so as to encourage the boys to remain in the house and read in the evenings.

The cottages are extremely bad, but although the occupier occasionally complains, they do not appear to be really discontented.

We think that the most suitable plan for providing education would be to prohibit labour under 10, and also between 10 and 13 unless a certain amount of proficiency had been attained.

Cottage rent in Bredwardine and Staunton is 4*l.* to 7*l.* a year; in Brobury 2*l.* to 3*l.* This is on account of Jarvis' Charity. Some cottages are much overcrowded.

BROMYARD.

5. The following paper was communicated by The *Rev. Nash Stephenson*, vicar of Bromyard, and Educational Secretary of the Social Science Association.

I.—MALES.

Labourers constantly engaged by a farmer are mostly paid 9*s.* a week through the year, from which must be deducted wet or broken days; but in harvest time they are mostly engaged by take-work; for mowing, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, and for reaping 8*s.* to 10*s.* an acre is paid; at a bark-peeling job they earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; hoeing from 2*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, bean and wheat hoeing ranges from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* an acre; wagoners are paid 10*s.* a week or a little more, wet or dry, but usually are hired by the year and are indoor servants, and obtain from 7*l.* to 12*l.* a year. The hours of the labourer are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; they have two quarts of cider a day from Michaelmas to Lady Day, and three quarts from Lady Day to Michaelmas, except in mowing and reaping seasons, when they have six quarts.

Labourers who are accustomed to cider, usually drink cider and buy it at 3*d.* a quart, but others, not farm labourers, prefer beer, which is 5*d.* a quart.

I had charge of a populous parish near Solihull in Warwickshire for nearly 30 years, and was Secretary to the Archidiaconal Board of Education. The labourers there are certainly in a better position than they are here. Wages are higher, houses are better, though rent about the same, and coals are 14*s.* instead of 28*s.* a ton. The state of education is much in advance of what it is here, and there is not nearly as much drunkenness there.

II.—FEMALES.

Hops.

Hop-tying.—In the beginning of June tying hops to the poles commences. By take-work the pay is 3*s.* 6*d.* an acre if the tyers find rushes, and 3*s.* if the master finds them; if by day the pay is 1*s.*, and the hours of labour are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. There are two poles to each stock. The hop plants are tied with rushes as they grow, and require tying three times in the year, and whoever commences the work also finishes it. At the first tying a quarter of an acre can only be done in a day, at second tying an acre, at third tying two acres; but much depends on there having been much or little wind to loosen them. Should a fourth tying be needed extra pay is given. Children are not employed, as they cannot tell the difference between the "gut wires" which are hollow and do not bear fruit, and are not cared for, and the wires on which alone the hops grow. The tying finishes about the middle of July.

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Hop-picking.

The season of hop-picking begins about the latter end of August, and lasts about three weeks or a month, varying according to the number of pickers looking for employment, and the fruitfulness of the season.

The farmers pay for hop-picking by day or bushel. If by day, the payment is 1*s.*, but few engagements are by time. If by bushel, should the hops run small or be few in quantity, the farmer pays 1*s.* per four bushels, or, should the hops be large or season plentiful the farmers pay 1*s.* per eight bushels. An adult experienced hand will earn 2*s.* a day, a girl from 12 to 14 will earn 1*s.* a day. The master provides cribs, tallies, and tickets, and gives new milk. Large numbers come from the black country for the hop-picking season, and are lodged in the barns; the employers find blankets, sheets, and straw ; children, boys and girls, married and single, all sleep in the same barn, close to each other, without screen or partition. Of course there are some laudable exceptions to this rule.

Field work.

For dressing ground, pulling swedes, picking stones, weeds, &c. the pay is 8*d.* a day ; for bark peeling, which is in May, the pay is 1*s.* a day ; they are employed in peeling in addition to stacking the bark. In hay-making seasons the farmer gives 8*d.* a day to his regular workers, but to others he gives 9*d.* or 10*d.* Wet or broken days are paid for proportionately.

Children under 10 years of age are seldom employed except in apple and hop-picking.

Female work is not excessive or unhealthy, neither does it tend to demoralizing results.

Mops or Hiring Fairs.

There are in Bromyard during the year three mops or hiring fairs, Lady Day, 1st May, and Michaelmas ; male and female indoor farm servants are hired at these fairs, and the engagement is binding for the current year. The servants receive 1*s.* as "earnest money" on the mop-day. As a rule, the master writes for a character to the last place ; if not satisfactory, he writes to the servant to that effect, and the engagement is at an end, the servant retaining the 1*s.*; on the other hand, should the servants decline, the 1*s.* is returned. Fighting and immorality prevail to a great extent, but, owing to the increased vigilance of the police, the evil is not as great as it used to be.

I do not think that the mops can be put down by law. In Warwickshire the mops are fast dying out as hiring fairs. The better class of farmers and farm servants are ashamed of them and will not attend them.

Rent, Rates, &c.

The rent for an ordinarily sized cottage is 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. In the country there is usually a good-sized garden. The rates (of which there are four in the year) for a cottage of 4*l.* 4*s.* rental vary from 1*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.*; the cottagers and not the landlord usually pay the rates.

The above information respecting wages and work was given me in answer to my inquiries by a married woman in Bromyard, aged 29, who had worked all her lifetime in Bromyard in fieldwork, and was confirmed, and slightly altered by another married woman, who had worked at fieldwork for 10 years, and by some labourers and employers of labour, and was ratified by the clergy at a ruri-decanal meeting.

Education.

In agricultural districts there are many chilren now growing up without knowing the three r's. The reason why children are not sent to school is not the want of the school pence or of clothing, but mainly the indifference of the parents. There are probably few or no children who have never been to school, but the attendance of the mass is so desultory that the education given is of little value in after life; either the children do not come to school at a sufficiently early age, or, if they do, they do not attend regularly enough to attain satisfactory results. The children themselves are not engaged in any agricultural labour which need materially interfere with their education. The school accommodation in the neighbourhood is generally sufficient, but, owing to the scattered position of the cottages, some of the children have to travel long distances. I am in favor of "compulsory education," but do not think that there is any mode by which, in rural parishes, where the population is small, "compulsory education," either direct or indirect, can be carried out. If any plan is feasible it would be by the application of the principle of the Print-works rather than the Factory Acts. The supply of certificated teachers being limited, and the funds of rural schools being necessarily small, it is impossible for rural parishes to employ such teachers, and so to obtain Government aid. To remedy this it would be desirable that in small parishes Government aid should be given for results without requiring certificated teachers, but the grant should not be given unless the average attendance amounted to 20, and unless not less than 40 or 45 per cent. of the children in average attendance pass. The object of the former provision is to prevent the time of the inspector being wasted on insignificant schools ; and of the latter, to induce the teacher to secure an adequate result with respect to the children committed to his care.

Clodock.

6. The *Rev. C. L. Eagles*, vicar of Craswall Chapel. —Been here 20 years. The parish of Clodock contains 17,833 acres, a great deal of which is mountain. It comprises the townships of Craswall, Llanveyno, Longtown, and Newton. It is only one parish for ecclesiastical purposes, but each of the townships forms a separate parish for secular purposes. The rateable value is 10,000*l.*, and population (1861) 1794, and inhabited houses 372. There is one church and four chapels of ease in the parish. There is one school in Longtown, another in Craswall, and another in Newton. There is a very small portion of the population in Llanveyno which is so situated as to be out of reach of a school. There is a master and mistress at Longtown, a master at Craswall, and I think a mistress at Newton. More than half of the parish is grass ; there are no hops ; oats, barley, and wheat are the staple crops. I farm about 100 acres. Women are employed to a considerable extent, but do no hard work; but they are more employed in Michaelchurch, where there are some Scotch farmers. Women won't come to work before 8 or 9 in the morning, and usually leave about 5 p.m. I employ about four women when I have work for them to do. They always have 1*s.* a week and drink. I employ six men regularly ; my best man has 12*s.* and the other 10*s.* and 11*s.* a week and drink, and for two months during summer they have 3*s.* a week extra ; if they don't have that they expect victuals. There is a sufficient supply of labour here. I don't employ any boys ; but all farmers employ one or two, whom they board in their houses, of 12 or 13 years of age ; such a boy would probably have 25*s.* or 30*s.* a year. No boys are employed younger than that ; some are employed for scaring, but sometimes go to plant potatoes with their parents. The holdings here are small; they probably average less than 100 acres. There are a great many small proprietors who farm their own land, which is usually mortgaged ; but they are quite unable to contend with the larger tenant farmers.

We have a sufficiency of cottages, but they are very bad ; the ordinary rent is 3*l.* to 5*l.*

There is nothing at all to take the children from school before they are 12.

The women often give the farmers two or three days' work for no wages in consideration of receiving

permission "to lease;" and occasionally they only "*lease to halves*," *i.e.*, are obliged to give up to the farmers half the wheat they collect. Either one or the other of these practices always prevails among farmers.

I know the district in this neighbourhood well, and I don't think any practices prevail about here substantially different from those I have described, except that our wages may be rather higher here.

Dorstone.

7. The *Rev. D. Powell.*—I am a trustee of the schools at Dorstone, Clifford, and Peterchurch. The first has an endowment of 50*l.* per annum, and the two last of 80*l.* They are under Government inspection; we don't profess to admit children into them under the age of 7; some under that age are however admitted to be taken care of while their mothers are out at work. There are besides the endowed schools two infant schools at Clifford and one at Peterchurch, but there is none here. All the children in our school pay 1*d.* per week. I think there is hardly a parent in the parish who cannot read; and the children who came to receive instruction at the age of 7 can usually read monosyllables. Almost all the farmers let potato ground to their labourers at 2½*d.* a "purk" or "perch" = 7 yards. The farmers prepare the land and the labourers plant, weed, and get up the crop In the case of stone, potato, and apple picking the work is usually done by the piece, and the children assist their parents, but are not "employed" by the farmers; and bird-scaring is the only occupation in which young children are employed. I think that the first continuous work for children commences at about the age of 11; a boy of that age if in the farmer's house would get 50*s.* a year, but if out of the house 3*s.* a week. I only know of two families in the parish who don't attend school at all; but my experience tells me that the education depends very much on the popularity of the master. Our master is not permitted to inflict corporal punishment. I do that myself, and every case in which it is done is reported to the trustees at the end of the quarter. I think that the best way of providing education for the labouring class would be by having school open from 4 to 7 from the 1st April to the 31st October for boys at work. Attendance should be compulsory then and in daytime during the remainder of the year.

Wages are 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week here, besides drink. A good deal of extra money is given in the way of occasional meals, hauling coals, &c., and in harvest time the men are all fed.

Eardisland.

8. The *Rev. J. Barker*, vicar of Eardisland.—I have been here two years, and before that I lived at Berkswell, in Warwickshire. I think that no boys go to agricultural work here before they are 12 or 13. In Warwickshire they never stayed at school after the age of 9 or 10. I think there is a surplus supply of labour here, and that the hop cultivation induces more to remain in the parish than otherwise would. There is an endowed free school here; I think that the education is rather more advanced here than in Warwickshire; but the people don't really value it. There are 78 on the books of this school, and 42 in average attendance. My last confirmation class contained 23 boys varying from 14½ to 17 years of age; of them 16 could read well, six moderately, and one not all; 15 could write well, seven moderately, and one not at all. There are no inhabitants of this parish who have not access to some school. The apathy of the parents is the only cause of the defective education here. I don't think there is any necessity for a new law to improve the education in this parish; and if it were necessary I don't see how it could be carried out. I object to females working in the fields, because I think that their children and cottages are neglected, but I don't think that the work does them any harm. The children of field workers are certainly less regular in their attendance at school than the children of other parents. I have carried on a night school here until this month [May], and in Warwickshire I carried one on all the year round. I think night schools are very valuable for the purpose of keeping lads out of mischief, but they cannot be generally relied on as a means of giving instruction. I strongly object to the practice of paying wages in cider. I have recommended the farmers to sell some of their cider; but the labourers have a strong objection to its going off the farm.

9. *Mr. G. Yeld*, Twyford, Eardisland, landowner.—I farm my own land; 174 acres. More than half is grass. I don't grow hops, but most of my neighbours do. I never employ more than one boy aged 11 or 12. I don't think they would be of any use under that age. But where hops are grown little boys are useful for hop-picking, but in no other operation connected with the hop cultivation. I never employ women for hard work; but I do employ them in haymaking, and weeding the corn, and turnip and mangold pulling, which is piecework done for about 7*s.* an acre. They weed with a spud and not with a hoe. They never bring little children to help them, except in hop-picking; the older children come occasionally to assist them in turnip pulling, but I think not under 11 years of age. Their ordinary hours of work are from 8 to 6 p.m. on my farm, but perhaps other employers keep them longer. Wages here are 10*s.* for day labourers, and an extra 1*s.* a day during harvest, generally for a month; and in haymaking if we keep them past time, we either give them money or victuals. They always have cider; that is the great curse of this country, but it is impossible for any single employer to get the men to give it up. The cider is worth about 2*s.* a week. I sometimes give an additional 2*s.* a week instead of cider during winter. The labourers also have potato ground, which is usually paid for at 6*d.* a score. Women have 8*d.* a day, never less, and more if we keep them late. I never give them cider except in hay time. There is a sufficiency of labour here. My men come from either Eardisland or Pembridge. The cottages are not very good, but those in Eardisland are being greatly improved. Usual rent is 3*l.* to 4*l.* All have gardens. I find I can get just as many women to work for me as I could formerly, but I hear my neighbours say that they cannot.

There are very good schools both at Pembridge and Eardisland. There is nothing whatever in the agricultural labour the children perform to prevent their attending school.

Felton.

10. Letter from the Rev. H. T. Hill, rector of Felton, vicar of Preston-Wynne, and rural dean of Frome, dated Felton Rectory, May 26, 1869.

I have carefully read the printed papers you enclosed to me. I think that from me a short continuous statement would be quite as serviceable to you, if serviceable at all, as a categorical answer to the printed questions. For my own two adjoining parishes of Felton and Preston-Wynne are very small, insignificant in point of population, &c., and I should therefore think it out of place to furnish you with particulars respecting them, such particulars would not be any criterion. I can only give you, as you desire it, my own impressions (after some years' experience in these and much larger parishes) on the general questions and matters of inquiry.

1. As to agricultural labourers my own impression is that here or hereabouts there is no excess of labour required by employers, nor any necessary unhealthiness in the occupations of our women and children employed in agriculture unless in cases where they are at their work in wet weather on these clay soils for some hours together, and I certainly think that pulling

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turnips in wet and cold weather ought not to be required of women and children.

I have had no experience of gangs, public or private.

I do not think that children are usually overworked in our country parishes, nor do they have to go long distances to their work. I am not aware of any ill-treatment. I do not think you can expect the labourer to forego altogether the pecuniary advantage to be gained from the work which his wife and his children may do.

I think that possibly some legislation there might be with good effect to regulate the age below which boys and girls should not be employed in farm labour, say not below 10 years of age. I also think that some encouragement might be held out to parents to abstain from sending their children to work till a more advanced age, say till 11½ years of age, and this entirely for the purpose of their education. I do not think that the hours of work of boys or girls need be regulated, nor do I think regulations needed hereabouts as regards hours of work or unhealthiness of employments generally.

I would also express an opinion that it may be questioned whether the gain to the labourer from the out-door work of the wife is so considerable as he usually thinks it to be. I think he might come to a difference of opinion if he could be induced to consider, that such out-door work necessitates the neglect of many home duties, greater wear and tear in the matter of clothing, a more generous kind of living in order to perfect health, or else weariness and exhaustion, and considerable interference with his own comfort in his own home. I think that in this country the employment of females of a certain age in field work could hardly be restricted.

II. As to education. I think something might be done, or ought to be done, with the smallest possible degree of compulsion (but with it if unavoidable). I am of opinion that the education of children in our rural parishes should be carried on. I cannot think it right or advisable that children should continue to lose, as many are doing, the only education (in its best sense and truest) which they can ever receive, owing to the blindness and selfishness of their parents or employers. I cannot think it right that children, as is often the case, should be sent to work at 9 and 9½ and 10 (sometimes, I fear, earlier than 9), instead of being sent to school. They may not be sent regularly to work, but neither are they sent regularly to schools, and that very irregularity defeats all our efforts to educate them.

I consider that even alternate whole days at school, if it were regular, would be preferable to the present state of things, if we could be sure of children, say, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; I mean that it would be preferable for many, there are of course some who attend with tolerable regularity each day in the week. I do not think that a night school is a substitute at all for a day school. In very small parishes they are difficult to work, because so few can come to them, and because the clergyman has often no one to help him and so cannot have such a school sufficiently often in the week. But even with us they are of use; encouragement in the erection of schoolrooms in small parishes is needed, or for united small parishes. It is far easier to get schools erected and maintained in large parishes. I have had to build one myself on land of my own for my two small parishes, finding it impossible to obtain funds for it from other sources. We have now an attendance of 35 children, as many as the room will hold when the novelty has worn off the attendance may fall off possibly. We want some way (though as mild a way as can be hit on) for enforcing a more regular attendance at our schools when they are erected. The very irregular attendance by some families is a great obstacle and difficulty, it renders a good school almost impossible, it prevents there being a good first class in the school, it greatly discourages the teacher, it just prevents children who are irregular from acquiring that information and those good principles and habits of discipline which would be of such permanent benefit to them. I think that employers generally do put too much pressure on their workpeople to induce them at certain times to send their children into the fields rather than into the schools (I do not now allude to hay making, corn harvesting, and hop-picking). I also think that 2*d.* per week for each child is in some cases felt by the parents a good deal, and yet I do not see how our rural schools are to be supported if a smaller sum is charged. I think Government might well offer some assistance to rural schools, and ought to do so, satisfied with our usual diocesan inspection.

III. As to cottage accommodation. It has been very inferior in this neighbourhood, but improvement is slowly taking place. I think bad and insufficient cottage accommodation a great evil and very demoralizing. I do not think we have a sufficient supply of cottages, nor with sufficient bedroom accommodation. Even inquiry on the part of Government must do good in this matter.

Fownhope.

11. The *Rev. T. West*, vicar.
Mr. James Apperley, occupier.
Mr. C. T. Lechmere.

This parish is situated just on the borders of the hop district; no peculiar crops are grown here. The farms are small, from 100 to 200 acres; there is not much grass, but there is a large quantity of wood. There are a good many squatters, but very few farmers occupying their own land. No children are employed under 10 to 12 years of age except occasionally for bird-keeping. Mr. Apperley thinks that the little boys under that age do just as well for scaring as older boys. The general occupation for boys after they go to regular work at the age of 10 to 12 is with the horses. Very few boys are now boarded in the farm houses. The women are employed in the ordinary light work of the farms, but they are much less disposed to go out to farm work than they used to be; they are not of much use except for such work as apple and hop picking; their ordinary wages are 8*d.* and in harvest 10*d.* besides cider. Hours of work from 8 to 6 except when at piecework. Girls never go out before they are 16 or 17 years of age. There is an over supply of labour here; there are a good many men who live by job work, and work only a part of the year.

The supply of cottages is sufficient in number, and (with a few exceptions) they are tolerably good, and are provided with gardens, rent 4*l.* to 5*l.* It is the usual practice for farmers to let potato ground; the larger farmers only let it to the labourers they employ, but the smaller farmers let it to any who will take it at 6*d.* a score.

A new school has been built here, now under a master, who is about to receive his certificate; it is a mixed school, and was opened last October. There are now about 100 on the books, and about 70 in ordinary attendance. When Mr. West came here, which was four years ago, there was only a small dame's school attended by from 30 to 40 children; when the new school was opened there was an immediate attendance of over 50, which has gradually increased. The parents expressed themselves very anxious to Mr. West for the opening of the new school, and he believes that the increased attendance is entirely due to the value attached by their parents to education.

Mr. West thinks that since the opening of the new school there are very few children who do not attend, and that the agricultural employment does not interfere with the education. The average age of the first class is 11 years 9 months. No change of the law is necessary to improve the education here.

Wages here are 10*s.* in summer, and sometimes drop to 9*s.* in winter.

The cider allowed by Mr. Apperley is two quarts a day in winter, three in summer, and four or five in

hay time and harvest; it costs him less than 4*d.* a gallon, probably about 3*d.*

HENTLAND.

12. The *Rev. W. Poole*, Secretary to the Hereford Diocesan Board of Education.—The whole of the county of Hereford is in the diocese of Hereford. There are only two parishes, containing over 500 people, in the county which are without schools. There are no accurate returns from which it is possible to estimate the number of places containing a population less than 500 which are without school accommodation. The population of the county is very much scattered, and thus in some districts it is scarcely possible to find a sufficient population to maintain a school. In the east of London 185,751 persons are found in a square mile, but in Herefordshire the average is 147 (including the towns).

There is not much agricultural employment for children under 12 years; but these young children are more constantly kept away when their parents are occupiers of small quantities of land (under 10 acres), of which there are two in my parish. The chief causes which interfere with the education of children may be gathered from the following census of my parish:—

Total children under 6 -	95
From 12 to 6 - -	108
	203
From 12 to 6 at school -	55
Not at school - -	53
	108

Causes of absence.

Want of money, clothes, or food -	9
Out at work - - - -	8
No school near - - -	2
Kept at home to mind house or nurse -	13
Indifference of parents - -	17
Accidental cause - - -	4
	53

I don't find that the agricultural labour causes much irregularity. I don't permit irregularity, and discharge those who are irregular.

I think that the employment of females in the fields is decidedly healthy, but I object to it because it certainly leads to both the cottages and children being untidy; and also to the elder children being kept from school to mind the younger ones.

The farms here vary from 150 to 300 acres. It is the usual practice to let cottages with the farms; but I disapprove of that practice, because it gives the employer too great a control over his labourers, and because a man who is liable to be turned out on a short notice will take less interest in his cottage and garden than if he had a more certain tenure. I have a property in this county in the neighbourhood of Stretton Grandison, on which there are above 60 cottages, and I retain all except four in my own hands. I have no difficulty with the farmers on this account, I usually let the cottages to the men whom the farmers recommend.

At present most of the friendly societies are little better than drinking clubs; there are, however, two or three good ones, one of which, the Hereford Friendly Society, has a branch here. There are now two public house clubs here. The law which now requires clubs to be registered should also require that a certificate should be obtained to show that the tables are founded on reliable calculation. I would also make it compulsory for all young men over 15 years of age to belong to a club, and would make it incompetent for them to give evidence or receive parish relief unless they did.

There exists a very strong feeling against "compulsory education." It is reckoned an interference with private life; it is thought likely to augment pauperism; it is considered to be unworkable; it is hard upon farmers who want hands; it is hard upon parents who want money. Any law simply exacting that all children shall be educated would be likely to meet a very general opposition and that neglect or indifference which is even harder to contend against than actual opposition itself.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the lads who grow up without education are (if we take them in the mass, and do not judge by this or that exceptional case) the least trustworthy of the labouring class. They are slow and unintelligent in their work; they fall back upon the public house for their amusement; they are the enticers of younger men to drunkenness and extravagance; they become paupers and the fathers of paupers, and hand on to another generation some of the worst evils of our own.

Is it hopeless then to make an effort that we may lay the strong hand of the law upon these vagrants of civilisation, and bring them within the healthful circulation of the national system?

Compulsory eduction by itself appears to me quite impossible in the present state of men's opinion regarding it. None of the plans as yet proposed would have vitality enough to conquer the passive resistance of all classes. Its few supporters would be battering an earthwork of unmeasured thickness. But as one of a group of measures intended to improve the condition of labourers and at the same time to lighten the pressure of local taxation, it is possible that such a bill might not be unacceptable. Men feel that school teaching is but one among the many elements of success in life, and when it is insisted on as in itself of supreme importance they point to this or that individual instance of its failure within the range of their knowledge, and all argument is counterbalanced by this fatal fact. If a wise and broad plan, however, were traced out for meeting the principal evils which beset the country on the side of its poor inhabitants; if the interests of the ratepayers were evidently to be served and the necessities of the employers of labour were acknowledged, it is probable that regulations for an universal instruction of the young might be accepted and worked out. The principal points which would have to be considered and provided for in such a scheme would be as follows:—

1. Securing decent and sufficient dwellings for the poor.
   - (*a.*) Lending money not only to landlords as at present, but to poor freeholders for the improvement and building of houses, and even under regulations not difficult to draw up to tenant farmers.
   - (*b.*) Forbidding more than a proper number to live in any house (as in the case of registered lodging-houses).
   - (*c.*) Declaring by proper process houses unfit for habitation, and so compelling owners to repair or keep them vacant.

2. Providing against sickness and old age.
   - (*a.*) Altering the present pauperising system of friendly societies, forbidding them to meet at public houses, amalgamating smaller clubs, closing the unsafe, and guaranteeing the rest.
   - (*b.*) Bringing government annuities within the reach of labouring classes and making the regulations more popular.
   - (*c.*) Making it compulsory on all the young men under 15 to belong to such societies (or to show that they have a deposit at the savings bank instead).

3. Providing recreation and instruction for elder lads, men, &c.
   - (*a.*) Encouraging the establishment of playgrounds, reading rooms, &c. by facilities for appropriating ground, management, &c., and when such play places are established, forbidding any game or sport to be held at the public house.

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(*b.*) Limiting and regulating public houses (a great boon to employers of labour).

4. Then requiring that all children should be educated to a certain standard.

Regulations which by themselves might be thought hard, in conjunction with these other measures would assume a very different appearance.

The plan of requiring once for all a certificate of having obtained a certain amount of school learning seems to labour under this evil, that in infant schools this standard may be hastened to such a degree as to allow of very young children going out to labour, and knowledge so early acquired is easily and entirely forgotten. I have known children qualified for any standard that could be reasonably required come back after a few years of work totally unable to read or write.

The half-time system has been successfully carried out in special instances, but in every case I believe where this has occurred among our agricultural population it has been owing to the active intervention of some influential individual who has given his time and often his money to work it out, otherwise it seems unlikely that this plan would succeed.

In towns under a numerous police the children idling in the streets or unemployed at home might be swept by the officers into free ragged schools without injuring or interfering with schools of a better class.

In the country it might be required both of the parents and the master employing a child under 12 years of age that they should produce a licence, the parents for his being hired out, and the master for employing him. This licence should depend upon his reaching a certain standard of acquirements, and might or might not be paid for as might seem best. It should never be granted for more than one year, and if during the year of labour the child had greatly lost the power of reading and writing it would be in the power of the authority to refuse a renewal on the ground that either at home or at service his proper improvement had been neglected. A committee selected out of the Board of Guardians of the poor (with a certain proportion of ex-officio guardians) might be the authority by which such licences should be granted. In this way it would be open to any one interested in the welfare of a child to demand the licence and to oppose the issue of it were such a step deemed desirable.

This, in conjunction with the other measures alluded to above, might ensure the non-employment of children under 12 years of age; but for its possibility it depends upon forming part of a system which shall endeavour to ease the working of the wheels where, between the employers of labour, the ratepayers, and the paupers, they have unhappily become a little disordered. The decay of an independent feeling among the poor, ready application for relief, especially for medical relief, by those not absolutely in want, and an accompanying carelessness as to the education of their children, make this question, in this part of the country at least, of very urgent importance, and though at first sight at least we may seem to complicate the matter by the introduction of these allied questions, yet this will really be found a case in which Bacon's axiom becomes strictly true,—"It is easier to change many things than one."

Hereford.

13. *Mr. Edwin Day*, Secretary to the Herefordshire Friendly Society, established in 1836. Open to all residents in the county, but the great bulk of the members live within five or six miles of Hereford. There is a branch at Leominster, and eight or nine agents in different country parishes. There are over 1,100 members [April 1869]. The insurance is for sums payable in sickness and at death, as well as for annuities payable after 65, but very few persons purchase annuities. The great majority of the members are agricultural labourers. Those who live in the towns are caught up by the Odd Fellows and Foresters. The balance in hand at the end of last year amounted to 9,287*l.* 6*s.* 4¾*d.*

Kington.

Meeting at Kington.

14. The Rev. J. F. Crouch, vicar of Pembridge.
Mr. Gardiner, occupier, Lyonshall.
C. W. Greenly, Titley Court.
Rev. J. Whateley, Kington.
Mr. Wellson, occupier, Kington.

Women are very much employed in agriculture in this county; the usual hours of work for them are from 8 to 5, except in harvest time. There is less work for them in winter than in summer. They are not injured either physically or morally by the work they do, but some of the gentlemen present think that the houses of the field worker are less tidy than those of other women.

Boys are not employed in regular farm work under 12 years of age; they do no work which is injurious to them. Young girls are not employed in farm labour except in apple picking.

The condition of the education among the young now growing up is fairly satisfactory, although it is in many instances defective. At Pembridge there was no failure last year when the school was inspected either in reading, writing, or cyphering; the great difficulty is to maintain the education after work commences. The school accommodation in the neighbourhood is generally sufficient. We cannot see that any change in the law is practicable for the purpose of improving the education, although improvement might in many cases be desirable.

The cottages are not as good as could be wished; they are usually sufficient in number and well situated; they are usually scattered, but there are considerable villages at Pembridge and Lyonshall; the accommodation they contain is generally insufficient; there are not sufficient bedrooms, not enough privies, and the cottages are out of repair; they all have gardens. There are no allotments, but the labourers hire potato ground of their employer at 6*d.* a score. The rent varies of cottages from 4*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* We cannot suggest any change in the law for the purpose of improving the accommodation, the powers of the present law are sufficient if carried out. Men's wages are 10*s.* and drink, and generally potato ground free; 1*l.* or 25*s.* extra in harvest. Women have 8*d.* a day and drink in harvest, and boys about 6*d.* a day at first.

Pipe-cum-Lyde.

15. *Mr. J. Bosley*, Lower Lyde Farm, Pipe and Lyde.—Most of this parish belongs to Guy's Hospital. About half is grass and half arable; there are about 44 acres of hops. I farm 344 acres here and have another farm at Huntington about the same size as this; the land is all rather stiff. We have a sufficient supply of labour within easy access. Cottages are usually let with the farm. I have six with my farm; that is not sufficient to supply me with all the labour I require. I have great difficulty in getting women to come out to work. I make a stipulation with those who do occupy my cottages that they shall come when I want them, but they always make some excuse. The work which they dislike most is apple picking because it is cold work; they do that by the day. They rather like turnip cleaning, because they can go out for two or three hours a day for that work. Boys are wanted for a good deal of work in the hop gardens, because the horses must be led between the poles when at that work. I had rather not have boys younger than 12 except for bird-minding.

There is a school in this parish under a mistress; it is quite in the centre of the parish and accessible to all. I certainly think that all should be taught to read, write, and cypher, but I am not prepared to make any recommendation as to how that could be

carried out, and I fear that a compulsory law would meet with opposition. The cottages in this neighbourhood do not contain sufficient accommodation, but they are not crowded and are well situated with reference to the work to be done.

I employ 12 regular men besides my bailiff; I board none in my house. My shepherd's wages and allowances are,—

	s.	*d.*
11*s.* per week=per annum -	572	0
3*d.* per head allowed for lambs (say 200) - - -	50	0
Shearing 360 sheep at 1*s.* 6*d.* per score = - - - -	27	0
Shearing 180 lambs at 6*d.* per score = - - -	4	6
Money given in lieu of pig= -	30	0
102 lbs. of bacon given at (say) 6*d.*=	51	0
Extra money in harvest= -	30	0
„ „ haymaking= -	20	0
Thatching (say)= - -	15	0
Cider (2*s.* per week)= - -	104	0
Potato ground (25 score at 6*d.*) =	12	6
Total - - - - -	916	0

= 17*s.* 8*d.* per week.

He has five children, three of whom work for me, and those three and his wife earn on an average 4*s.* 6*d.* per week. No farmer about here keeps a regular shepherd except myself.

My carter has 11*s.* per week and his earnings average about 13*s.* per week besides his cider. My best day labourer has 10*s.* per week summer and winter, and his earnings average 13*s.* 6*d.* per week besides his cider. Of the remainder of my day labourers three of the best earn on an average 12*s.* 6*d.*, and three of the worst earn 11*s.*, besides their cider and potato ground. I give all my men who have no piecework 30*s.* extra for harvest and 20*s.* extra for hay making. I use mowing and reaping machines, and therefore do not require extra men except sometimes for hoeing. I employ five boys; those who are big enough to drive plough earn 3*s.* and little boys who scare 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. I do not want to employ boys under 11 or 12 years of age regularly. Possibly I may pay rather higher than some of my neighbours. I make no distinction between old and young men, some of the others do.

[I visited the cottages on the farm; they were decidedly very bad; most of them were made of wattle and dab, and thatched; the living room tolerably spacious but very low and unceiled; one or two bedrooms upstairs in the roof, and sometimes one opening out of the sitting room on the ground floor. Good gardens; rent usually 4*l.*]

Sellack.

16. *Mr. Thomas Duckham*, Baysham Court, occupier of about 270 acres (about 120 grass).—The soil in the neighbourhood of Ross is light and well suited for growing turnips and barley, but no hops are grown there. The farms vary a good deal in size, but it is exceptional for them to exceed 300 acres. The old red sandstone formation is not suitable for hops; the four course system of cropping usually prevails on it, and the six course on the clay land of the county. I employ women to a small extent; their usual employments are stocking turnips (*i.e.* pulling out the roots when the sheep have eaten the upper part of the bulb), cleaning turnips, weeding the corn crops, cleaning the pastures, haymaking; in harvest they tie up, but I think I never saw a woman reaping here, reaping machines are now coming into very general use; after harvest they are employed in potato and fruit picking. No potatoes are grown for exporting. In winter one woman is generally employed with the threshing machine to cut the bands; steam threshing machines are generally used. I generally employ three women when there is work to be done, but never have any extra women. They are supposed to breakfast before they come, and commence work at 8 o'clock, dinner at 1 to 2, and leave off at 6. Their pay is 9*d.* a day without cider, except in busy times; they are the wives of my labourers. I employ boys from the age of 10 or 11. I only employ one at present; he is employed to assist the cowman, shepherd, or carter, but boys are not much required to drive horses on the light land. In my neighbourhood two horses with reins are usually employed for ploughing; boys are required to drive on the stiff land where more than two horses are used to plough. It is very rare that a boy is employed at weeding, &c. with women. Beans are sometimes but rarely dibbled, but no other crops. Boys and sometimes girls are employed to frighten birds, but not much. My opinion is that boys should not be taken to work until they are 10 years of age; that should be the minimum. Boys as well as girls are employed in fruit picking; that is sometimes day and sometimes piece work. After fruit picking is over boys under 12 or 13 are not usually wanted until the following March. Boys usually get about 2*s.* 6*d.* a week when they first come to work. I don't think that women or children do any work which is physically injurious to them. I think that as a general rule the agricultural children attend schools well; the value of education is becoming so well known among agricultural labourers that they make efforts to obtain it.

As a general rule cottages are let with the farms; the usual rent of cottages is about 5*l.* a year, but farmers let them at 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

Labourers' wages are usually 10*s.* a week. Cider is always allowed; two quarts per day during the six winter, and three quarts per day during the six summer months; my waggoner gets 11*s.* and house and large garden rent free. All my cottages have five rooms each. Cowmen and shepherds have the same wages as waggoners.

Some of the old-fashioned farmers board two or three indoor servants, but the practice is fast wearing out.

There are statute fairs in all the small market towns, but they are not used as much as formerly.

During the harvest we give 1*l.* in addition to the ordinary wages, *i.e.*, 5*s.* per week; they are allowed some victuals besides.

Withington.

17. *Mr. W. Taylor*, occupier of about 1,000 acres, of which about half is grass, and more than 50 acres of hops, partly in Ocle Pitchard, Preston Wynne, and Marden.—I employ about 30 men, and occasionally boys under 13, but none regularly. I have three now under that age minding cows, and I may employ them for that and other light occupations for about two months in the year; that is in addition to the work they do with their parents, such as fruit and hop picking. The soil here is a stiff loamy clay, but we always plough with a pair of horses, and don't require boys to drive. The women I employ vary in number according to the work to be done; all whom I employ (except those who come during the hop-picking) live in the village, and during that season a number come to work for me from the black country. The hours of work for women are from 8 to 6; they stop at about 9·30 to "*bait*," and again at 1 for dinner. As a general rule the supply of labour in this parish is sufficient for the demand, but I usually employ four or five men for hoeing in the spring and summer who come from Stourbridge.

Women's wages when at day work are 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day, and 1*s.* in hay time, and 1*s.* 6*d.* per day for tyeing in harvest. They always have cider, one quart a day, except in harvest, when they have as much as they like.

Fruit picking is done by the bushel or load, at 1*s.* per cartload or 20 bushels.

My shepherd gets 12*s.* and three quarts of cider per day; house rent free; 10 stones (12 lbs. each) of bacon, in lieu of keeping a pig; 28*s.* extra for

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harvest, and 6*s.* for haymaking, and 21*s.* extra for lambing season; potato ground worth about 10*s.*, and wood worth 15*s.* My shepherd also attends to my horse when I am out, and has his supper on those evenings; the waggoner does not get quite as much as that. The ordinary men get 10*s.* a week (it has been 11*s.* until this last winter). They do the hop work by contract; that includes the throwing down, cutting, spreading, and pitching the poles, hilling up and stripping the poles after the hops are picked; that is done for 24*s.* or 25*s.* per acre. Each man can take about 3½ acres; that occupies them about 45 days. These men cannot be spared to hoe. In harvest time they have 2*s.* 10*d.* a day for every working day in August, without reference to whether the harvest is going on or not. In hop-picking the pole pullers who are my own labourers get an extra 1*s.* per week; there are two dryers, and they get an extra 22*s.* a week and their maintenance. The baggers earn about 4*s.* a day (at 6*d.* a bag) and maintenance. The measurers who are my own men get an extra 10*s.* or 15*s.* All the men to whom I don't allow bacon have a run on my meadows for a pig, and potato ground free. I send about 20 miles to meet my hop-pickers; there is some bread and cheese and a barrel of cider sent in the waggon, and during the picking each picker has three pints of pea soup and three pints of cider a day; I consume 150 hogsheads of cider per year.

Women have also opportunities of earning extra money by making and mending sacks.

WHITNEY.

18 (*a.*) The *Rev. H. Dew.*—There is a mixed school here under an uncertificated mistress. There are about 40 in attendance. The fee is 2*d.* a week; it has lately been raised, and since it has been raised the attendance has been more regular.

The are only about seven women in this parish who go out to field work, and they don't bring out their children to help them.

The two principal employers of labour here don't give cider, except in harvest time.

I farm 70 acres, and I employ four men. I pay (1), 12*s.* a week and a cottage; (2), 11*s.* 6*d.* a week without a cottage; (3), 10*s.* a week without a cottage; and (4, and old man), 9*s.* without a cottage. I never allow drink; in harvest time I give the men their food, but no extra money. When I employ extra men by the day I usually give them 1*s.* 8*d.* a day besides their cider.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from the Rev. W. C. Fowle, Brinsop; Mr. T. Powell, Goodrich; Mr. Sessions, Hampton Court; Mr. J. Davis, Kingston; Mr. H. N. Edwards, Broadward, Leominster; J. Rankin, Esq., Much Dewchurch; the Rev. W. E. Edwards, Orleton; Mr. B. Brunsdon and Mr. J. Bennett, of Ross; and Capt. M. K. Power, Mr. T. S. Bradstock, and Mr. T. Theyer, Walford.

SURREY.

Surrey.

ABINGER.

18 (*b.*) The *Rev. J. W. Powell*, rector of Abinger.—The parish of Abinger is nine miles long and half a mile broad. A portion of the parish is now separated into the ecclesiastical district of Oakwood, which embraces also a portion of Wotton. Females are hardly ever employed in the fields in this district; they are a little employed at haymaking, but they do no hard work. There is a great deal of woodland; that gives occupation to men and boys in hoop shaving in winter; as a general rule all men understand the work in the woods; the wood cutting is not done by piecework. There is no employment for women and children in the woods. There is no continued employment for children at all until they go out with the horses. There is a school at Abinger, and also a school at Oakwood; that at Abinger is very central for the Abinger district; the most distant part of the district may be two miles from the school. There is also a private school kept by a woman, who is paid 3*d.* a week by those who learn to write, and 2*d.* by those who learn to read only. There are from 20 to 30 scholars at that school, and the rent of the schoolroom is paid by a friend. There are eight different churches to which the inhabitants of my parish can have access as easily as they can to mine. The rent of cottages is about 4*l.* a year. The principal landowner, who owns most of the cottages, gives 1*l.*'s worth of groceries, and bread, meat, &c. to the value of from 2*l.* to 3*l.* to every tenant of his cottages each year, and all the old people are well cared for. I think the children leave school at about 11, as young as they do elsewhere. They leave at particular times of the year, for a few weeks at a time, after the age of 8. There was a night school here last year, which was attended by about 24 scholars regularly, most of them about 18 or 19; some came 2½ miles to attend it. No women or children are employed in barking trees. I think it is desirable that children should remain at school longer than they do in order to provide for their moral training; but the instruction, *i.e.*, book learning, which I support on principle, can never be obtained without compulsion. I am not opposed to compulsion in principle, but think it impracticable.

ADDINGTON.

18 (*c.*) *Mr. Marmaduke Walker*, occupier.—I farm 1,200 acres (200 acres are grass and 150 are wood), the rest arable. I employ boys at the age of 12 or 14, all the year round, to go with horses and other light jobs, under that age I employ them occasionally. They are then useful to scare birds, and (from June to September) to single turnips and make bands in harvest, also in tending sheep, cattle, &c. Girls usually go out with their mothers; their mothers take the jobs and bring the children with them, and if the mother takes work by the day she usually brings her children to look after them. I think I employ 16 women all the year round, and perhaps 20 all through the summer, 40 in harvest. In summer they hoe turnips and weed; in harvest they follow the mowing machine and lay the corn in sheaves; the children make bands. In winter they work with the threshing machine; 12 or 14 are required to supply the feeder and take the straw away and tie it up, they pull turnips. I keep 2,000 sheep and 120 bullocks. My labourers live near; I have 12 cottages on my farm, with 4 rooms each. Women have 6*s.* in summer and 9*s.* in harvest; men 12*s.* in winter, and 20*s.* 8*d.* for five weeks in harvest; children 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day; cottages always let rent free and fuel is carted free. The hours of work are from 8 to 12 and from 2 to 6. Big boys who have 10*s.* a week to look after the horses have to be there at 6 a.m.; our horses no out from 7 to 12 and 2 to 6. There is no unhealthiness among women or children. There is a free school at Addington, where children go in winter. The women I employ are almost all Irish, I think no English go out, they are all above it. Many Irish families have settled here for some years, and saved money and have then gone to America; I think one family saved in 7 or 8 years 70*l.*; many have saved 50*l.* There is an infant school at Chelsham. Children all go to school except when at work. I have built 12 four-roomed cottages. I generally let 2 rooms to a man and wife and if there is a large family I let the whole cottage to them; they depend on tanks for water; I had to cart water this year [1868]. All the cottages have gardens. Labour cost me 1*l.* an acre a year. Nobody about here employs women and children to the same extent as I do.

ADDLESTONE.

19. The *Rev. W. Pidcock.*—I have been in this district, which was a portion of the parish of Chertsey, about 23 years. Chertsey was formerly one individual parish. It now contains, besides this parish, the ecclesiastical districts of Ottershaw, Botley's, Lyne, and Longcross. There is a school in each of these districts; the population has increased very considerably. Women are not much employed in field labour, not so much as to create an evil. The work they are principally employed in is picking potatoes and bunching carrots. Two farmers in this district have lately taken to growing garden produce, peas and carrots; many women and children are employed in picking peas, but very few of those who are so employed belong to this district, they usually come from a distance. We have had a night school; we have had about 35 to 40 in ordinary attendance. It is open for two nights a week from October to February. I have always had to lament a lack of help at my night schools; I find that if you can give the scholars plenty to do, they will always attend regularly. There is one hamlet in my parish (Woodham) which contains 18 cottages, that is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from my school, but only $1\frac{1}{2}$ from Horsell and Byfleet; only two children from those cottages come to my school, but some go to Byfleet and Horsell. I don't think we are ripe for compulsory education at present, and I also think that education is now sufficiently appreciated. I advocate the early employment of boys in field labour in order that they may learn their business. The cottages about here are much crowded. The usual rent is 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* for cottages with four rooms; in the outlying hamlets it is 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* Very few men have far to go to work. The cottages have good gardens but there are no allotments. I don't think the farmers press the parents unduly in order to induce them to send their children to work. I think a dame's school might be maintained in most outlying hamlets. I stated one which cost at first 21*l.* a year; the woman who kept it had 6*s.* a week at first; I found that the children attended well and made progress. I have had no experience of itinerant masters. The ordinary excuse for keeping the children away from school is the want of clothing. Some of the parents are willing to pay extra in order to obtain a better education for their children; they sometimes send them to Chertsey, where they pay 6*d.* a week. I raised my price from 1*d.* to 2*d.* and none of the children left in consequence.

ALBURY.

20. The *Rev. G. R. Portal.*—I think that the education of the children is insufficient. I attribute the defect to the fact that they don't attend school sufficiently regularly before they to work. Many don't send their children to school at all. They keep them at home and send them to work whenever they can get a job; to some extent the large gardens are an inducement to the parents to keep their children at home. The main cause of the want of education is the indifference of the parents. They can always find something for their children to do, if they do not want to send them to school. There are not enough schools here. The parishes are very large, mine is 6 miles long; there is a school in every parish, but that is not enough. In my parish there are 4 or 5 hamlets, and there should be a dame's school in each, but the expense is too great to enable me to establish them; the payment should be made for results without requiring certificated teachers, or there should be one scale for certificated and another for uncertificated teachers; the payment in all the schools about here is 1*d.* until they write in copy books, and 2*d.* afterwards. I think a child could attend school advantageously at the age of 5, and if they attended regularly up to the age of 8 they would be so well grounded in the 3 R's that a night school would do the rest. I think that the labour should be prohibited up to the age of 9 or 10. The night school is the only mode which is practicable after the children begin to work. It is difficult to get children who know nothing to come to night schools; those who can read are glad to come and read amusing books. I am a guardian in the Guildford Union. The Public Health Act, 1866, is unknown and not enforced. The guardians are indifferent about nuisances.

BRAMLEY.

21. The *Rev. H. B. Power.*—I find that in my school the children who come from a distance attend better than those who live near. It is rather the indifference of the parents than the pressure used by the farmers that keeps the children from school. As soon as the parents find that their children can read and write they take them away from school, and the effect of having a good master and mistress is to cause the children to leave school younger than they otherwise would do, because their parents find that they make greater progress. Boys attend school up to the age of 10 or 11; a few leave occasionally before that age for scaring and dibbling and a few similar occupations, but they do not absent themselves to a serious extent.

There were no schools here when I came. I don't think many young persons are growing up in this district without being able to read and write; if they cannot it is their own fault. I think this district is well supplied with schools, and that they are well placed with reference to the cottages. I have attempted night schools, but they have not succeeded.

Letter from Mr. W. Drewitt, Lea Farm, Bramley.

22. I think the present mode of education as good as could be desired for children under 10 years, for which period the whole of their time should be given to it, after which they should be learning their trade, so to speak, which should be continued without interruption.

And I think the system of half-time, or so many months a year, though not injuring the farmer greatly, would be of very little service towards a boy's education.

A great deal might be done to improve the education and morals not only of the boys but also of men by a good system of night schools properly carried out, the time of which should never exceed an hour and a half, which carried on in a comfortable room would save many a man from the public house, and eventually the jail and ruin.

The best educated men are the best workmen, because they respect themselves enough to keep from the degrading influence of the beershop and public house. And the best means of improving the labourer's education is that which keeps in his mind all his school learning, and at the same time enables him practically to learn things daily required in his avocations, for which means no plan can do so much as night schools.

For instance, boys may be taught almost anything in the school, but put them on the farm, and in a year or two they have forgotten almost all they learnt.

In recommending night schools I speak from experience, and feel confident that if properly conducted they would be a great boon to the working classes.

BYFLEET.

23. The *Rev. N. L. Spicer.*—I think that the work done by women in the fields is very injurious to them physically; hoeing and carrot washing is too severe work for them. The standing so long in cold weather is injurious to them. I know of several women in my parish who, I think, have been injured by it. I am certain, too, that it has led to an immense amount of drinking among them. They fall into men's habits

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from mixing with men, and go off to the public house directly their work is done. The field work absolutely unfits them for domestic duties; they don't perform their domestic duties. The infants are hired out at about 6*d.* a day, or are sent to the infant school when their mothers go out to work. I have an infant school. I am quite opposed to it in principle, but I am obliged to fall in with the practices of the neighbourhood. The children leave the infant school at 5. As a general rule the cottages of the women who go to work are less tidy than the cottages of those who do not. In my school there are only four children above 12 years of age. I think that labourers' sons stay at school until the age of 11; they are irregular in their attendance during the last six months. Every boy and girl who leaves school can read and write when he or she leaves, and only a small minority don't come at all. Men's wages are 13*s.*; beer is allowed in addition during hay time and harvest; women have 1*s.* 6*d.* a day in hay time, and find their own beer; children have 2*s.* or 3*s.* a week at first. Some of the cottages in the parish are at a great distance from the school, but the distance makes no difference in the regularity of the attendance of the children. I think that the small farmers don't appreciate education at all, because they have no means of educating their own children. Cottages are usually let by the quarter, but the rent is paid weekly. Cottages belonging to the smaller landlords are all let by the week. There are very few close parishes in this county. A few women may get washing to do, otherwise the whole family is dependent on the father for support. A little work is done in the cottage gardens on Sundays, and a good many cows are kept for the London market; these have to be milked; and boys scare on Sundays.

The education of the poor is clearly defective. I attribute the defect to the unwillingness to forego the children's earnings.

Camberwell.

24. *Mr. W. Barnes*, nursery gardener.—I have lived here as a nursery gardener during the last 17 years. I employ a couple of boys, aged about 14; they begin at 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week, and are gradually raised. I don't employ women; no women are employed in nursery gardens, and boys are not employed to a greater extent than I employ them. I am well acquainted with the cultivation of market gardens near London; I have occasionally had the valuing of them. All the severe work of the cultivation is done by men; the women's work is to collect the vegetables (which have been previously dug up by the men), to clean them, and to carry them to the carts to be packed for market; but no young girls or boys are to be found at work in the market gardens. The usual hours of work for women are from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., but at busy times they often have to begin at 4 a.m. and go on until 9 or 10 at night, and to work on Sundays as well. The whole profits of a market gardener depend upon his being able to bring his vegetables as early as possible to market so as to secure the best price. All the work must be expeditiously done, and children cannot work expeditiously, and therefore they are not employed.

Most of the women who work are Irish; I should say 9 out of 10. Their usual wages are 6*s.* to 9*s.* a week, but when they work overtime they get about 2*d.* an hour for every hour they work overtime. Around Fulham and Hammersmith thousands of Irish men and women are employed in the market gardens, and in hard weather during winter they are thrown upon the rates. The busiest months are from April until September; after that the work becomes slack, but there is always something to be done during the winter. None of the women work at piecework. The women are old, strong, and healthy, although much of the work they do exposes them to cold and wet. There is no work done by boys or girls in the gardens (nursery or market) which causes them to leave school before the age of 14. I never employ a boy in my gardens who cannot read and write; if he could not do that he would be useless to me.

Carshalton.

25. *Edward Galtland*, foreman to Mr. Arnott, Woodcote.—Mr. Arnott farms about 550 acres; no grass; he grows a little lavender. This year he has grown 80 acres of potatoes, and about eight or 10 acres of green peas.

We employ women for weeding corn and potatoes, knocking dung, setting potatoes, and couching. In winter they sometimes work with the thrashing machine; about seven or eight work with the machine; they hand the corn into the machine, and collect the scattered corn from underneath. About seven or eight women are usually occupied in planting potatoes for about three weeks. We cut our corn by machinery, and the wives and children help the men to tie up; that job is done by the piece. After harvest the women rake, and after that digging potatoes occupies them for three weeks or one month. There is no constant employment for women during winter; they are occasionally employed for a day or two. We employ from seven to 20 women during summer. There are about seven who live on the farm, and the rest come from a distance; we set them on as we can get them. We plough up our potatoes. Our potato picking and weeding is done by the day. We have never had any women injured by machinery; some women are not strong enough for the work, but we cannot get enough men; we employ about four boys. We do not often employ a boy under the age of 12; if we do it is only for a week or two scaring birds. We plough by steam, and don't want ploughboys. We do not do much work by the piece. Men's wages are 15*s.* a week; women's, 6*s.*; and boys, 5*s.*, that is the lowest for boys as a general rule, although we had one boy to mind pigs after harvest at 3*s.* a week. Women work from 8 to 6 all the year round; they have one hour, 12 to 1, for dinner. Carters have 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week and a house which is worth 3*s.* 6*d.*; each man has charge of one pair of horses. We have 11 cottages on the farm; that number is sufficient to supply us with labourers during the winter, but not during the summer. The children who are big enough go to Carshalton to school (distance two miles); they stay there until they are 14 or 15. Perhaps a few more boys are employed where they plough with three or four horses, which some people about here do.

26. *Mr. C. Simm*, Carshalton.—My brother and myself grow about 60 acres of medical herbs here. We cultivate altogether about 160 acres. Probably about 300 acres of medical herbs are grown in this district altogether, and about nine-tenths of that extent consist of mint and lavender. Women are employed a little in the spring for pulling up the young plants in the nurseries before they are transplanted into the fields; that work lasts one month or five weeks; they are paid 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a day with one pint of beer. They are sometimes employed with their husbands in cutting the crops; but there is no other labour in connexion with this cultivation in which they are employed. Very few children are employed; they sometimes work with their parents, but there is no special employment in connexion with the herbs which occupies boys.

Capel.

27. *Edward Kerrich, Esq.*—I have been chairman of the Dorking Board of Guardians for 30 years; I am well acquainted with the cultivation of the land and with the mode in which labour is employed in this district. I formerly farmed 150 acres of land. There are no gangs in this neighbourhood. When engaged in bean or pea dibbling a man will bring three or four children to work with him; but there is no other work in which children are employed to work under the control of a man who hires them and superintends the

work. The children who are so employed are generally small. Women go harvesting with their husbands, they help to tie up and some of them fag a little; they make hay. I have never known a woman take a job at harvest by herself. I have seen a woman occasionally pull turnips in winter, but that is very rare. Women are so little employed that I cannot say whether the employment is physically or morally injurious to them. I cannot imagine that what they do can injure them. It is very rare to see a girl under 16 or 17 at work. I have occasionally seen a girl or two tenting birds. Very few boys under the age of 13 or 14 are employed; they used to begin to work younger than that, but now they remain at school. They go with the team, scare birds, tend cows, and in winter go to copse cutting. Copse cutting is piece-work, and is paid by the load or the 100 of each article. That work lasts from September to March or April; hoop shaving and peeling bark lasts a month or six weeks longer. The woodmen are then employed in mowing the hay and at harvest. The boys brush up and cut the small stuff. Most of the men in this district can cut wood, but some are far more dexterous than others. Men's wages are 13*s*. Carters and shepherds are 15*s*. or 16*s*. Some farmers give their carters 1*l*. or so in harvest, but that is not a general rule. Carter boys get from 5*s*. to 8*s*. a week; they come at 5 a.m. and leave at 6.30 or 7. I think the poor are better off in this district than in any other in the country. This is a purely agricultural district, but many men go from here to the metropolitan district. Cottages are very insufficient. You may make the internal accommodation as comfortable as you like, they will always take in lodgers. The accommodation is better now than it was formerly; the owners are of all kinds. The rent for cottages with two or three bedrooms and gardens is about 5*l*. a year. The guardians never overlook a case of overcrowding; we find it difficult to come at, it is difficult to know who is living in the cottage. I approve of the Act of 1866, but I think it is defective in making nobody but the person who originates the nuisance responsible for it. I think that any person on whose land a nuisance is found should be liable for it, and should have power to proceed against the person actually causing the nuisance. I think that the education of the poor is quite sufficient. No cottages in this district are more than two miles from a school. A man who worked for me with a boy at copse cutting for 10 weeks earned on an average 23*s*. a week.

Chobham.

28. *Mr. F. Daborn*, farmer.—Boys are not of any use to farmers until the age of 10, and are not of much general use until the age of 12. I pay my carter 15*s*. (he also has 6*d*. every time he goes away from home, and that amounts to about 1*s*. 6*d*. a week). My carter, two under cowmen, and shepherd have to be here three and a half hours each Sunday. No women are employed, and boys very little until after the age of 11 or 12; they earn 4*s*. or 5*s*. a week at that age; that is more than they are worth, but we give it to them in order to retain them on the place. The boys used formerly to lodge in the farmers' houses, and they then came in at 7.30 or 8, now they spend their evenings at the public houses. An Act should be passed to compel the children to attend school during a certain number of years, and to abolish half the beer houses. Day wages are about 13*s*.

Clandon.

29. *Mr. Richard Drewitt*, agent to Lord Onslow.—I have lived here 19 years. I formerly farmed from 400 to 700 acres of land at Pinford. Women are only occasionally employed; on a farm of 400 or 500 acres, perhaps four or five women will be employed, commonly about 9 months a year. They are employed in raking and spudding couch grass, weeding corn, haymaking, and harvesting. After harvest they are employed in picking tuffets off the sown wheat. They usually work from 8 to 5. I don't think that the wife's work is of much assistance to the family except during harvest. I am well acquainted with the country for 10 miles round this place, and what I say now applies to all that district. The farms are usually from 200 to 500 acres in extent. I don't think that more than one-fourth of the women go out to work at all, except in haytime and during harvest. Girls very seldom work in the fields, and it is not at all desirable that they should. Boys usually remain at school until they are 12; their chief employment is to drive plough; they are useful for that purpose at the age of 12; those employed in bird-scaring and sheep and cow tending are usually 12. They earn about 3*s*. a week at that age. Most boys can read and write; I can name one family who cannot, but that is because they will not go to school. Lord Onslow subscribes 10*l*. a year to the schools in each of the parishes in which he has property. It is a great mistake to suppose that all labourers earn the same; in order to be a good agricultural labourer a boy must begin to work when young, but I think 12 is young enough to begin, except during harvest. Gleaning causes more immorality than any other kind of work. The children go out 50 or 60 together to get so many handfulls, and they go and steal the corn in order to complete their handfulls. Lord Onslow lets about 1½ cottages per 100 acres with the farms. He charges his tenants 3*l*. per cottage, and I endeavour to bind the tenant to let them to the labourer for the same sum as they pay themselves, but I cannot get that carried out. Lord Onslow charges 50*s*. a year for the cottages he lets to the labourers. The farmers frequently let their cottages to others than their own labourers. All the cottages have gardens of from 30 to 60 poles. There are some allotments in Clandon. Every labourer who has only 20 poles of garden has an allotment of quarter acre for which he pays 5*s*. a year. The usual rent of the land is about 25*s*. an acre. The allotments are let subject to the condition of the occupiers keeping sober and going to church; they may not grow wheat on more than a quarter. The farmers do not object to the allotments. Almost all the labourers keep pigs. The cottages are conveniently situated with respect to the work to be done, but there are not enough of them. I built two cottages for 100 guineas each, with two bedrooms and a small sleeping room for children up stairs, and sitting room, kitchen, and scullery down stairs; that sum included the water supply, which can be easily obtained here, and fences. On Sundays the shepherd is wanted during half the day, sometimes more; the horse keeper and stockman three hours each. I think a good labourer will earn 50*l*. a year here; but here he can earn 30*s*. a week for 6 weeks by stripping bark. I have three under me now who earn that amount; most men will earn about 40*l*. I think it is desirable that boys should go to school during a portion of their time after they begin to work, but they can only devote the evening and Sundays to it.

Cranleigh.

30. *Mr. Thomas Street*, Mannings Hill Farm.—I was born here, and have lived here all my life. I farm 190 acres of my own land, and hire about 70 acres besides. I have only about 20 acres of wood and about 30 of grass. I can employ women when I can get them, but they don't like work. 10 years ago I used to pick 80 loads of stones by women's labour a year, and they used to bid for the work This year I have only picked about 20 loads. Women used to trim roots in winter, but they won't do that now; all they do now is to weed corn, pick couch, make hay, and help in harvest. Many won't come out to harvest at all; they do nothing in the fields here after harvest. There are no hops here. They are usually paid for weeding and couching 10*d*. a day, and 1*s*. during haytime and harvest. Women never work by the piece, except during harvest, when they work with their husbands. The ordinary hours of work are from 7 to 5 for men all the year

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round, and from 8 to 5 for women. Those who work for me are usually labourers' wives. I have never had more than three women working for me at one time this year. I employ five boys under 18 all the year round. I don't think they are of any use under the age of 13; I may sometimes take one of 10 out of charity. I feed my turnips on the land. In winter I want perhaps two boys to help the shepherd. In summer we have our stock on the commons, and want boys to tend them; they also help a little in the service of the house; they begin to drive team at about the age of 13. We don't want them for bird frightening much; we never have them to scare after sowing, but sometimes a little before the corn is ripe. Boys are not employed to single turnips, a man does that. Boys' wages begin at 6*d.* a day, and stop at 1*s.*; 21 years ago I gave 2*s.* 6*d.* for a boy to drive plough; now I give 4*s.* or 4*s.* 6*d.* The hours of work with the horses are from 7 to 4; they return home for one hour for dinner; they have their breakfast before they go out. The ordinary hours of labour are from 7 to 5. The boys are almost always employed either in looking after stock or with the team. Sometimes I apply to the parents for boys, and sometimes the parents apply to me. The boys are healthy. I pay my men 12*s.* a week, the shepherd and carter have 15*s.* I think that the boys who have been to school conduct themselves better and are therefore more useful to me than those who have not. I think that those who stay away from school, stay away because they live too far from the school, *i.e.*, about 2 miles, and besides, the parents are not always anxious about it. We cannot get maid servants as easily as we could. I could not spare the boys who work for me at all during the day time. I think education is very desirable, but a boy ought to be educated before he goes to work at all. The boys are easier to manage after they have been to school, and are not discontented. This parish is 6 miles long, and some parts of it are more than 2 miles from the school; my labourers all live within 1 mile of my farm. Cottages let for about 80*s.* a year. I have three carter boys in the house; I board them. They have 9*l.*, 6*l.*, and 4*l.* a year, besides their board and lodging. I hire them for the half year. They are obliged to stay in-doors during the evening. Formerly all farmers used to board boys in their houses, but few do it at present. I find more difficulty in getting boys to come than formerly. I send them to school in winter. The cottages have gardens of from 20 to 40 poles. There are no allotments. Women and children do not do much work in the gardens. The cottages are not crowded. I think that all the farmers about here manage their land in the way I do.

Dorking.

31. The *Rev. J. S. Bright.*—I am a noncomformist. I know the neighbourhood of Dorking well. There are plenty of schools, in fact there is a competition among the different managers to procure the attendance of the children at their respective schools. This is not a purely agricultural neighbourhood; but knowing what I do of the condition of the poorer classes generally, I incline to think that they can be educated by compulsion only. I am inclined to think that nonconformists would object to compulsion, not from fear of objectionable doctrines being taught, but because they object to anything which infringes their independence. In the large parishes compulsion would be impossible, because you cannot contend with space. Children could not come great distances to school. The cottage accommodation is everywhere inadequate.

Farnham.

32. *Mr. John Nash*, auctioneer, land surveyor, and hop planter, Farnham.—I have lived here all my life. I farm about 20 acres of hops and 10 acres of other land. In the parish of Farnham there are 1,500 acres of hops, and about 10,600 acres altogether. I have about 120 hop growers. The hop district extends about 12 or 14 miles south-west and about 3 miles north-east. In that district there are about 3,500 acres of hops. I am well acquainted with the general employment of labour in agriculture in this district. Farms are small, there may be 10 or 12 over 200 acres; the remainder go down to as low as 8or 10 acres. Women are employed in hop tying, (*i.e.*, tying the hops to the poles); they commence about the beginning of May; one woman will tie 4 acres at 10*s.* an acre. They bring their children to help them; a woman working alone would tie 4 acres in about 3 or 4 weeks. They usually work from about 8 a.m. to 4 or 5 p.m.; don't work in wet weather; we always find plenty of women to do these jobs, they consider it healthy. Very often all the labour necessary for the cultivation of hops is contracted for at 4*l.* per acre. That includes everything except "extra-becking" (*i.e.*, extra labour which may be necessary to remove the weeds) and ladder lying when the hops are blown off the poles. That work will employ the man who undertakes it constantly from January to August, and one man will do 5 acres, and in addition will have a few days to spare. He does it all himself. If a man has a son to help him he will take more land, but the women never do hard work, altho' they sometimes help their husbands in laying out the poles, which is included in the contract work done for 4*l.* The labour costs about 4*l.* 10*s.* per acre except the picking. Young boys and girls under 12 are useless for the cultivation of hops, and are scarcely ever employed at all under that age. The picking employs about 7 or 8 persons per acre upon an average for about three weeks. The work is done by the piece, we pay usually about 2½*d.* a bushel. Each family take their own money; no gang system; never heard of a contractor undertaking to get hops picked by the acre at a certain price. Young children are useful for picking hops, the whole labouring population turn out to pick hops immediately after harvest. A good picker will earn 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* a day; I have known a large family earn about 3*l.* or 3*l.* 10*s.* a week. Very few Farnham men pick the hops; they are employed in other ways at that time. There are tramps who come to assist in hop picking, but nearly all of the labour is supplied by the inhabitants of this locality. Women do no hard work in agriculture. Children very little employed. They do not go to drive ploughs until the age of 13 or 14. There is hardly anything for them to do before that age. They go to school; there are plenty of schools. There is an ample supply of cottages; average rent is about 2*s.* 6*d.* a week; all have gardens of 20 to 40 poles. There are a few allotment fields, but it is rather the exception to have allotments. The new cottages are good, the old inferior. Wages are 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week; women at haymaking have 1*s.* a day and beer allowed. The cottages are owned partly by the landowners, but a majority by other persons; many labourers have cottages which have been built on the waste. The cottages owned by the proprietors are about the same in quality and let at the same price as those owned by others. I have built several cottages with 3 bedrooms; they cost me 120*l.* each and let for 3*s.* a week with gardens. The commons are most of them enclosed now so that the cottagers cannot cut fuel as formerly, nor have they been compensated for the loss.

33. *Mr. Colin Carmichael*, bailiff to Mrs. Paine, Dippenhall farm.—I have been here 5 years and have the management of 1,000 acres of land, 200 of which are hop ground. I employ 23 women now, and about that number all the year round. That was not the practice here before I came, but I find women at 1*s.* a day cheaper than other labourers. In hay time we employ 60 women. I am obliged to keep very friendly with the women because in May I want 60 for tying hops. The general employment of women is as follows:—In spring they spread manure and hoe, in summer and autumn they are employed at haymaking, harvest, and hop picking, and in winter they pull and clean turnips and strip hop poles. My neighbours don't employ as many women as I do. I

don't employ any girls under 12; sometimes the mothers bring them to help them when they do piece-work. I have about 30 boys under 18; they do the same sort of work as the women, but don't tye the hops. The boys are not well educated, some we have who have never been to school. I won't employ them younger than 12, but their fathers take them out to work with them under that age when they do work by the piece. The cause of their defective education is because their parents will not keep them at school long enough or regularly enough. My men's wages last week averaged 1*l.* a head. The boys would be far more useful to me if they were better educated. I think there should be a law requiring a certain amount of education from those engaged in labour. I would not allow any boy to be employed in the fields under the age of 10, and between the ages of 10 and 12 they should go to school in the winter quarter. If that were done they could devote the whole of their time after the age of 12 to their profession. I think that boys might go to school for 2 or 3 hours in the morning before they go to work. I don't think that would at all interfere with the arrangements of agricultural labour. Education renders them far more intelligent in every way, and particularly more competent to use machinery. It is all nonsense to say that education makes them discontented; I have no difficulty with the best educated of my men. In hop-picking we use 600 bins, and they usually employ 2,000 pickers. We engage pickers by the bin, and those who take the bins bring assistants, and the actual number employed depends upon the number of assistants they bring. It costs me 1*s.* 7*d.* per bin to get the pickers, and for refreshments on the journey here. I send waggons for 10 or 20 miles all round to bring the people in, and I send them back after the hops are picked; we have sub-agents in all the parishes round. I send out men who go round the country to collect pickers, I pay them 4*d.* for every bin for which they provide pickers; and they pay something, I believe 1*d.* a head, out of their money for the pickers the sub-agents can provide them with.

Frensham.

34. *James Simmons, Esq.*, Cherrimans, Shottermill.—I have lived here all my life. I farm 100 acres now, formerly 400. I don't think women work in sufficient numbers for it to have a bad moral effect upon them. It is the exception to see a girl in the fields. I think children could be spared up to 11 or 12 from field labour without increasing the expense of cultivation; but a boy should begin to work early in order to learn his business and to enure him to agricultural work. I have employed boys who have been in the workhouse up to the age of 13, and they were of little use. Most boys can read and write when they leave school; they do not take much trouble to keep up what they know. I don't think any good could be done by passing an Act of Parliament for the purpose of introducing compulsory education. The labourers are too independent. Most of the commons around here have been enclosed. Before the enclosures the squatters on the commons and cottagers depended upon the commons for their fuel; since the enclosures they have not been allowed to cut the turf, except by special permission; but their condition has nevertheless improved, because there is more regular employment than formerly. They can usually keep geese, but bees pay best. The parish of Frenchham is nine miles long. There are four schools in different parts of it. My cottages are let for 1*s.* 9*d.* per week; that is rather cheap. A five-roomed cottage here costs about 120*l.* for the building alone. I do not approve of the Labouring Classes Dwelling House Act. It is too complex, and the plans on which the work is done are not always the best for investment.

Guildford.

35. *Mr. Thomas Drewitt*, Picard's Farms.—I farm 550 acres; about 100 are poor sheep walk. I have occupied it for 50 years. I employ a few women, but not so much now as formerly. Women are seldom employed in pulling up turnips for storing, but they sometimes thin them in winter. Very few girls work. We have about six or seven boys, beginning at the age of 11 or 12, at work all the year round. We have one boy with each team, and we want one or two extra boys to lead the horses when the teams are divided and placed in separate carts or other farm implements. These boys are also wanted in the winter to help the shepherd, to thin turnips, and to prepare food for the sheep and cattle. Not many employed younger than 11 or 12. Some farmers employ them for scaring birds, but I always employ a man with a gun for that purpose. I rarely employ boys younger than 11 or 12. I give my youngest boys 2*s.* 6*d.* per week; their wages are increased to 7*s.* or 8*s.* I give women 1*s.* a day and beer during haytime, and 10*d.* a day at other times. Boys usually apply for work when they want it. Men are wanted on Sundays to feed horses, sheep, and beasts, but for no other purposes. The boys get more saucy when mixed with other boys at school than when at work. Day wages for men are 12*s.* a week. I think a good man who works by the piece would earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day in winter and 3*s.* in summer, and would find piecework to do almost all the year. A great deal of hoeing, all mowing, reaping, winnowing, and hedging are done by the piece; piecework is usually taken separately, but occasionally two or three men will undertake a piece of work together. Meal hours are half an hour for breakfast at 8; dinner at 12, one hour; and if they work late, half hour at 4. In winter they breakfast before coming to work and do not stop at 4. All my men live within one mile; usually four or five cottages are let with a farm of the size of mine. My own farm cottages let at 1*s.* a week, that is the usual rent for cottages let by the farmer to his labourers; other cottages are about 2*s.* a week. They generally have gardens of from 20 to 40 poles. They dont grow corn in the gardens. Some labourers have allotments, not more than a quarter of an acre. There they grow vegetables, and sell some of the produce. They keep pigs where allowed to do so, but the sanitary inspectors have shut up the pigsties in many instances. I think it answers to a labourer to keep a pig where they have allotments. They feed the pig chiefly with potatoes. I don't allow my cottagers who live on the farm to keep pigs, because I would not expose them to the temptation, but I give them four loads of dung a year, and sell them 30 stone (8 lbs.) of pig meat at 25 per cent. under the market price. My shepherd and carter have 15*s.* a week. I think that all the boys have been taught to read and write and do a little arithmetic. I don't think that the labourers value education very much, because I often find that they keep their children at home when they might send them to school. A certain number of cottages are always wanted on the farm, and I think about one cottage per 100 acres sufficient on farms over 400 acres, but the proportion must be larger on smaller farms. I think my labour costs nearly 2*l.* per acre, including harvest. No statute fair about here. I am not aware of any in the county. My farm is principally on the Hog's Back, but the mode of cultivation is the same both north and south of the Hog's Back until the wealden clay about Dunsfold is reached. A family often earns 10*s.* a day by reaping.

Godstone.

36. *Mr. W. Chater*, relieving officer and nuisance inspector to the Godstone Board of Guardians.—The cottage accommodation in my district is by no means sufficient. The defective drainage forms the principal ground of complaint. I meet with no difficulty in carrying out the present law; when I have found a cottage overcrowded, I have occasionally complained to the inmates, and always with success. Near Farley I found three cottages, in which 27 persons lived, supplied with only one privy. Power should

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be given to the magistrates to supply the necessary accommodation where the landlord failed to do so.

LIMPSFIELD.

37. *Mr. Henry Cox*, landowner.—Cultivation is chiefly arable, one-third grass, 70 or 80 acres hops. I have farmed 300 acres of my own land (one half grass), for 40 years.

Young boys about 8 to 12 are employed at crow, cow, and sheep keeping, and weeding; sheep and cattle are turned out on the commons; sheep require a keeper. Children are employed by their parents to weed. At 12 they they are fit to go to plough. I think it a great hardship for a boy to be put to drive plough under 12 with a stranger, that does occasionally happen. I used to have two or three boys always running about. I do not employ extra boys at particular times of the year. There are upwards of 800 acres of common in Limpsfield.

Girls are hardly ever employed.

Women are very little employed, except in weeding, hay making, and hopping; families get their children to service as soon as possible. Women and children never have more than a mile to go to work; they work from 6 to 6 in summer and during daylight in winter. Carter's boys have to come at 5, and the only case of hardship which I know is where boys put to plough under 12 years of age with strangers; there may be a few cases where that happens in Limpsfield. They work from 7 p.m., but after 2 o'clock the work is very easy. Carter's boys breakfast before they come. I cannot say whether any restriction is desirable, but I don't think any farmer would be worse off than they are now if they employed no boys under 12; I think a boy should be permitted to work with his parents under that age.

There are plenty of schools here; I don't approve of the education given, I don't think the children are taught to think, they only give answers by rote. It is impossible that more can be done for education than is done about here.

Men's wages are 13*s.*; a great deal of work done by piece. All threshing is done by machinery; the machines are attended by 17 or 18 hands, about 2 of whom are women. I don't remember any accident happening to women. There is plenty of hop-picking here for the inhabitants, in fact the residents are not quite able to do work.

My labour always amounted to rather more than 1*l.* per acre, that did not include hop picking and drying, but did include the hop cultivation.

I think two cottages per 100 acres sufficient here.

[I am indebted to Mr. H. Cox, for the following particulars as to the expense of cultivating hops and the average rate of day wages each year. Mr. Cox was a hop grower himself for many years, and the following particulars are the result of his own experience.—F. H. N.]

Estimate of the Expense of cultivating an acre of Hops at Trevereux, Limpsfield, for the year.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Rent of land	1	5	0
Tithe and taxes	1	6	0
Stripping poles	0	7	0
Average expense of poles (12 or 14 feet)* per year	7	10	0
Digging	0	18	0
Cutting	0	6	0
Polling	0	14	0
Average manure	4	0	0
Keeping clean	1	5	0
Tieing and hilling	0	14	0
Fences	0	5	0
Interest of capital	1	10	0
	20	0	0

[* The 14 feet poles cost more than the 12 feet, but last longer.—F. H. N.]

* Expenses of picking, drying, and of the duty on a crop of hops by the hundredweight.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Picking on an average	0	9	0
Pole pullers and helpers	0	2	6
Small repairs to kiln	0	1	6
Driers' wages	0	2	0
Fuel and sulphur	0	3	0
Pockets and bagging	0	3	6
Carriage to London	0	1	6
Commission on selling	0	2	6
Duty (now taken off)	0	19	0
Hop, sulphur, &c.	0	1	0
	2	5	6

The average growth of hops at Trevereux from 1817 to 1843 (being 1,649 cwt. 1 qr. 16 lbs. grown on 274 acres) was 6 cwt. 0 qr. 2 lbs. per acre.

On an average it cost 1*s.* to get about 8 bushels picked, but the number picked at Trevereux for 1*s.* has varied from 2 to 9 bushels; 58 to 80 bushels of green hops are required to make up a hundredweight. During the picking a pole puller is required for every 4 or 5 bins.

Average day wages at Trevereux.

	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*
1818	2	4	1842	2	2
1819	2	4	1843	2	2
1820	2	3	1844	2	0
1821	2	0	1845	1	10
1822	1	10	1846	2	0
1823	1	8	1847	2	0
1824	1	10	1848	1	8
1825	2	0	1849	1	8
1826	2	0	1850	1	8
1827	2	0	1851	1	8
1828	2	0	1852	1	8
1829	2	0	1853	2	0
1830	1	10	1854	2	0
1831	2	0	1855	2	2
1832	2	0	1856	2	2
1833	2	0	1857	2	2
1834	2	0	1858	2	0
1835	1	10	1859	2	0
1836	1	10	1860	2	2
1837	2	0	1861	2	2
1838	2	0	1862	2	2
1839	2	2	1863	2	2
1840	2	2	1864	2	2
1841	2	2	1865	2	2

PUTTENHAM.

38. *Mr. J. L. Hewitt.*—I farm 1,200 acres with my brother, nearly all arable and some hops. I want boys all the year round; I employ about 20 from the age of 11 or 12, they are employed with carters and shepherds. I plough with two, three, or four horses, according to the soil and crop we intend to grow; also employ five or six boys bird minding for a month or two, and for a few weeks in summer in weeding, they are seldom under 10. In weeding we send out five or six together with a man; that lasts only two or three weeks in May and June; weeding is required here because charlock grows more on chalk than elsewhere. Small boys earn 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week; we usually send to the parents when we want boys. The men who superintend the boys at work threaten a good deal, but find it difficult to carry it out, the mothers let them know about it. Boys more useful than women for weeding; don't tread so much; these weeds grow where seeds are sown, and if you use a horse-hoe you pull pull up the seeds. Girls are seldom employed; it would be a good job if none went out. We employ about two-fifths of the wives of the labourers, only in

* In some years when hops are abundant the picking may cost less; if the crop is bad the picking will cost more; the price of fuel also varies a little. It never is done, picking, curing, &c., until sale is made under 2*l.* 2*s.*

summer; they weed; I have one who works with a threshing machine, but know of no other; they don't hoe, but weed with the hand or fork. They live about half a mile from their work. Boys work from 7 to 5, carters 6 to 6, but they go home for breakfast; one hour is allowed for meals; women's hours are from 8 to 5.

I think it is desirable that labour of boys should be prohibited up to 10, except during harvest and hop-picking, when they can earn about 1*s.* a day. I could not spare them at all after they once came to work for me, but I employ very few under 12.

Labour costs 35*s.* to 40*s.* an acre; day labourers' wages are 12*s.* a week, but only about one-fifth of the work is done by the day. Seven men in my employment earn on an average 42*l.* a year; wages are paid fortnightly. These seven men are not particularly good workmen, rather under average. We have often talked it over at Guildford, and we think that the average wages per week in this part of Surrey are 16*s.* Carters have 15*s.* and harvest money 3*l.* I also find beer worth about 25*s.* per annum, and fetch firing for them. There has been a rise in the cost of agricultural labour, amounting to at least 25 per cent., in 10 years.

Reigate.

39. *Mr. Robert Clutton*, Hartswood, land agent.—I farm 600 acres. I am well acquainted with every part of Surrey, and with the labour necessary to carry on the cultivation here. So far as the health of women and children no Act of Parliament is necessary. The school attendance is irregular while it lasts, and does not last long enough. The increase of wages to the labourer has not led him to send his children more regularly to school or for a longer period than formerly. I think it very desirable that the children should have a better education. Here we don't employ children before 12, but they are employed on the greensand and beds above that to single turnips for about a month to six weeks in the year under the age of 12; they are also employed for rook and sheep tending; but I don't employ them for that purpose, I think it cheaper to employ men. I don' think they are employed under 10, they are not wanted, and should not be employed. There would be no harm in prohibiting labour under 10, it would be useless here, because it is never done. I think boys are of no use between the ages of 10 and 12, except for about three months in the year. I always advise the men to keep their children longer at school, but they won't do it; at present those who are educated are apt to be discontented, but when education becomes general I expect that will not be the case. I am acquainted witn the Labouring Classes Dwelling House Act; I don't think it answers; it adds largely to the expense, and often the plans which are insisted on are not the best. I know that no five-roomed cottage can be built for 150*l.*; I always build with an upper floor; poor people all prefer cottages so built, they are drier. I think landlords ought to let cottages with the farm, making stipulations as to lodgers; the labourer should be under the farmer, and not the farmer under the labourer; the agent should see that the labourer is not screwed as to rent by the farmer, and the cottage not overcrowded. In this district almost all the farms are let on yearly holdings, therefore the landlord virtually has the control over them; where the farms are let on lease some other arrangement may be necessary. My labour here costs 35*s.* or 40*s.* an acre, and I have two cottages for each 100 acres; that is amply sufficient. The most necessary alteration in the law which can be made with regard to cottages is that the nuisance inspector should not be a local man; if he is he is apt to be influenced by local interests.

Letter from R. Clutton, Esq., dated Hartswood, Reigate, 5th September 1868.

40. I find on enquiry that there are more children employed in this neighbourhood under 12 years of age than I was aware of. It is very desirable that up to 12 certainly the boys and girls too should attend school, and if one year later they could attend school alternate days (half-time days being found impracticable in agriculture) it would more than anything tend to fix in them that which they have been previously taught. I am confirmed in the opinion that the increase in the wages of both men and boys has, instead of inducing a longer attendance at school, produced exactly the contrary effect.

Ripley.

41. *Major Onslow*, owner.—The cultivation chiefly arable. I farm 90 acres. Boys are employed from 8 to 10 or 11 occasionally at bird-minding, cow and pig keeping; after that they are employed regularly. Boys do much injury to wheat. Last year I had a boy to mind birds for me, and he did more harm than the birds would have done. It is said here that if you employ boys you must employ a man to look after them. They are employed now about as extensively as formerly; wages, 2*s.* and upwards.

Girls are hardly ever employed; women very rarely, except in hay and harvest. A few farmers grow carrots, and women are wanted to wash them from November to spring. The merchants who buy the carrots employ all that labour. I think women get rheumatics from carrot washing. As to the morality, I find that there is more bastardy among women in service than among those engaged in field work.

I think any restrictions as to age boys might be permitted to work would cause a great deal of discontent on the part of farmers and parents; the parents say it would be hard to be deprived of their earnings, and farmers say it would be hard not to have the work done. Nor do I think any restriction is desirable. If there were much female labour I should object to it, but there is so little that no restriction is necessary.

There are two schools, one at Ripley and one at Send. Children pay 2*d.* a week; no cottages are out of reach of the schools. I don't think labourers take sufficient advantage of the schools, *e.g.*, I have a man who works for me, and I can't get him to send his son to school; he says that his wife works, and the boy must stay at home to take care of his young brother.

The cottages are now becoming sufficient in number, many having been built by Lord Lovelace, they are conveniently situated; much crowded in the villages. Old cottages have only two rooms, but the new have two or three bedrooms and one or two others; rent, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*

Water supply good; drainage good: cottages in villages have no gardens, but they have allotments of about one-quarter acre each near the cottages; other cottages have gardens.

Seale.

42. The *Rev. W. L. Beynon.*—I have been here 12 years. Girls are never taken away permanently from school to go to work. Boys begin to leave school at about 8 and girls at about 10. Boys often ask leave to be absent from school before they finally leave, and are absent about one month or six weeks besides the regular holidays, which last during August and September, for gleaning and hop-picking. It is against the rules of the school to give the girls leave to be absent, but they ask leave to be absent to take care of the younger children when the mother is away, chiefly in the hop-tyeing time, and we usually give them leave. They then go to the fields ostensibly with the dinner, but when there they stay and assist in the work. There is a certain amount of pressure put upon the parents by the farmers; the parents send the children to work because they don't like to offend the farmers. The parents tell me that the farmers say the work must be done, and that they cannot stay in the cottage unless it is. The enclosure of the commons is no great loss to the poor; some of

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them used to keep a cow, which they cannot do now, and they used to cut fuel on the commons; but now they can buy coal, which does not on the whole cost them much more than obtaining turf from the commons. There are no cottages in this parish more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ or $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the village. There are many parents who from indolence or indifference never send their children to school, even those who attend regularly are quite insufficiently educated, they can hardly read, and writing is quite unknown among them. When they come to a confirmation class they can hardly get through the service. The parents never tell me that they are obliged to keep their children at home for the sake of their earnings. I know well that that is not the true reason. Persons who live at a distance from the village always fall off in morality. Most of the cottages are scattered about at a distance from the village. The nominal wages here at 12*s.* a week, but so much task work is done that many earn 16*s.* or 17*s.* When husband and wife and one or two boys go to work they earn from 1*l.* to 30*s.* a week. There is no real poverty here. The farmers do not turn off the men in winter, but employ them to trench the commons.

THORPE.

43. The *Rev. G. Drury.*—I don't think that the women who go to work are less respectable than any other women in the parish as a general rule. The work does not appear to interfere with the management of the cottages, except in one or two instances. The older girls stay at home to look after the children. I think that is a good education for them. 25 attended my night school last year; that number comprised nearly all in the parish between the ages of 13 and 18; and out of that number nine, who are in the choir, are sufficiently educated; of the remainder four could not read, seven could read a little, perhaps second standard; the other five could read about fourth standard. Perhaps one-third could not write well. I think that if a boy attended school regularly up to the age of 11 he would have have learnt enough to be able to keep up what he knew. The attendance of the older children at school is very irregular. The porportion in regular attendance is very large, but that is made up by the infants who attend regularly, and as much in winter as in summer, because they live near. I reckoned that the expense of our night school during one winter for four months, four nights a week, was 15*s.* per boy; that included teaching, lighting, firing, and books. We have 70 cottages here for 1,400 acres, but some are inhabited by gardeners, &c., there being four or five large houses in the parish. There are a few allotments; only about one acre altogether. I lived at Peper Harrow $6\frac{1}{2}$ years; I don't think they are better off here than there, though the people have more opportunities; there is more drinking here. Wages were raised a little while ago here; but the people are not better off for that; they only drink more beer. The education is more advanced here than at Peper Harrow. We have a reading-room here; it is open from 7 to 9 p.m. during the winter months. The subscription is 1*s.*; that is not quite enough to pay the expense; they may smoke if they like. There are nine subscribers; they may not take the books out The room is always lighted and has a fire. There are books and newspapers, drafts, chess, and dominoes. Nobody is admitted without my consent.

WANBOROUGH.

44. The *Rev. G. Chilton.*—I have been here 7 years. I think that the children of the labourers now growing up in this parish are sufficiently educated at the time they leave school. The charities in the parish are made to depend entirely upon the attendance of the children at school, and consequently all attend regularly. I don't think there is much difference between the state of things in my parish and the surrounding parishes. Perhaps I am rather more advantageously situated than others, because I am well supported by the landowners. The boys attend school regularly up to the age of 10 at least; they sometimes go away for three weeks or a month in the spring for bean-dropping, &c., but that does not interfere with their school work. I think that the instruction would be best carried on by the half-day system, where the farm work is sufficiently near the school; and I think that there is a sufficient supply af boys about here to enable that to be done. I think that the girls acquire a distaste for service by going to school; they prefer living at home and leading an idle life. Boys who go away for a few weeks to do short jobs always come back to school when their work is done. There is only one farmer in this parish who employs boys as young as 10. There are a few hops in this parish, but they are picked by the parishioners without any assistance from elsewhere. The extra earnings of father, mother, and four children in harvest amount to 5*l.* or 6*l.* The income and expenditure of a family of a father, mother, and four children is as follows:—

Income (weekly).	*s.*	*d.*
Father's wages - - - -	13	0
Extra money in harvest, earned by father 4*l.* = per week, say -	1	6
Do. earned by wife and children, 2*l.*, = say	0	9
Total weekly income - -	15	3

Expenditure (weekly).	*s.*	*d.*
Five gallons flour, at 1*s.* 6*d.* - - -	7	6
Three lbs. pork, at 8*d.* - - -	2	0
Two ozs. tea and two lbs. sugar - -	1	1
One lb. butter - - - -	1	2
One lb. candles, 6*d*; soda and soap, 6*d.* -	1	0
Firing - - - - -	1	6
Salt and yeast - - - -	0	4
Schooling - - - - -	0	3
Clubs (Clothing and Benefit) - -	1	$8\frac{1}{2}$
Clothing (besides club) 2*l.* a year, say -	0	9
Rent - - - - -	2	0
Total weekly expenditure -	19	$3\frac{1}{2}$

	s.	*d.*
	19	$3\frac{1}{2}$
	15	3
Excess of expenditure over income - -	*s.* 4	$0\frac{1}{2}$

Some cottages are always let with the farms about here; I have never observed any harm to arise from that plan. It is the usual practice here for the farmers to make a dedution from the wages when the weather is wet, and then if a man has not an allotment on which he can work his time is thrown away. Women are much employed in carrot washing and turnip trimming in winter. I think that so few boys go to work before the age of 10 that a restriction up to that age would have no effect; if children were to attend from the age of four *regularly* the difficulty would be considerably lessened. Boys who go out to work at 10 have usually reached the third standard, but after they leave they lose their education, unless they can read with sufficient facility to amuse themselves. There is a lending library here. All the cottages have gardens or allotments.

WINDLESHAM.

45 (*a*). The *Rev. F. C. Fitton*, Bagshot.—There are many boys of all ages in this parish who cannot read. When I opened a night school many applied to be admitted who ought not to have left school for one or two years; a large proportion don't send their children to school at all. In December 1867 there were 32 names on the register of my night school, all between the ages of 14 and 19; out of these 12 could not read and 20 could not write. There is a night school in Bagshot, which is a district of Windlesham; the National school is in Windlesham, two miles from here. There is an infant school at Bagshot.

45 (*b*). *Mr. John Waterer.*—I keep the nursery grounds at Bagshot; they are about 120 acres in extent. We employ four or five women in summer, but not regularly; their principal work is weeding and cleaning the ground. They earn about 1*s.* a day and work from about 8 or 9 until 5. We don't employ young girls. We employ four or five boys aged from 9 to 12; they are employed constantly; they wait on the men. We employ 40 men all the year round, and at times as many as 60 or 70. We employ the boys because they come and ask for work; their labour is not of great importance to us; we pay them 4*s.* to 8*s.* a week. The other nursery gardeners about here employ labour in the same way as we do.

WOLDINGHAM.

46. *Mr. W. Harrison.*—I farm 560 acres. I hire six cottages with my farm; I also lodge four or five men in my house; they board with the labourers in their cottages. It is never the practice for farmers to board servants in this district. I have no doubt that the labourers would be far more useful as farm servants if their minds were more enlightened, but they are so ignorant themselves that they will not insist on their children attending school. I never employ boys regularly all the year round until they are about 12, and only for occasional jobs for about three months in the year before that age. I think it very desirable that the Government should do something in this matter; I think there ought to be some form of compulsory education. The greater part of those now growing up cannot read or write. I don't think that legislative interference is necessary except in the matter of education. When I came here there was no school within two miles; I opened one myself. I provide everything and charge 1*d.* a week, but cannot get the children to attend regularly. I used to live in the north of Lincolnshire; the labourers here are not nearly so able as labourers as the men there; they are also behind them in the matter of education. We have no man here who can read well enough to be parish clerk. I pay my horsemen 16*s.* or 17*s.* a week and 1*l.* at harvest; day wages are 13*s.*, but the men usually earn 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week by means of piecework, exclusive of harvest. I paid my harvest men yesterday; they had earned from 8*l.* to 9*l.* each in three weeks. I allow my cottagers one ton of coals at Christmas, and let them sow one sack of potatoes on my land which I till for them; these allowances are included in my estimate of what they earn. In Lincolnshire wages are about the same as they are here, but they vary with the price of flour. The men are better off there than here.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from Mr. W. Drewitt, of Bramley; the Rev. G. Finch and Mr. J. Sadler, Chiddingfold; J. Bradshaw, Esq., Cranleigh; Mr. J. Smallpiece and Mr. G. Bennett, Compton; Mr. R. Lewin, Cuddington; A. K. Barclay, Esq., Mr. A. Mitchell, Mr. J. White, and Mr. W. Stephens, Dorking; Mr. Edward Hooker, East Horsley; Rev. G. E. C. Walker, Farley; Mr. C. Roumieu, Farnham; Mr. I. Ellis and Mr. W. F. Snelgrove, Godstone; Mr. A. Ellis and Mr. J. Ellis, Guildford; Mr. C. Ellis, Hambledon; the Rev. Albert Mangles, Horsell; Mr. E. Atkins and Rev. S. Charlsworth, Limpsfield; the Rev. J. Thomas and Mr. G. Chapman, Lingfield; Mr. A. Lambert, Ockham; Mr. R. Young and Mr. Edward Kelsey, Oxted; the Rev. J. Randolph, Sanderstead; Mr. E. Elkins, Stoke; Mr. J. Taylor, Thorpe; Mr. D. Walker, West Horsley; Mr. G. Frimbley and Mr. Perrin, Windlesham; Mr. G. Burt and Mr. Brumbridge, Worplesdon; and Mr. Edward Hilder, of Woking.

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ALVESTON.

47. *Sir R. N. Hamilton, Bt., K.C.B.*

Mr. W. Gibbs, occupier of 280 acres in Alveston and 100 in Snitterfield.

The parish of Alveston belongs to a number of proprietors. The cultivation is principally arable. There are meadows near the river Avon; the side of the parish next the river is light, the remainder rather heavier land. The four-course system prevails on the light and six-course on the heavier land. The farms are about 80 to 300 acres. There is not a sufficient supply of labour in the parish. Many men come from Stratford to work (distance two miles). Girls are not employed under 15 or 16; they do the same work as women. Boys are not wanted regularly until they are old enough to drive plough. Mr. Gibbs thinks they might do that at the age of 10; they are never wanted under that age except for bird-tending. Sometimes small boys are employed in that way, sometimes old men. Ploughboys begin at 6*d.* a day. Only a small number of women go out to work, principally in summer; they are usually the wives of the labourers who live on the land; they take a job, such as cleaning turnips, by the piece, and do it during autumn and winter, when they have time to spare from their home duties; they get 8*d.* a day when they work by the day. Men's wages now are 11*s.* on this side of the river and 12*s.* on the other; waggoners and shepherds, 14*s.* and 15*s.* All the regular workmen have jobs at piecework whenever there are jobs for them. There are a few casual workers who live in the towns, and who get a few jobs in the summer.

Mr. Gibbs has six regular labourers, besides two waggoners, one shepherd, and three boys on his farm of 280 acres here. All the boys are over 12; two of his labourers are lodged and boarded in his house. An under waggoner has from 5*l.* to 8*l.* and his board, which costs at least 1*s.* a day. The farmers usually give two meat meals a day, but the servants often stipulate for meat three times a day.

There is a National school at Alveston, but we think that the Government should be more liberal in their grants to country parishes. Sir R. Hamilton had the superintendence of the distribution of some diocesan prizes in the neighbourhood, and he found that a larger per-centage of the children educated by uncertificated than of those educated by certificated masters got the prizes. There is a group of about 19 cottages at a distant part of this parish, about two miles from the school and one mile from Stratford. A dame's school has been established there for the early education of the children. The better class of agricultural labourers are very anxious to get their children educated, but there is a considerable number of the worst class of labourers who live in the market towns who don't care about it. There can be no question that the educated men are far more useful than the uneducated as labourers; they take a greater interest in their work, they are more trustworthy, and are not at all disposed to throw up their work. There is no fear of their getting too much education. All that is wanted is a more liberal grant in the country districts. It should also be rendered compulsory to institute central schools for the education of pauper children. When a child has been brought up in the union they always come back there as their home.

The supply of cottages in this neighbourhood is insufficient; they belong to a variety of proprietors; some have gardens; there are also about 80 allotment gardens. The farm cottages are let at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; many built by speculators are let for 6*l.* a year. There are not enough cottages built on the farms. When a man can get a good cottage and garden he will always be respectable and stick to his work. In many of the parishes about game is highly preserved, and cottages have been pulled down to a considerable extent during the last 30 years, partly to save the

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rates and partly to keep off poachers. No alteration has taken place since the Union Chargeability Bill was passed. There is a large statute fair at Stratford. There is very little hiring done, but a great many people come for the sake of the amusement. Statute fairs are decidedly objectionable; good servants will not go to them. The nuisance is not sufficient to make it necessary to the Government to put a stop to them by law.

BABINGTON.

48. *Mr. H. J. Carter.*—I usually employ two women from March to November; their work consists in weeding, spudding thistles, haymaking, and harvest work, cleaning the stubbles, and picking acorns; this year four women who worked for me picked 178 bushels and 5 gallons of acorns between the 26th September and the 26th October. I paid them 1*s.* a gallon; one woman picked 49 bushels 4 gallons in 16 days; she picked 5 bushels 4 gallons in one day, and 5 bushels another day; she sometimes had a boy to help her. Another woman picked 45 bushels in 17 days with two children to help; another 44 bushels in 16 days with one boy to help; another 35 bushels in 16 days alone; she is above 60 years of age. No women come out to work who are under 40 years of age, except in haymaking and during harvest. The girls do the same work as the women as soon as they come out to work.

BARFORD.

49. *Edward Greaves, Esq., M.P.*, landowner.
Mr. Thomas, schoolmaster and assistant overseer.
Mr. Reading, bailiff to Mr. Greaves.

This parish contains 1,577 acres, about two-thirds arable. The soil varies; it is very good, some stiff and some light; it belongs to a number of proprietors, Mr. Greaves, Lord Warwick, Rev. C. Mills, and Miss Ryland being the principal. There are 202 houses in the parish. The supply of labourers is more than sufficient for the requirements of this parish. Some men go from here to Tachbrook and Sherbourn to work, and some come from Wasperton to work here. The size of the farms varies from about 150 to 300 acres.

A very small number of women work in the fields; at present about seven or eight may be so employed; more are employed in summer; many like to go out then; they don't often reap in harvest now; they used to do so; they now make bands for their husbands. Young girls are not employed. As a general rule no boys are employed under 11 years of age; a few under that age may be employed at particular times of the year.

There is no continuous work for boys until they are big enough to go with horses; they are of no great use for that until they are about 12. Mr. Thomas thinks that the children of labourers don't remain at school after the age of 10; from 8 until 10 they would be absent for three or four months in the year for intermittent work. There are a few who never come to school at all, but almost all the remainder can read, write, and cipher by the time they grow up.

Men's wages are 12*s.* to 13*s.* Formerly all the farmers about required extra labour for harvest, but now they require less because some use machinery, and the ordinary staff is in many cases sufficient. Not nearly as many Irish are employed as formerly. Where a machine is used the employer provides the machine and horses, and pays the whole of the men 5*s.* 6*d.* or 6*s.* per acre; we only allow them to work from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Boys get 3*d.* or 4*d.* a day for scaring, about 6*d.* per day when they first come out with the plough. The plough is out from 7 a.m. to 4 or 5 p.m., with one hour in the middle of the day. The ploughboys come at about 6.30 a.m., and leave at 6 p.m.

The cottages belong to a number of persons; rent is 3*l.* to 4*l.*; sometimes a small garden; most have cottage allotments; some of the small proprietors charge from 4*l.* to 6*l.*; they are let by the week or quarter. Mr. Thomas thinks a weekly letting the best, because he finds that the rents are difficult to collect where let for longer periods than one week. It is not the custom to let cottages with the farms. There is a club called the "Barford Friendly Society" here, to which about 60 of the labourers belong; the rules of this have been certified.

BICKENHILL.

50. *Mr. John Smith*, Lyndon.—I have lived here 16 years, and I farm my own land. The parish of Bickenhill is separated into two parts. The main part, where the church and schools are, is called Church Bickenhill, and the part where I live called Lyndon End. Lyndon End is about three and a half miles long and half a mile broad. There is no school here, but there is a school at Sheldon, distant about three-quarters of a mile, to which the children might go from here, but they are not admitted in that school, and have therefore no good school accommodation; as a fact none of them do go to school except occasionally in summer, when they go to Bickenhill school, distant three miles; there is however a dame's school at Sheldon, to which some of the infants go, it being a private school. Lately a considerable population has sprung up in a place called Haycocks Green, but before these people came the population of this part of the parish amounted to about 400. This is a purely agricultural district. The ground is cropped in the ordinary four-course system, and very good wheat is grown here. Boys are employed for driving ploughs from the age of 9 or 10 years; but boys are very scarce, they get apprenticed at Birmingham; when old enough to drive a plough a boy gets 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a week; they are employed also a little in stone-picking or bird-tenting. You cannot get a woman for love or money; there are a considerable number of well-to-do residents who employ women for charing, &c.; women when they work in the fields get 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. There is no great necessity for employing women here because at the busy time of the year a number of Irishmen come round and do all the necessary work for 2*s.* a day.

The regular labourers get 13*s.* a week and beer. Many of the young men are enticed away to the factories at Birmingham; but the old men cannot take to factory work as easily as the young. There are a few market gardeners who supply Birmingham market; they are usually small farmers; they work themselves and employ Irish when they require assistance.

Mr. Digby is the principal landowner; about three-fifths are grass; the cottages belong to a number of proprietors. Since I have been here Mr. Digby has purchased four or five properties, and has pulled down five cottages which stood on those properties. The ordinary rent for a cottage is 4*l.* to 6*l.*, and most of them have gardens.

There is no necessity for the extension of the Factory Acts on sanitary grounds, but I am decidedly of opinion that education should be made compulsory, and I would support a rate, if necessary, in order to carry out that plan. I was a manufacturer at Birmingham before I came here, and found that the uneducated men gave me far more trouble than the educated; the same observation applies to agricultural labourers. You cannot carry on the half-time system in agriculture, but I think that the plan of requiring a certificate of proficiency would be not only practicable but decidedly desirable.

BISHOP'S TACHBROOK.

Meeting held Tuesday, December 8th, 1868.

PRESENT:

51. *Rev. E. T. Codd*, vicar.
Rev. J. R. Porter, curate.
Mr. T. Rainbow, churchwarden, and occupier of 290 acres (part in Barford and part in Warwick).
Mr. John Barnett, occupier of 218 acres (part in Warwick).
Mr. Edward Hawkins, schoolmaster, and assistant overseer, and collector of rates.
Mr. Ashford, occupier of nearly 200 acres.

This parish belongs almost entirely to Lord Warwick; the soil varies, some heavy some light land; the acreage 3,467 acres. The cultivation is chiefly arable. The farms vary from 120 to 386 acres in size. The parish is partly agricultural, but a great many men who live here go to work in Leamington and Warwick, or work as artizans; the supply of labour would be insufficient if there were not a number of Irishmen in Warwick who come out to assist us. Our cottages would be sufficient in number if it were not that a number of them were inhabited by old people, or men who don't do regular work. Lord Warwick rarely turns labourers out. The cottage accommodation is very fair; the cottages are old but comfortable. The cottages are nearly all in the village; some of the men have to go one and half miles to the distant parts of the parish to work. The water supply and drainage is good. Cottage rent is 2*l.* to 3*l.*; it was not formerly the practice to let cottages with the farms, but lately Lord Warwick has been in the habit of letting a few to the farmers; that is thought a good plan; it was adopted because the supply of labour is short. There are gardens and also allotment grounds; some labourers who have gardens have allotments besides; there are altogether 10½ acres of allotment ground; the labourers have one-eighth of an acre each; they sell a portion of what they grow at Leamington; they are not allowed to grow corn, it is undesirable for them to go to market because it takes the mothers and daughters of families away from home. There is very little drunkenness here; the men are employed in the evenings on their own ground. There are not many men who keep themselves unemployed in order to do odd jobs on the allotments.

Females are only employed in hay and corn harvest and in stone picking; no restriction is desirable with respect to their labour. They earn 9*d.* to 1*s.* a day.

Boys are occasionally employed in bird-keeping, and osier stripping, which lasts three weeks or a month.

Mr. Rainbow has not had his beans dibbled for some time because he cannot get boys to drop them, although he prefers dibbling to drilling; he thinks that if there were 12 more ploughboys in the village they could all get employment; he is sometimes compelled to send two men instead of a man and a boy with his horses.

Mr. Hawkins thinks that the age at which the boys first go out for casual work is before they are 9, and that they leave school finally from 10 to 11. There has been a good school here since the end of the last century; nothing is taught besides reading, writing, and arithmetic; geography is taught occasionally. We are in favour of education of the character given at this school, and think that all should have it.

Mr. Codd thinks that when he has a confirmation class the children who belong to this parish are sharper than those which come from other parishes where the schools are not so good.

Mr. Hawkins thinks that the instruction they receive at day schools before they go to work is not sufficiently impressed upon their minds to prevent them forgetting it after they have been absent from school for some time.

The parents are very anxious to get their children out to work.

Mr. Porter thinks that none should be necessary; that all the education necessary should be given before work begins, although a night school may be useful at present.

It is the general practice to hire farm servants at statutes; it is now customary to require characters, that was not so formerly. Here they change at Michaelmas. The servants hired at statutes are waggoners, shepherds, cowmen, in fact all farm as well as many domestic servants.

We think that statutes are a decided encouragement to vice, drunkenness, and immorality. Servants go there with their year's earnings and spend it all; farmers are without servants for nearly a week. Statutes also lead them to change their places.

If they were abolished the thing might work round; but Mr. Barnett thinks there would be great difficulty in obtaining farm servants.

A ploughboy gets 2*l.* 10*s.* with board and lodging; a shepherd or waggoner would get 10*l.* to 12*l.* besides board and lodging. It costs on an average about 1*s.* a day to feed a man or boy. They have meat three times a day. Wages now are 12*s.* per week, and beer all the year round worth 1*s.* a week; piecework may raise their wages about 2*s.* per week.

Farmers don't want boys to work for them under 10 years of age, except occasionally for a few weeks.

Chilvers Coton.

52. *Mr. T. P. Evans*, Griff, agent to Lord Aylesford, Mr. Newdegate, M.P., and Mr. Bromley Davenport, M.P.—I am acquainted with all the northern part of Warwickshire. The soil is a good deal mixed, some light and some heavy land, nearly half grass; almost all the farmers have a cheese dairy as well as arable land. The farms usually average about 150 or 200 acres, some are as large as 300 or 400 acres. The light land is farmed on the four-course and the heavier on the six-course system. Women are occasionally employed, *i.e.*, a few in the summer, but it is not a general practice among farmers to employ them. I think that the number employed is diminishing. A good many used to be employed at Lord Aylesford's estate, but very few are so engaged at present. I don't think it a good that women should work in the fields; they can make a better use of their time at home. Their labour is not necessary for farmers. There is an ample supply of men's labour here.

Almost all the farmers employ boys, one or two each; they begin tending birds, &c. at about 8; they begin regularly at about the age of 12. The bulk of the land in North Warwickshire is usually ploughed with two horses now, so that fewer ploughboys are wanted than formerly; but they should begin to handle horses early in order to become accustomed to them. The school accommodation is ample in this neighbourhood, and within easy access of the cottages.

It is not the practice to let cottages with the farm, very few indeed are so let. Our cottages cost about 250*l.* a pair for the brickwork alone; the new ones are usually placed as near the farmer's work as possible. We change the occupiers of the cottages if we find that the farmers have any well-founded objection to them.

Cubbington.

53. *Mr. Richard Bass.*—I have been guardian for this parish above 30 years; I have been occupied as a land surveyor during the greater part of my life; I was school teacher for 17 years, and have also farmed a little. This is an open parish; there is no resident squire here. The parish is owned by above 40 small proprietors, almost every form belongs to the occupier. The population numbered 944 in 1861; 883 in 1851; and 677 in 1841. A great many people go from here to work in Leamington; the remainder work as agricultural labourers. The neighbouring parishes of Ashow, Weston, Hunningham, Lillington, and Offchurch are in a few hands, and draw a great portion of their labour from this parish. In 1861 there were 232 inhabited and six uninhabited houses in the parish; the inhabitants of about 130 of these houses have been in the habit of out of this parish for work and still do so. The Union Chargeability Bill has not yet had any effect in diminishing our population. Women work scarcely at all in the fields except in hay time. Some take in washing and many go to Leamington to wash. They leave here at 7 a.m., and earn 1*s.* 2*d.* a day and their food. The children go out to work very little in the fields except in driving plough; many work in the brick

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fields; I don't think they are much employed under 12 or 13 years of age. I was formerly schoolmaster here. I gave up the school in 1842; while I had the management of it boys used to attend the week day school and Sunday school up to the age of 15 if they were out of employment. Boys get 2*s.* 6*d.* a week when they first go out to work. The cottages are owned chiefly by small tradesmen. The rent is 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum; many have gardens, but there is also an ample supply of allotments. All the cottages except five or six are in the village. Our rates have decreased half since the introduction of the Union Chargeability Bill. Some few cottages are let by the week, but it is more usual to let them by the quarter. The water supply and drainage is good, and the population healthy. I don't think that there is sufficient employment of women and children in the fields about here to make parliamentary interference necessary. There are statute fairs at Kenilworth, Berkswell, Warwick, Southam, and other places. I think they should be done away with, but far fewer are hired there now than formerly. All the cottages in the parish are within reach of the school.

Charlcote.

54. *Mr. William Dilworth*, agent to Spencer Lucy, Esq., occupier of 120 acres.—I have resided here nearly all my life. Almost the whole of the parishes of Charlcote and Hampton Lucy belong to Mr. Lucy. The farms average about 250 acres, principally arable. The greater part of the land is rich loam on a gravel subsoil, well suited for turnips. All the land bordering the river is good. There is scarcely sufficient labour here. We draw a few men from Wellesbourne and Wasperton (distant one mile each). Almost all the cottages at Charlcote are new; those at Hampton Lucy are not so new, but all well cared for and in good repair. We take care that they are not crowded. None of the inhabitants have far to go to work. The outlying farms have a cottage or two each, but that is rather exceptional. At Charlcote there is a school under a mistress and a grammar school, as well as an infant school at Hampton Lucy.

The grammar school at Hampton Lucy is free for the parishes of Charlcote, Hampton Lucy, Wasperton, and Alverston. Children who have attended school here for a time, go to the grammar school for a year or two before going to work. There are no cottages in the parish out of reach of the school. These two parishes are purely agricultural. The cottages let for about 45*s.*, with garden and allotment about a quarter of an acre. They are let by the year, subject to a three months notice to quit; the rent is paid annually. The cottagers prefer to pay their rent annually to any other letting. There are a few women who go out to field work, chiefly in spring and summer, and occasionally in winter when the weather is fine, to clean roots or stock turnips.

Young girls scarcely ever go out. Boys are employed from about the age of 10 years; I think they are of scarcely any use to farmers under that age, but the age at which they begin must depend upon their size and strength. We usually plough with three horses and boys drive. Their hours of work are from 6 or 6.30 to 5 in winter and 6 in summer. Wages about 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day. They are not employed much for "tenting" in this county because it it is so much enclosed, nor for weeding. There is an evening school here. I think that the children in this neighbourhood are sufficiently well educated for their position, and that no new law is desirable. No portion of a boy's time except the evening could be devoted to school after he begins to work.

Men's wages here are 12*s.*, usually paid wet or dry. About here three or four men and one boy are necessary for the cultivation of every 100 acres. There is very little wood here.

Most of the cottages have two bedrooms, very few three. We don't encourage the grown up sons and daughters to stay about the village. It is the usual practice for the farmer to board one or two of their younger farm servants in their houses; that is a most desirable practice. They are kept under proper subjection until they are old enough to marry, and they make much better labourers than those who live in the village. They usually save some money while they live with the farmer, and it is no greater expense to the farmer than paying board wages.

There is no publichouse here; a few buy casks of beer, which they keep in their houses. There is very little drunkenness. Most of the men belong to the Becher Club, some belong to the Hampton Lucy Friendly Society.

Claverdon.

55. *Rev. E. A. Kempson*, vicar of Claverdon, with the Chapelry of Norton Lindsey.—Langley is a hamlet of this parish. The principal proprietor is Captain Musgrave, who is lord of the manor, and Mr. Galton. The cultivation is chiefly arable. The cottages of the parish are very much scattered; they are not, as a general rule, let with the farms. The rent varies from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a year. There are a great many copyhold cottages, the tenants of which pay a quit rent of about half a crown a year.

The acreage of Claverdon with Langley is 3,572 acres, and of Norton 604 acres. The cottages are in a very bad condition, but the copyhold cottages worse than others; they belong to and are inhabited by farm labourers. They will never part with them unless very hard pushed. When they sell them they usually get about 40*l.* to 60*l.* for them. The copyhold cottages have larger gardens than the others, and are therefore more popular. The mode of cultivation throughout the parish is very uniform; the farming is improving very much. The farms contain from 200 to 300 acres. I think the supply of labour is sufficient, except when there is a press of work. The women go out to work to a considerable extent; they are mostly married women, and not young girls. There is a National school here, and dames' schools at Langley and Norton Lindsey. All the children in the parish would have access to one or other of the schools; most of them come to school, but very irregularly; education always suffers if any work is to be done.

As a general rule the better the cottage the better the man; but I don't think that I can fairly say that the copyholders are either more or less respectable than the other men; but the men who live in the cottages attached to the farms are certainly more respectable and steady than others. I am sure that some form of compulsion is necessary in order to improve the education. The general work for boys is driving plough. They do not leave school much in order to work on their parents' gardens. We have allotments here. The labourers have one-eighth of an acre as a rule. The system answers well. The health of the people is good; but a more efficient mode of inspecting the cottages is necessary. I have continually noticed cases of fever and illness arise where the drainage is bad; nobody likes to give information about the nuisances; the inspector is not very accessible. The best club in this county is the Becher; I want my parishioners to belong to that, but it is not so popular as others, because the payments are as a rule 2*d.* a week more, and also because the management is not in local hands. It is managed without recourse being had to public-houses; I receive the subscriptions. We have a local medical club which acts well; the poor pay from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week according to the size of the family, and have medical aid free in case of illness. They always object to being attended by the parish doctor, because they think that attention can only be secured where they have to pay.

I find great inconvenience from the statutes; they are so arranged as to follow in succession at the neighbouring towns during the course of about three weeks.

The young labourers leave their employment for about a week and go to two or three fairs. It leads to a great deal of dissipation. They could be done away with very easily if some substitute could be found for them by way of amusement. I am Diocesan Inspector of Schools for the Deanery of Warwick. There are 17 parishes in the deanery; in four of them there is no school at all (Wolverton, Preston Bagot, Haseley, and Beaudesert), but all these places are within two miles of some school, and, with the exception of Wolverton, not so far as that. The average age of the first class in the schools I inspect is $10\frac{1}{2}$; in the schools not under Government inspection the first class is usually as well taught as in Government schools, but the lower classes are not.

Eatington.

56. *Mr. W. Lowe*, agent to Mr. Shirley, and occupier of 300 acres in Eatington, and 250 in Loxley.

The *Rev. G. H. Biggs*, vicar of Eatington.—I came here in 1866. The chief proprietor at Eatington is E. P. Shirley, Esq. The population in the parish is fully large enough to supply the necessary labour for the parish; in busy times all have work, but at slack times, as at present (December), there are a few men out of work; at present there are 18 young men out of work [the population being 713]. As a general rule this parish does not supply labour to the surrounding parishes except in a few instances. There is no manufacture here of any sort. I think the average size of the farms is 200 acres. There are two or three small holdings of glebe lands; one man has 22 acres, another 55, and another 150. There are about 100 cottages and small houses here. Mr. Shirley has about 30 cottages, the remainder belong to several proprietors; they are sufficient in number for the population. Mr. Shirley's cottages are most of them let for 3*l.*, some of the others for 4*l.* or 5*l.*; most of them have small gardens, but there are also from 20 to 30 acres of allotments, let in pieces of a quarter of an acre each; they pay 10*s.* or 11*s.* for each allotment. There are about 15 to 20 squatters on the waste; they pay an acknowledgment to the lord of the manor; the gardens connected with the cottages are very small. Many of the squatters are farm labourers; they are usually in very poor condition; and don't seem to be better off than men who have to pay rent. Before Mr. Biggs came here nearly 50 acres of the glebe were let out in small pieces varying from 1 to 16 acres; some were taken by small tradesmen. In the parish of Loxley the glebe was let in a similar manner, but Mr. Lowe has observed that these small occupiers have always been miserably poor; they have usually had to pay a rather higher rent than the ordinary farm rent; in this parish they paid at the rate of 3*l.* an acre, landlord paying rates and taxes. The ordinary rent about here would be about 30*s.* There is a mixed school here under a certificated master; all the cottages, except two, are within one mile of the school.

The parish of Loxley belongs chiefly to Mr. Jones; he resides in the parish. There is an ample supply of labour in winter, but not enough in summer. The cottages are about the same in character as those in Eatington, but no squatters. The school is under a mistress. The six course system of cropping usually prevails in this neighbourhood; very few turnips are grown, and so women are not employed in winter, except with the threshing machine; they are employed more regularly in spring and summer. The women who work in the fields are quite as respectable, usually more energetic, and take as good care of their families as other women. A great many more go to field work at Loxley than here; there was a blind woman living there who used to take charge of six or eight children while the mothers were out at work. Many of the women like to go out, because they say it is more healthy than staying at home. Their wages are 8*d.* a day and 1*s.* at haytime, Boys go to regular plough work from 11 to 14; they have a little occasional work before the regular work begins. Mr. Lowe thinks that boys might be spared for half their time from December to March; he also thinks that educated men are far more useful than uneducated even in the simplest farm work. It is thought that on the whole the education in this neighbourhood is not sufficiently defective to render a new law necessary. Men's wages, 11*s.*

Exhall.

Meeting at Exhall.

57. *Mr. Startin*, landowner, Exhall.
Mr. Arthur Startin, occupier, Exhall.
Mr. Swinnerton, landowner, Caldecote, Nuneaton.
Mr. John Neale, landowner, Exhall.
Mr. E. Wilson, landowner, Over Whitacre.
Mr. S. Wilson, landowner, Exhall.
Mr. W. Burton, landowner and occupier, Allesley.

At Exhall the supply of labour is sufficient for the cultivation of the soil, except at particular times. Not more than one-third of the inhabitants are employed in agriculture, the remaining two-thirds are weavers and miners. There is a school at Exhall, which is badly situated with reference to the population, but otherwise the school accommodation is sufficient. The parish belongs to a number of small proprietors. When wanted the weavers will always assist in agriculture, but do not make very efficient labourers.

Over Whitacre is in a few hands, and as well as Exhall is chiefly cultivated by the proprietors. The supply of labour as well as the school accommodation is sufficient. The school is a mixed school under a mistress. Caldecote is in a few hands; there is a school there under a mistress; the supply of labour is not sufficient for the cultivation of the land.

Allesley contains over 4,000 acres; it is two miles from Coventry; there is an endowed school there for boys, a girls' school maintained by subscription, a dames' infant school, and another school for small boys and girls. The supply of labour is sufficient. In this district boys are employed continuously from about the age of 10 upwards; they do a few occasional jobs, such as bird-tenting, before that age. As a general rule boys could not be dispensed with by farmers after the age of 10 years, but occasionally where the land is light the boys might be dispensed with in the winter months for a year or two until the age of 15. Boys usually work from 7 to 5 in winter, and 6 to 6 in summer. Women are a little employed in the agricultural parishes, but hardly at all where bead-making and weaving can be obtained. Women earn 9*d.* or 10*d.* a day in winter, and 1*s.* in summer. They can now earn from 3*s.* to 4*s.* a week at weaving, but when trade was good they could earn more.

The gentlemen present all think that there can be no doubt that an educated labourer is more useful to a farmer than one who has not been educated; and all of them think that it is decidedly desirable the system of requiring a certificate of proficiency as a condition of employment should be imposed on all agricultural children. The employer should be fined as well as the parent, in the event of a boy being employed without a certificate on the information of any individual, and half the fine should go to the informer. If a boy failed to obtain the certificate of proficiency by the age of 13, he should then receive a certificate of stupidity from the parish schoolmaster, and might be employed on producing that. The best mode of carrying on the examinations would be by having periodical examinations in central places, conducted by certificated schoolmasters, to which the children of the surrounding neighbourhood could be sent.

Men's wages here are 11*s.* to 13*s.* in winter; in some cases beer worth 1*s.* a week is given in lieu of a

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portion of the wages. In summer they usually have 1*s.* a week more than in winter. At Caldecote and some other parishes it is customary to give 3*s.* a week beyond the current rate for two weeks in summer without any beer. About here where they do piecework they earn about 15*s.* to 25*s.* during the harvest work, but only two or three of the best men have harvest work; shepherds and carters get 2*s.* a week above the common men. Usually one man is kept in the house, who acts as groom and odd man. Cottage rent from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week; they usually have gardens, and as a general rule are sufficient for the accommodation of the inhabitants and well distributed.

Harbury.

Meeting at Harbury, December 16th, 1868.

58. *Mr. Heath*, occupier of 300 acres, Harbury.
Mr. Horley, occupier of 700 to 800 acres, Ufton.
Mr. Dean, occupier of 500 acres in Ufton and Long Itchington.
Mr. Archer, manager of 700 acres in Bishop's Itchington.
Rev. M. H. Higgins, curate of Ufton.

These parishes are all in the Southam Union.

The parish of Harbury belongs to a number of proprietors, of which Miss Ryland is the principal. There is plenty of labour, some men go from here to work in the parishes of Chesterton, Itchington, and Ufton. The rates were very high here before the Union Chargeability Bill was passed, but have fallen considerably since. There is an infant school and another National school here, both under Government.

The cottages belong to a number of proprietors. Taking them all round the accommodation is very indifferent; overcrowding is to be met with in several cases. The village is well situated for the work to be done. The cottage rent varies from 50*s.* to 4*l.*; not many have gardens, but there are plenty of allotments; all have allotments who wish for them. The vicar lets 20 acres of land in allotments.

Ufton belongs to Balliol College, with the exception of about 90 acres. The supply of labour is hardly sufficient for the demand. The cottages are better than they are generally in this district; they let for about 2*l.* to 3*l.* a year with gardens and allotments. There is a school put under Government this year.

Long Itchington belongs chiefly to Lord Aylesford; Lord Leigh, Mr. Chamberlayne, and Dr. Jephson have also land there. It is a populous parish, and contains sufficient labour. There is a school there under Government.

Bishops Itchington belongs to several proprietors; the principal are Mr. Thelluson, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Chamberlayne. There are plenty of labourers there. Many labourers go to work in Mr. Greaves' lime works, and in the neighbouring parishes. There was a great deal of extra-parochial land in this Union about Watergall and Hodnell on which there is scarcely any cottages; the land has now been divided into seven parishes and added to the Southam Union. There are two schools at Bishops Itchington; the church school and a dissenter school; the former is quite insufficient for the accommodation of the parish, but is now about to be rebuilt.

The soil about there is generally stiff clay; three or four horses are generally used for ploughing, sometimes five. On the extra-parochial land there is a good deal of grass; the other land is chiefly arable.

This is a purely agricultural district; no manufactures except cement; as many as 200 men have sometimes been employed in the cement works, but generally not more than 100. They take away all the best of the men at certain times.

Women are not generally employed here. Mr. Heath usually employs four in summer and some occasionally in winter.

Mr. Dean has not employed any for some years Those who work are usually the wives of the labourers. The stone-picking and turnip-cleaning is piecework and weeding is day work. Their wages are 8*d.* a day, and in hay time 1*s.* or 14*d.* a day.

The gentlemen present think that it is undesirable for women who have families to go to work, but that there is no harm in women who have no families going to work. Mr. Higgins thinks it does not answer for any women to go to work, because they are thus compelled to neglect their cottages, and they wear out their clothes.

No girls go out to regular work until the age of 13 or 14.

A few boys and girls go out bean-dropping and singling turnips, but that is not a common occupation for them.

Boys come out to regular work at about 10, some as young as 9. The boys are always anxious to obtain work as soon as possible, and their parents are anxious to get work for them.

The gentlemen present think that farmers would be put to inconvenience if boys did not go to work at the age of 10; and that the boys would not make good labourers if they went to work later than that.

Some of the gentlemen present think that the boys might be spared for two or three months in the winter, but the majority think that farmers would be put to inconvenience if they had to dispense with their services at all.

The gentlemen present think that all should be taught to read, write, and cipher; and without pledging themselves as approving of a change in the law, they think that if any system of compulsion is to be enforced the system of granting a certificate of proficiency as a condition of employment is the system best suited to the exigencies of agricultural labour.

Men's wages here are 12*s.* a week; waggoners and shepherds have 12*s.* with a house, or 13*s.* or 14*s.* without.

Boys' wages vary from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day. A lad who is boarded gets 4*l.* or 5*l.* a year. A man of 24, 10*l.* or 12*l.* a year. The plan of boarding the lads in the farmhouses is going out of use; the boys don't like it, because they object to the restriction; and it is also troublesome to the masters. A few cottages are let with the farms, but that is not the general practice about here.

Statutes lead to a great deal of harm; we think that the practice of hiring at statutes is going out of use, but it would be very difficult to get servants to give them up.

Kenilworth.

59. *James Isaacs, Esq.*, chief constable of Warwickshire.—I have been chief constable of Warwickshire since 1841. There are statute fairs at Warwick, Southam, Wellesbourne, Henley, Alcester, Stratford, Kenilworth, Berkswell, Wolston, Brinklow, Rugby, Atherstone, Coventry, Nuneaton, Bulkington, Coleshill, Fillongley, and Polesworth. The fairs are held about Michaelmas; they range over about three weeks. The servants hired there are domestic servants, waggoners, shepherds, and cowmen. The farmer usually gives 1*s.* at the time of hiring to make the bargain binding. The fairs are called statutes if held before Michaelmas, and mops if held afterwards. Each fair lasts one day only; the fair at Southam lasts for three Mondays in succession, and at Warwick for the three intervening Saturdays; the last day of the fair is called the "draggle-tail." At other places the fairs only last one day. Very few come to be hired, a good many come for the amusement. They come in the morning of the fair; the hiring takes place about 1 p.m. There are usually shows in the evening, and often a dance at the public-houses, where they remain frequently until after midnight, the police often have to clear the houses. The town is usually clear by the following day. These fairs do no good, but there is not so much harm done now as was done some years ago because so few attend. They form a sort of harvest for thieves and

prostitutes; the farmers who come to hire servants usually leave early, but those who come to be hired bring many with them, and are frequently robbed. I have known the servants who come to be hired extend for 150 yards along the street at Kenilworth, now they do not extend for 15 or 20. Very few police cases arise out of these fairs. I have observed such an improvement in the conduct of these fairs of late, that we may hope that they will gradually die out without being put a stop to by law. I have not heard farmers complain of being put to inconvenience in consequence of the absence of their servants at the fair.

Women are employed more in the south than in other parts of the county; it may sometimes lead them to neglect their families, but the earnings are of great use to them. I think it very desirable that the attendance of children at the schools should be prolonged, but I don't think that their earnings can be dispensed with by their parents. There has been a great deal of bead work here, but the trade has been bad lately. I have known women earn 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week by making trimmings; and children can earn 7*d.* or 8*d.* a day by threading beads.

I find that not above 1 out of 10 of those men who belong to the agricultural class, and are applicants for employment in the police, have sufficient education to enable me to employ them.

60. The *Rev. W. F. Brickmore.*—There are plenty of schools in this parish. Two National schools (mixed), a Roman Catholic school, Boys' Free school, and British school (largely endowed). I don't think that the education given is sufficient except in the National schools. There are a good many boys now growing up who cannot read and write efficiently; that is due mainly to the early labour. When they once begin to go out to work there is a succession of employments for them which keep them occupied during the greater part of the year, so that they make but little progress afterwards. When the boys come to be confirmed I find that their education is very deficient.

Many of the cottages are extremely bad. We don't supply much labour to the surrounding parishes.

The statute fair is an abomination; it is a source of great immorality; the farmers don't desire to keep it up; it is only maintained for the purpose of amusing the people. I don't see that the evil of the fair is decreasing; its continuance depends in a great degree on the nomadic race of showmen who attend the fair, and profit by it.

61. *Mr. Thomas Harris,* Dale House.—I farm 400 acres; one-third is grass. My land is situated one-half in Stoneleigh and one-half in Kenilworth. I get my labour from Kenilworth and Stoneleigh. We are short of labour here. The parish of Kenilworth belongs chiefly to Lord Clarendon and Lord Leigh. I have three cottages let with the farm; but with the exception of the men who live in these cottages my men come 1½ miles to work.

The cottages in Kenilworth parish belong to a number of proprietors. The rent is 1*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. Some have small gardens, some none.

I do not find that my men are attracted to go to work at the factories in Coventry or Birmingham. The extra men who come to do the work in hay and harvest come from Coventry, Ireland, Buckingham, and Berkshire.

All the men who live at Stoneleigh have been well educated and are well lodged. I think that they are stronger and in better health from having good houses and gardens than the Kenilworth men, but at the same time they are rather above their work. A few casual workers live in Kenilworth. There are no factories there except a tan yard.

My impression is that a labourer who has received a fair education in the three rules is much more useful to a farmer than an ignorant man. As far as this district is concerned I think that no compulsion is required; I think that all the boys now growing up have sufficient opportunities of learning.

The hours of work for ordinary men are from 6 to 6 in summer and from 7 to 5 in winter. The hours of my waggoner and shepherds are from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. The boys come from 6·30 to 6 in summer and from 7 to 5 in winter. I think that three cottages per 100 acres would be sufficient to supply me with labour except when extra work is to be done.

The practice of boarding labourers is falling into disuse, and the practice of letting cottages with the farms is coming into use.

I think mops are a great source of evil and demoralization. Very few men are now hired there. Very few now go to mops to be engaged; they only go there for the amusement. If the hiring at mops were to be made illegal the mops would not be put an end to, because labourers would still attend them; they might meet the farmer there, and adjourn to another place and another day for the purpose of concluding the bargain.

I allow each of my men to plant a row of potatoes in my turnip field; that is not the usual custom.

I approve of the system of allowing beer to the labourers; they are better satisfied, work better, and it is cheaper for the farmer, because he must allow an additional 1*s.* per week if he does not give beer, and the beer does not cost him that.

Kinwarton.

62. The *Rev. Richard Seymour,* rector of Kinwarton with Great Alne.—These are two distinct parishes. Kinwarton is the chapelry of Great Alne. The principal proprietor of Kinwarton is Mr. Brown, who owns the greater part of the parish. Great Alne is more an open parish, the largest owners in it being W. Hemming, Esq., and Sir W. Throckmorton. This is a purely agricultural district. No peculiar crops are grown. The four or five course system of cropping prevails. The population of Kinwarton is about 70, and is not quite sufficient to supply the necessary labourers. Some labourers come from Alcester and Great Alne (distant one mile each) to work here, but one-half of Kinwarton is grass, so that not much labour is required. The supply of labour at Great Alne is sufficient for the requirements of the parish.

It is the usual practice for married women to go out to field work all the year round when the weather permits. Girls who have been out to service usually take to field work when they marry; their husbands expect them to contribute to the family earnings. The field work is popular among the women, and they prefer it to charring.

The majority of boys leave school from 9 to 10 years of age, and never come back to the day school. There is very little work which takes them away from school before they finally leave; they used to be absent a good deal for bean-dropping, but they don't dibble beans much now; a few are kept away for scaring.

There is a mixed school under a certificated mistress at Great Alne for the two parishes. All the cottages are within access of the school. The opportunities for education are quite sufficient in these parishes, but the labourers with large families don't take sufficient advantage of them. There are none who don't come at all, but the needs of the parish compel them to turn their children to account as soon as they possibly can. Farm boys are very scarce about here, and farmers tempt boys away from school by the wages they offer them. The boys get about 2*s.* a week when they first go out. I think that the boys when they leave my school could pass the second standard and some of them the third.

There is a statute at Alcester. I object to it strongly on the ground of morality. We made a great effort to abolish it some time ago by means of registry, but it did not answer; the publicans and shopkeepers opposed this change, and the farmers did not support it. Among the young the fair is popular. There is a Becher benefit club held here which embraces the whole union; there is a medical club attached to it. A member of the benefit club must belong to the

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medical club as well, but a man may belong to the medical club without belonging to the benefit.

A good many women about here are employed in gloving; that does not employ children but keeps some of the women from field work. They can make about 3*s.* a week by it. Formerly women were employed in straightening needles, but I know of none so employed at present in these parishes. The gloving is obtained from Worcester, the needlework from Alcester and Studley. I don't observe much difference in the social condition of those who take up that sort of work from that of those employed in field labour. There is nothing peculiar in these parishes when compared with the other neighbouring parishes.

I am diocesan inspector for the Alcester deanery and inspect the schools in 23 parishes in this neighbourhood. In the parish of Haseley there is no day school; the children have to come from that parish to Great Alne (one mile) to school. In all the remaining parishes there are schools, although in two of them it would be desirable to enlarge the accommodation.

Meriden.

Meriden Board of Guardians.

Present, 12, *J. Darlington, Esq.*, in the chair.

26th Jan. 1869.

63. Very few women are employed in agriculture in this neighbourhood; those who are so employed are chiefly the wives of labourers. Their hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except during harvest. They are employed very little in winter; they are then engaged either in stone-picking or turnip cutting. Their principal work begins in March or April. They earn 10*d.* in winter, and 1*s.* a day in summer. The work does them no harm; and their cottages are not less tidy than those of other women. No young girls work in the fields. Boys begin to work at the age of from 8 to 12, and usually about 10; farmers don't want them under that age; they are generally employed continuously from the time they first begin to work. Sometimes extra boys are required for tenting birds. Their health is improved rather than injured by the work. Many boys don't go to school; that is owing either to the poverty or neglect of their parents; in some cases children have to go two miles or more to school; that is too far for small children. Some of the schoolmasters in the neighbourhood are inefficient. By some employers boys might be spared from work during the four winter months, and where there is a large population, as at Coleshill, they might be spared on alternate weeks.

Cottages are generally insufficient in number and condition; many men have to go long distances to work. In some parishes the cottages are good, but too few in number. The drawback is, that they are built by the large landowners at a positive loss. Gardens are very general. Farmers would usually guarantee the rent of new cottages if landlords would build them. A great expense has fallen on the rates in consequence of illness caused by bad cottage accommodation. The nuisance laws should be made more easy to set in motion; the nuisance inspectors should have the same powers as the officers under local boards of health. The land in this union is principally in the hands of large proprietors, and it would be very difficult for persons other than the landowner who might be desirous of building cottages to find sites for them.

64. *James Darlington, Esq.*, of Meriden Hall, a Justice of the Peace for the County of Warwick, Chairman of the Board of Guardians for the Meriden Union, &c.—The education of the people might be improved by placing it more directly under the care of one of the ministers, or by the appointment of a minister of education who could be held directly responsible for the expenditure of monies voted and for the extension of education to rural districts within defined limits.

The initiation of new schools in rural districts should not be left entirely to boards of guardians. The guardians are elected by the ratepayers, and it is not to be expected until education is more widely diffused and appreciated that ratepayers would elect persons in favour of an increase of local rates for school buildings and teachers in outlying hamlets.

The education of the industrious poor is defective both in rural and populous districts. I had many opportunities of testing it during the recent cattle plague. I found that few of the farm servants or labourers could read and write. Many could write only their name, and others could not do even that, although they had been sent to school for a time when quite young. This was owing to either (1) death or permanent illness of parents, and their being cast young and uncared for upon the world; or (2) to the poverty of parents owing to the want of work or weak state of health and a large family; or (3) to the indifference of parents living at a distance from school; or (4) to there being a large family and the parents unable to resist the temptation of securing the small earnings of their children.

There are rural districts in this union too far from a school. Expensive school buildings and highly paid teachers are not necessary, but both comfortable buildings and efficient teachers are indispensable to carry education into such districts. Itinerant schoolmasters would not be successful. The teacher should be at his post daily, and also conduct a night school for the older boys. All boys employed in agriculture and other things under 10 might prudently be prohibited from working for wages.

Those between 10 and 12 might work and learn on alternate weeks if they could read and write at 10 years old. Those between 12 and 15 might be required to attend a night school three times a week. Care should be taken to avoid unequal industrial restrictions, or some important industry might be seriously prejudiced. If 10 years be adopted as the starting time for work in agriculture, &c., the same restriction ought to apply to all other trades, so that the farmer or the miner would not be injured by the factories being open to them at an earlier age.

If fines be imposed by Act of Parliament for employing children contrary to the Act the master or employer should pay the penalties, and not the children or their parents, unless the latter had made a false representation of age.

In any district in which a new school and a teacher is wanted for the education of the people I would give three months' notice of the intention of the Government to establish a new school, fixing the notice on the church and chapel doors of the parishes affected, and if the parishioners or some of them did not before the expiration of the notice give an undertaking within a reasonable time to build a new school and provide an efficient teacher, the Council of Education should then call upon the Board of Guardians to erect buildings and appoint an efficient teacher, the cost to be defrayed by the parishes affected in such proportions as the board (or justices, in case of appeal) might determine.

If the parishioners or some of them gave the necessary undertaking, liberal grants should be made by the Council of Education to the parties undertaking in aid of the building and teacher's salary. In case of failure or default by the undertakers, the school building to revert to the Council with power to proceed, after one month's notice fixed on the church or chapel doors, as if no undertaking had been given.

All schools erected after such notice, or that lapsed by default of the undertakers, to be managed, subject to rules and to an effective conscience clause in reference to any special religious teaching. If the teacher were required to open and close the school daily with the Lord's Prayer the people would almost unanimously approve of it. As nearly the whole population of rural districts are members of the National Church the ordinary teaching of the National schools might be allowed.

In the case of relief being given by guardians of the poor to widows or others for children above the age of 7, such relief should be made dependant upon a weekly certificate of the schoolmaster of the attendance of the child at school during the previous week. Denison's Act is virtually inoperative in this union, and unless the relief *be earned by school attendance* (except in sickness) I fear it will remain so. Shoes and clothing for the children are rarely provided by the Board of Guardians, and without these the parents often by way of excuse say they cannot send them. Many other excuses are also made. Statute fairs for hiring servants are a source of much demoralization to ignorant and inferior servants of both sexes. Registries have been opened in many parishes to counteract the evil effects, but they have not generally succeeded. One was opened in this parish, and young persons put down their names, but the farmers and employers did not resort to it. If this evil is to be grappled with the most that can be safely attempted would be not to recognise the condition of master and servant where the hiring or any negotiation appertaining to it takes place at a statute or fair.

Servants of both sexes who have perhaps been hired at a statute or taken without characters live in farmers' houses. In many farmhouses at night the master, mistress, and their children sit in the kitchen, whilst the servants are often left without any suitable place in which to pass the evening. The comfort, accommodation, and surveillance are imperfect, consequently the young men stray out to the nearest public-house or village, or hang about neighbours' houses. This cannot be legislated upon, but a little more consideration might advantageously be given by masters and employers in housing their servants and properly separating the sleeping apartments of the men and women.

Owners of property also might do much by increasing the number of good three-roomed cottages, and by building them upon the farms where the labour is wanted. As a matter of investment cottages do not pay a fair interest. But many large farmers would gladly pay more than the mere rent for the convenience of having their labourers on the spot. When a man has walked two to three miles (as many do) to work, apart from the general convenience, his labour is not as effective, and therefore not worth as much to the farmer as if he lived nearer. Landowners might be still further assisted with Government loans for new cottages. It is desirable that boards of guardians should have power to shut up any cottage that is either in bad repair or that is unclean or undrained, or without proper water supply, or otherwise unhealthy, with appeal to the justices in case of resistance; also power to limit the number of persons in any house, and to enforce the removal of nuisances without appeal to the justices except in certain cases.

A higher state of education among the industrious poor would almost be useless without a proper regulation and improvement of the cottage houses.

The Nuisances Acts are too numerous and intricate. It is desirable to repeal the whole and substitute one simple Act with prompt and simple powers to the local authorities or justices. The inspection of nuisances in rural districts and villages is little more than a name. The duty is performed in this union by the two relieving officers, who have 18 parishes (some of them very extensive ones) under their care; they receive 10*l.* a year each for their work; they have not the leisure to make thorough periodical inspections; they seldom look to any houses but those to which they are taken in the discharge of their duty. An officer of the class of a police inspector, who should give his whole time to the duties, and report his daily visits to the local authority, would be far more efficient than the present imperfect system, without being much more costly to the union. The inspector should be empowered to serve notices on the spot, with an appeal to the next meeting of the local authority, or to the justices in petty sessions, if notice be given to the inspector or local authority of such appeal within three days.

Young children partially permanent in workhouses would be better brought up in separate district industrial schools, unless there is complete isolation from the adults and from those children who are received for short periods.

Many National or endowed schools will not admit workhouse children; such is the case at the National or endowed school at Meriden.

Milcote.

65. *Mr. J. C. Adkins*, occupier.—This is a hamlet of Weston, which is in Gloucestershire, but this hamlet is in Warwickshire. I have property in the parish of Loxley. I have lived here all my life, and have always been connected with agriculture. Women are considerably employed about here all the year, except during the winter; they are generally the wives of the agricultural labourers; the ordinary pay is 8*d.* to 1*s.* a day, and the usual hours of work are from 8 to 5, with 1½ hours interval. It is beneficial to their health, and I find that women who are most valuable as labourers are most valuable as wives and mothers; if they are good for nothing as wives and mothers they are good for nothing in the fields. I think the practice of women working in the fields is slightly decreasing, but not much. The services of women is most important to farmers; such work as weeding, haymaking, and stone picking would have to go undone if it were not for the women. In addition to the women I have just referred to who live at Milcote, we sometimes have recourse to Stratford (distant two miles) in busy time for women to assist us. Young girls sometimes come and do the same work as their mothers, but very rarely. Women do no piecework except in harvest.

We employ boys from 9 upwards in a variety of employments, chiefly with the horses, but also with shepherd and other jobs; they are occupied all the year round from the time they first come to us. Their hours of work are 6 to 5.30 in summer and during daylight in winter. I have never known any boys injured by the work they do, or any accidents caused by horses. I think that as a general rule the education they receive is sufficient; the boys whom I employ live at Stratford, where they have ample opportunities of education; the last three I have had have obtained places on the railway. I don't think that a man in service is at all more useful to me because he is a scholar. The labourers here are very stationary. The wages now are 11*s.* a week. One of my common day labourers earned last year 14*s.* 11*d.* on an average per week, exclusive of beer for four months, worth more than 1*s.* a week, and a five-room cottage and garden for 1*s.* a week. I don't think many men earn within 1*s.* a week of that.

I always hire two or three young men by the year, but do not board them; but there are very few hired agricultural labourers now boarded in the houses. I think that there is certainly no need of any extension of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour.

Oxhill.

66. *Mr. J. G. Ward*, landowner.—There is a church school here under a mistress; also a Wesleyan Sunday school, but no day school for non-churchmen. Not one-third of the population of the parish are churchmen; formerly the church school was supported by all parties, but of late many of the subscriptions have been withdrawn, and there are many parents who are unwilling to send their children to it on account of the doctrines taught. There is no educational provision for their children; some go to Tysoe, distant two miles. There can be no doubt that the education of the children should be improved. I don't think that there is much advantage in employing a boy under 10 years of age, but they are occasionally useful under that age. After they begin to work they could be spared in winter evenings after 5 o'clock, but not

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during the day time. I prefer a man who can read and write for a labourer, but most of our men here can do that.

RADFORD SEMELE.

67. *Edmund Lythall, Esq.*, occupier of 600 here, and 60 at Harbury.

Thomas Horley, Esq., occupier of 425 acres in this parish, and 140 in Napton and Harbury.

The principal landowners in Radford are F. E. Williams and W. G. G. Williams Esqs. About four-fifths of the parish is arable; the soil is various, some very stiff and some very light, more of the former than the latter. There is a sufficient supply of labour in the parish for the wants of this parish, but many men go to work at Leamington and at Offchurch (which is a close parish) so that there are often barely enough labourers here; we don't suffer from this because we keep the same number of men summer and winter. There are a good many young men out of work now; they won't go to regular work, but do casual jobs on railways or coal and iron works in Staffordshire; they come back here in winter when that work is over. There is a school here and a very good uncertificated master; almost all the children in the parish attend. There are now 94 on the books of the day and 110 of the Sunday school, there is also a night school attended by adults. The cottages are more than necessary for the labourers in this parish; many of them are very bad, not sufficient sleeping accommodation. Most of them belong to Mr. Williams, but some have been built up by speculators on small pieces of land which they have been able to purchase; the accommodation of these is also insufficient; rent from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* All belonging to Mr. Williams have gardens, but some of the others have not, there are allotments besides. We think that allotments are a very great benefit to the labourers whenever they are used as a substitute for gardens, but they are very injurious to the labourers and farmers when they do not effect that object. They should be one-eighth of an acre in extent. It is useless to give a few men extra land in order to supply the labourer at extra times of the year, because these men have to do their own work at times when they are most wanted by the farmers. The bulk of the cottages are close to the school, only six are more than a mile from it.

At Harbury Miss Ryland is the principal proprietor, but there are a number of different owners. A few years ago almost every man farmed his own land there, but that system is now being given up. There is very little grass there (not more than one-sixth), the land is very stiff.

The usual size of farms is from 200 to 500 acres, average about 300. We cannot get boys as we used to get them; they go to work from this parish about 9 years old occasionally, and probably begin continuous labour about 10. They are first employed in bean dropping, and turnip singling, and bird scaring; women and girls are employed in bean dropping and turnip singling as well as boys. The best continuous work boys can do is driving plough; we don't think that any restriction upon their employment is desirable; there is no greater danger from boys of 10 being placed with horses than boys of 14, because if horses are unmanageable a small boy will run away, but a bigger boy will endeavour to restrain the horses.

Women are very little employed, we don't employ any regularly; they only do light work in the spring and summer. The winter work is quite occasional and optional. Many go to Leamington to wash, and they get 1*s.* 3*d.* a day and their food.

Men's wages are 12*s.* The piecework done in the neighbourhood is turnip hoeing at 7*s.* an acre (twice over); mowing, 3*s.* an acre and beer, worth 1*s.* per acre more; harvest work, reaping about 12*s.* with beer or 14*s.* without per acre; men are also employed in carting, &c., get 3*s.* a day for a month besides beer; carter's wages are 12*s.* or 13*s.* with a cottage, with 1*l.* extra for harvest. Last year 18 able-bodied men employed by Mr. Horley earned on an average 15*s.* 6*d.* to 16*s.* per week. Mr. Lythall thinks that his men earn about the same sum.

It was not the custom to let cottages with the farm, but it is becoming more the custom now. It is desirable that all cottages except those necessary for the stockmen should be placed in the village; but a few labourers should always live close to their work.

Mr. Lythall usually engages two or three servants at the statutes; they are domestic and not farm servants. He hired two servants this year, one an under carter, another an under shepherd, they are lodged at an outfarm; they are found in firing, lodging, washing, and they have 7*s.* a week to board themselves, and are supplied with garden ground for vegetables; they get from 7*l.* to 10*l.* at Michaelmas.

Mr. Horley objects strongly to statutes; Mr. Lythall has been always in the habit of using them, and thinks there would be a difficulty in obtaining servants without them. There is one objection to registry offices, it is for their interest to move servants as often as they can without injury to their character, because they receive a fee whenever a servant moves; they get 2*s.* 6*d.* from one party, and 1*s.* from the other.

The school here has been in existence for many years, the good education enables the boys to get places at Leamington. Many of the sharp boys go there after 15 years of age, we only get the stupid ones to work for us. We think that boys are more useful as farm labourers when they can read and write. Mr. Horley is often in the habit of giving his men *written* directions when he goes away himself.

ROWINGTON.

68. The *Rev. B. P. Brodie.*—I have been here 13 years. The parish belongs to a number of proprietors, some of them resident farmers. There are about 20 farmers in this parish. There is no resident squire. The small farmers employ very few men in winter. Some few of the labourers are lodged and boarded by the farmers. The cottages are very much scattered. The children are absent from school for about two months a year for bird and pig tending; we lose enormously in their school work in consequence of that absence. The farmers send to the parents and take the children away. I have known them to go away at the age of 6 or 7 for that job; but then they come back again. The women go to work here whenever they can get a chance. We have a surplus population. All are employed during the summer; but in winter many are out of employment. There is a charity here worth 200*l.* to 300*l.* per annum; that always attracts people. We now pay church rates out of it. Many of the cottages in the parish belong to this charity, some are good, but some are disgracefully bad; they are managed by a committee, consisting chiefly of farmers, so that the farmers can provide cottages for their labourers when they please. We used to charge no rent for these cottages, on condition of the tenants keeping them in repair, but they have failed to do that, and now we charge a quit rent of 1*l.* a year.

Boys leave school at the age of 10, girls remain up to 11 or 12. I am certainly in favour of compulsion, but I think that indirect compulsion would be preferable to direct. When I first came here the school was free, and the children were then very irregular; since then a new school has been built, and the children now pay 1*d.* a week, and are far more regular in attendance than they were. The difficulty I have to deal with is not so much the difficulty of the field work as the indifference of the parents. Any law which may be passed should deal with both these difficulties. The school has been in good working order for six or seven years. Very few boys have left this parish for work elsewhere, in consequence of the good education they have received. I won't receive the children belonging to neighbouring parishes without the sanction of the clergy of the parishes to which they belong. I think night schools are failures, except

in compact parishes. I have had one here, but this parish is too much scattered for the purpose; the night school is usually attended by agricultural servants, who are hired at mops, and belong to other parishes.

Mops are a great evil, the greatest that can be; they are a perfect heathendom; they do no good, except to the publichouse keepers. Everything is done to make them as attractive as possible; in Warwick an ox is roasted whole in the streets. They are held in October in all the principal towns; they are among the most immoral things we have. It is a holyday for farm servants, and the only one they have. The farmers are without labour for a fortnight at the time of the mops. We have established registers at Warwick and other places for farm servants; but the attempt to do away with mops has generally failed, because the farmers won't hire boys there. None of the schools in this neighbourhood have certificated masters except ours and that at Lapworth.

SOLIHULL.

69. The *Rev. P. M. Smythe.*—The Becher club insures an annuity at the age either of 65 or 70, a payment in case of sickness and of death. A club does not answer if too much extended; people lose individual interest in it. At first we permitted women as well as men to contribute to it; but that was given up because it is impossible to gauge their state of health; they don't go out to work, and they may be in indifferent health, although well enough not to appear ill while staying at home. A man will always go out to work if he can. The Odd Fellows club is managed by the members themselves; the members are sufficiently numerous in the Odd Fellows to enable them to do that, but not so in the Becher club. When a club is limited to one or two parishes, nobody can be found to manage the finances unless some gentlemen take it up.

The Becher club never go to a public house; there is a dinner every year, but nobody need pay or attend unless they like. I think it is the general practice for the poor about here to belong to a club.

We have also a medical club. The poor pay 1*d.* a piece for each family, or $\frac{1}{2}d.$ for each individual. In case of sickness they pay 1*s.* for a medical ticket, which entitles them to medical attendance for six months; the extra money necessary is made up from an honorary fund, which amounts to about half the regular subscriptions.

I never heard of the Act of 1866, which makes overcrowding a nuisance, being enforced in this neighbourhood.

SOUTHAM.

Meeting at Southam, 1st Feb. 1869.

Present:

70. The *Rev. T. Hillyard,* rector of Southam.
Mr. W. B. Russell, occupier, Priors Marston.
Mr. G. F. Wills, occupier, Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick.
H. T. Chamberlayne, Esq., landowner, Long Itchington.
Mr. W. Winterton, occupier, Long Itchington.
Mr. T. Martin, land agent, Southam.
Mr. W. Moxam, occupier, Granborough.
Mr. D. Rice, surgeon, Southam.
Mr. S. Cook, occupier, Napton.
Mr. James Whitehead, occupier, Southam.
Mr. T. E. Ruttledge, surgeon, Southam.

The parish of Priors Marston is principally grass. The land is in the hands of several proprietors, of whom Lord Spencer is the principal. There is a national school under a master and mistress, besides dissenters' schools. The inhabitants are mainly collected in the village, and are all within reach of the school. Priors Hardwick is much smaller than Priors Marston; Lord Leigh is the principal proprietor. The school accommodation there is sufficient. The supply of labour is scarcely sufficient for the cultivation of the land.

Granborough is chiefly grass; the population is about 400. There is a school under a mistress, not a very satisfactory one; but at Willoughby, distant two miles, there is a good school. The principal proprietors are Lord Overstone and Mr. Robinson. The supply of labour is more than sufficient in winter; some of the men have been walking seven or eight miles to work; but in summer it is insufficient; we get Irish to work.

Napton is chiefly grass. There are schools there for girls and boys; the master is certificated, the mistress not. The supply of labour is more than sufficient. The property is in the hands of many proprietors. Scarcely any girls are employed in this district. Boys begin to work at tending birds or leading an extra horse when crops are being carried, at 10; but they do not go to regular work, such as plough-driving, until the age of 12 or 13; they are also occasionally wanted for the shepherds' work and odd jobs from the age of 12 or 13; their ordinary hours of work are from 6 to 6 in summer and 7 to 5 in winter, if they can see. The work is not physically injurious; the boys are not liable to more accidents than men; they earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a week at first. Women are very little employed except in hay-making and harvest; women of all ages go out, but principally the older ones. There are very few turnips in the neighbourhood, and therefore women are not much employed in topping and tailing; they are not generally employed in hoeing or squitch-picking. The work is not physically injurious to them, but it has a hardening effect upon them, more particularly upon the younger ones; it certainly has a bad effect upon their families. The language heard when men and women are at work together in the fields is very bad. The houses of the field workers are cleaner than others, because the women who work in the fields are the most industrious, and the children do not as a general rule suffer, though sometimes they suffer from too many being entrusted to the charge of one woman. The women have from 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day generally, and 1*s.* in hay and harvest.

Boys are not wanted by farmers until the age of 12, except for about two months a year, and it would be much better for them to be at school. It is thought that if they attended regularly until they go to work they might receive sufficient education; but there is great indifference amongst the poor about education. There can be no doubt that educated labourers are decidedly more useful to farmers than uneducated. A majority of seven to four of the gentlemen present are in favour of interference by law for the purpose of improving the education of the children. It was suggested by some gentlemen that the object might be satisfactorily attained by giving additional support to night schools, and by utilizing wet days, &c. when boys cannot earn wages.

As a general rule the cottages are insufficient both in number and accommodation; in Napton there are now a man and his wife and six children in one room, besides numerous other cases of overcrowding. The ordinary plan of cottages consists—one sitting room, a lean to, and the upper room divided into two by a wooden screen. Mr. Ruttledge has often traced cases of illness to bad drainage and ventilation, or the accumulation of manure under the windows. Fever and rheumatism are the two most prevalent diseases here. It is thought desirable that it should be made compulsory to carry out the Nuisance Acts.

The rent is 4*l.* or 5*l.* in Southam, and about 3*l.* or 4*l.* in the country parishes. As a general rule the cottages have gardens, though often very small; there are numerous allotments. Mr. Hillyard lets 36 acres in allotments at 2*l.* 2*s.* an acre, but in most cases the rent is much higher. It is the usual practice to keep pigs, and nuisances are frequently thus caused. The gentlemen present approve of the allotment system when used as a substitution for a garden.

Men's wages here at 12*s.* usually (now in one parish only 11*s.* here given) in summer, not in winter; the regular men have 1*l.* a week in harvest.

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STONELEIGH.

71. The *Hon. and Rev. J. W. Leigh.*—We established a co-operative store here in December 1867. We deal in groceries, bacon, cheese, bread, and beer. The sales amount now to over 40*l.* per week. The shares are 1*l.* shares; 3*s.* per share must be paid as allotment, the remainder by contributions of not less than 6*d.* per week till the whole amount of 1*l.* is paid up. The manager is paid by a per-centage on the sale. We think that that plan is preferable to that of a fixed salary, because it induces him to take an interest in the prosperity of the society. No credit should be allowed under any circumstances. One of the main objects of the society is to enable the members to keep out of debt. I think that a man with a large family would be able to pay his rent in this parish out of the dividend on the purchases he would make at a store. The beer sold is not allowed under any circumstances to be drunk on the premises. We buy our beer.

The profits are divided as follows:—10 per cent. for depreciation of fixed stock; 5 per cent. for interest on paid shares; dividends on the purchases of members and of non-members (if they reside within 3½ miles), but non-members receive only half the amount as a dividend that members receive. A small amount is always carried on to a reserved fund. The benefits derived from a co-operative store are (1), that a good article is supplied to the poor people at a moderate price; (2), that they are taught to calculate for themselves; and (3), that it acts as a savings bank. I can suggest no improvement in our mode of management. The society is under the management of a committee, consisting of a president (myself), a treasurer (a tenant farmer), a secretary (a plumber and glazier), and eight committee men (two of whom are farm bailiffs, and the rest agricultural labourers). The secretary receives no salary.

We have also a reading room (with a smoking room attached) and lending library; it is managed by a committee consisting chiefly of agricultural labourers; three daily papers besides weekly papers are taken in at the library. The subscription to the library is 1*s.* a year; this is far too low; the expenses have to be borne chiefly by the gentry and farmers. We have lectures and penny readings there during the winter months. I think that these institutions are of great benefit in keeping the men away from the publichouse. There is a beershop here, but no publichouse. There is no publichouse in any village owned entirely by Lord Leigh. No complaints are made on account of there being no publichouses. The keeper of the beer house has been persuaded to keep it closed on Sundays, except between 1 and 2 p.m. and 6 and 7 p.m.; this arrangement has led to very satisfactory results.

72. *Mr. George Jones*, agent and solicitor to Lord Leigh at Stoneleigh.—I have lived here for 40 years, and have had the management of Lord Leigh's property for 14 years. I have the superintendance of property in 27 parishes in Warwickshire; these parishes are much scattered about in different parts of the county. I am acquainted with the system of agriculture and the mode of employing labour which prevails generally throughout the county.

It is impossible to give a general description of the farms in Warwickshire; they vary in character in different parts; about here they vary from 100 to 400 acres, and about one-third is grass; in the south there is a larger proportion of grass than here; in the north also a considerable proportion of grass, but not quite as much as in the south. In the north it is the practice to graze cattle. A small dairy is attached to each farm throughout the county, but the cheese made here has little sale in the London market. The crops grown are the ordinary agricultural crops; there are few market gardens, no hop grounds. The price for labour in the county varies very much; it depends entirely on the farmer. I should think that some farmers spent more than 2*l.* per acre, and some less than 1*l.* I think 1*l.* 10*s.* per acre would do it well.

Women are employed in agriculture in this county in couching and weeding the crops in the spring, then in haymaking, then harvest (when very few reap, but bind up and rake for the farmer), then picking potatoes and cleaning turnips. The turnips are usually pulled up by men and cleaned by women. Women are not employed at dung spreading; occasionally, but rarely, employed with thrashing machines.

Girls begin to work about the age of 16; their work is the same as that of the women. Women's wages are about 1*s.* a day in summer, and less, perhaps 10*d.*, in winter; they work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with intervals for meals; they are rarely employed at piecework. When employed in weeding, &c. a number of women are sent to work together, but they are engaged and paid separately. Nobody is specially employed to superintend them when at work; the general superintendence rests with the farmer himself (if the farm is small) or with his foreman. Most of the females are married women. The girls who work in the fields consist of a class who dislike the control incident to domestic service. I don't think that the employment of women in field labour is necessary for the purpose of carrying on the cultivation of land in this district; no doubt in times when work is pressing every hand is of great use, but I think that female labour might as a general rule be dispensed with without increasing the expense of cultivation. I expect that the introduction of improved machinery in farming operations will have the effect of improving the cultivation, diminishing the weeds, and consequently the necessity for female labour. Of course any sudden withdrawal of women from field labour would be inconvenient, but I think that they might be gradually withdrawn from it without serious loss to farmers. I have the strongest possible objection to unmarried females being employed in field work, and I have prohibited bailiffs and others over whom I have control from so employing them. I think field work has a very bad effect upon their morals, and unfits them for their future domestic duties. As regards *married* women I think it a very great pity that they yield to the temptation offered by the wages of 1*s.* a day, but I feel sure that they save more for their families by attending to their domestic duties than they can earn by going out to field work. The number of women who are employed in the fields is I think decreasing; they do no hard work, and no work which in my opinion is unhealthy; and I doubt whether it is desirable to interfere by law in their case. Boys are first employed in tending birds and sheep, but the first continuous employment in which they are engaged is going with the horses. One boy is employed with each team, and they are engaged in that kind of work from the age of 8 upwards. Boys' hours of employment are usually from 6 to 6 in summer and winter. When at plough the horses go out at 7 and return at about 4; they stop for some time in the middle of the day to feed the horses and to enable the men to eat their dinners. I think that the early work is physically injurious to them; many accidents occur from their inability to control the horses. The hours of labour are too long, and their nourishment is insufficient for the exertion they are called upon to undergo; they have not time to attend school and obtain a sufficient education and proper moral training. I think that the best plan would probably be to make the employment of any boy illegal unless he could produce a certificate of having attended school a certain time or of having attained a certain amount of proficiency in school work.

Great efforts have been made during the last few years to improve the cottage accommodation, both as regards the health of the occupants and the separation of sexes. No doubt in the case of many of the old villages the cottages are placed at too great a distance from the land to be cultivated. That is owing in a great measure to the enclosures which have taken place within the last 60 years. Before that time there were a number of open commons in

this county on which no cottages stood; these have now been enclosed, and labourers are required to cultivate them, but cottages have not yet been built on all the land which was formerly common. Although there is much still to be done in this county, I think it would contrast favourably with many other counties as regards the supply of cottages. The practice among the principal landowners in the county is to keep their cottages in their own hands; they do their best to accommodate their tenants by letting the cottages which are near their respective farms to the labourers employed by the tenants; but it is not the practice to let the cottages to the nominees of the tenants, and a labourer would not as a general rule be turned out of his house simply because he disagreed with his employer. I find that that system works well. It is for the mutual advantages of the farmer and labourer that they should agree well together, and in my opinion the practice of letting cottages with the farms gives the farmers too great a control over their labourers. Most of the cottages stand in gardens, but besides these gardens the allotment system is very general; the allotments as a rule don't exceed a quarter of an acre. The labourers are left to manage them very much as they please; they are expected not to grow corn, but they very often do; spade labour only is allowed. I think the system has been of the utmost advantage to the labourer, it has given him an interest in his house, it has kept him out of the publichouse, and added materially to his comforts. In the neighbourhood of the towns a portion of the produce of the allotment is usually sold.

Farm labourers are not usually hired by the year; some, such as cow boys and under earters, are hired by the year, and live in the farm houses. There are statute fairs at all the principal towns; they are held principally at Michaelmas. I think the statute fairs are one unmixed evil without any counterbalancing advantage; they are composed of two elements, the business of hiring and the amusements of a fair; a substitute could easily be found for the former, but not for the latter, and that constitues the difficulty in abolishing them.

No work is done on Sundays except what is absolutely necessary, such as feeding cattle, &c.

There can be no question that educated labourers are more useful than uneducated; at the present time you require a man who is more or less conversant with machinery, and if you have an educated man you can make him a foreman. We have sent many men from here to be bailiffs; we could not have done that if they had not been educated. Lord Leigh's cottages are let by the year, rent paid half-yearly, and six months' notice to quit necessary. I think that is the best plan for letting. We cannot build a cottage with three bedrooms, two rooms down stairs, and detached washhouse under 150*l.* each, and I feel sure that it does not answer to build cottages with less accommodation than that. The best position is as near the work as possible, provided they are not too far from the school.

By the enclosure of commons all the commons rights have been lost; but in return for that the commoners have now far more work to do and a greater opportunity of earning wages than formerly.

Stratford-on-Avon.

73. *Mr. J. S. Leaver*, clerk to the Becher Club.—This club was established in 1868 by the Rev. R. Morris, Vicar of Eatington. The name was derived from the Rev. J. Becher, of Stockwell, in Northamptonshire, who was the originator. This Becher Club is co-extensive with the Stratford-upon-Avon union. There is another Becher Club at Solihull for five of the surrounding parishes, there is another at Stewpony in Worcestershire. It is a *sine quâ non* of our club at Stratford that no meeeting shall be held at a publichouse. We used to insure women, but we have ceased to do that because of the difficulty incurred in ascertaining their state of health and the frequent demands they made upon the club. There is a great difficulty in ascertaining whether they are really ill when they demand relief, and whether they are simply staying at home without any sufficient cause, as experience teaches us that it is no great deprivation to a woman to remain at home although in good health. At the beginning of 1868 the balance belonging to the club amounted to 4,581*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.*, and the number of members 327, of whom 197 belonged to Stratford. The class of people belonging to the club in Stratford are chiefly artizans of the better class and day labourers (not agricultural). In the country districts they are composed chiefly of agricultural labourers, with the exception of some quarry men. Those agricultural labourers who belong to it are principally carters and men who are earning more than the ordinary rate of wages.

All the country parishes have little clubs, but they are all publichouse clubs, we find that their competition operates against us on account of the attraction of the publichouses. The habit of belonging to clubs is certainly increasing; there has been an additional lodge of Odd Fellows and a court of Foresters started since I have been in the town (27 years), in addition to the clubs existing before. I have never known a member of the Becher Club apply to the Board of Guardians for relief because they are usually the better class of men (the majority of them subscribe for the highest rate of payment we can give them, viz., 10*s.* a week), but I believe that men belonging to the other clubs do apply for parish relief and are not refused. We have no difficulty in the management of our club because it is generally supported by the clergy and gentry of the neighbourhood, the members are in the habit of examining the accounts most carefully and with great intelligence, but in country villages where labourers are the chief supporters of clubs, the members are more apt to be influenced by the social attraction of a publichouse than by the solvency of the finances.

I think that all clubs should be obliged to publish a detailed balance sheet, showing the items of income and a detailed statement of the amount spent in each parish (if the club spreads over more than one parish). The accounts should also be audited by professional men every year, and the tables should be approved by an experienced actuary. Unless these requirements were complied with no officer of the club should be answerable for defalcations.

Tysoe.

74. The *Rev. C. D. Francis*, vicar of Tysoe and rector of Compton Winyate.—Lord Northampton owns the whole of Compton Winyate, and about one-third of Tysoe. The soil here is stiff; it lies between the oolite and the blue lias, and is very fertile; the rent varies from 35*s.* to 45*s.* as a general rule, but that is less than the best land is worth. There are several proprietors in Tysoe. Lord Northampton, Lord Leigh, Lord Redesdale, Lord Jersey, and Lord Willoughby, Sir W. Cope, and Christchurch College, all have land here, besides other proprietors. There is an ample supply of labour in Tysoe. Compton Winyate contains 997 acres, and only 27 inhabitants. There is only one cottage there in which there are eight people. The labour necessary for the cultivation of that parish comes from Tysoe, distant one mile, but it is almost all grass, and very few labourers are required. There used to be more cottages there, but they were pulled down many years ago before I came here, which was 17 years ago.

Lord Northampton has a residence at Compton Winyate, but usually only resides there for a few weeks in the year.

A good many young boys go to work in summer, and come to school in winter. The boys are employed in scaring and dibbling; it is the usual practice to dibble beans in the neighbourhood. The inclination of all the women is to go to field work, but we compel all the unmarried if possible to go to service. There is a clothing club here, and one of the rules is that any parent who keeps an unmarried daughter

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from domestic service without sufficient reason loses the benefit of the club. I think the parents usually like to get the girls out, but the girls all prefer the liberty and fun of the field work, although if they once become habituated to domestic service they are unwilling to give it up.

I think it would be impossible to fix beforehand upon any slack time of the year when children might be sure of not being wanted for field work; at the same time there are always certain times of the year which they might devote to school without interfering with the farm work. These times they could select for themselves if they were obliged to devote a certain portion of their time to school until they passed the fourth standard. They should have permission to secure the necessary amount of school attendance either at day or night school, or a combination of both. I think that the proper persons to enforce the law would be the relieving officer; he might ascertain from the schoolmaster what boys had failed to attend achool the requisite number of times. The parents should be finable in the first instance if the boys did not attend school; and the farmer should be punishable only if he employed a boy with a knowledge that the occupation for which he engaged him must necessarily interfere with the number of attendances which the boy was bound by law to devote to school. I think that it is desirable that a boy should go to work a short time every year as soon as he can; if he does not go to work until the age of 12, he acquires a distaste for farm work.

There were a number of cottages built originally on the waste by the labourers; but they have most of them now passed into the hands of farmers and tradesmen.

I think that night schools are of great value; I think that those who attend them learn as much during the three months they attend as the day school children do in six months. I have always found great difficulty in getting regular attendance at night school. This year I have made each scholar pay 1*s.* on joining the night school, which I give back to him if he attends the requisite number of times.

Every boy who attends the day school has to get leave from the master when he wants to be absent, and if they are absent a week without leave, they have to pay double next week. At Radway, where the school is free, the children pay when they are absent.

There is a benefit club here called the Tysoe Provident Society; it was started about nine years ago, and takes in a few members from five or six surrounding parishes, but the great majority of the members belong to this parish. It is started on temperance principles. We have a tea meeting every year. It is very popular among the labourers, and contains 226 members (chiefly labourers). Balance in hand 1,248*l.* There is also a small club for women founded on similar principles. The payments are regulated according to the age of the assured; they can purchase an annuity, and insure for relief in sickness for any amount below their earnings. There were three public-house clubs here before this was started; one of them was broken up, but the other two have given up the public-house principle. I met with great opposition from the publicans when the club was first started.

I think that the great obstacle to the education of young men is the publichouses; the men prefer them to the night schools. We have a good library, and are just starting a reading room.

Warwick.

75. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians for the Warwick Union held at Warwick on Saturday, November 28th, after hearing the statement of the Assistant Commissioner, the following resolutions were agreed to:—

1. That no legislative interference is necessary with respect to the employment of women in the fields.

2. That no child should be employed in the fields under 10 years of age, nor between the ages of 10 and 14, unless they can produce a certificate of proficiency signed by the Government Inspector, minister, or schoolmaster.

76. *Mr. H. Thornett, Mr. W. B. Bone, Mr. E. Stephens*, relieving officers for the Warwick Union.

No complaints can be made on the ground of ill health against the agricultural labour performed by women and children in this district. The children do occasionally suffer from ill health when their parents go to work; we have known several cases of children having been burnt. Many of the houses are filthy and wretched when the mother goes to work; the cottages are not more comfortable in consequence of the money earned by the mother. The illegitimate children are chiefly the children of domestic servants. The clause in the Sanitary Act of 1866 against overcrowding has not been enforced in this district, but there is a case of a house with one bedroom at Kenilworth in which it probably will be enforced. There are in that house a husband and wife and eight children. The cottage accommodation is now quite inadequate; there are many houses with only one room upstairs and one downstairs. The labourers don't often have to go more than one mile to their work, but some few have to go as much as two or three miles. The ordinary rent for cottages is 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. In some places cottages have been built upon the waste. The owners are labourers; they are usually miserable places. The guardians are certainly anxious to enforce the Nuisance Act to the best of their power.

Minutes of Meeting of the Agricultural Chamber, Warwick, 12th Dec. 1868.

77. Agreed that in this county,—

No girls are employed under 11 years of age, except for a short time in spring and autumn.

That employers would not be put to inconvenience if they employed no boys under 10 years of age.

That, as a general rule, none except the wives of labourers are employed in field work. Women are employed in spring in stone-picking, then in weeding the corn, hay and corn harvest, cleaning roots, and rarely with the threshing machine; their hours of work are from 8 to 5, and their health very good.

Fire-arms are not entrusted to young children.

Small boys are often sent out in charge of horses too young, but the employers oftener suffer from it than the boys.

That the Chamber prefers the system of requiring a certificate of proficiency to a certificate of school attendance as a means of education.

That it is very difficult to carry out night schools in thinly-scattered parishes.

That a boy of 10 years of age gets 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week; he gets employment under that age for dibbling; but that work is done for the parents, and employers rarely want a boy under 10.

That the women who work in the fields are usually the best description of women, and are more tidy in their houses than others.

Whitnash.

78. The *Rev. J. R. Young*, rector of Whitnash.—I have been here for 22 years. Children from 7 to 12 are employed here for three weeks in the spring at bean-setting, and three weeks in the autumn for wheat-dropping, and occasionally in bird-tending. Boys and girls are so employed. There are three men in the village who take this job, and they employ four children each when engaged in it, and sometimes a woman in the place of the children when the children cannot be obtained. The children so employed are usually their own children, but occasionally those of neighbours; the children are paid about 6*d.* a day.

No case of harshness, ill-treatment, or immorality has been known. I have questioned some of the most reliable women upon the point. The children come back to school in the intervals, and I think that the advantage they derive from the experience thus de-

rived of field work, combined with the benefit done to their health from being out of doors, more than counterbalances the loss they sustain from being obliged to absent themselves for a short time from school. The boys of the poorer families begin to go out regularly to work about the age of 10. There are no children in the village who don't go to school now. All the parishioners are within reach of the schools, except those who reside in two cottages attached to a farm two miles from the village. The children from that cottage do attend school, but less regularly than others. I don't think that the boys who leave school at the age of 10 have received sufficient education; they can pass about the fourth standard. I find that they retain the power of reading but not of writing. I think that they should attend up to the age of 12 in order to acquire an amount of education sufficient for their position. I have a night school here now, which enables the boys to retain and improve what they have learnt at the day school. The boys in the village were very anxious to establish a night school, and got it up of themselves; they have now got up some penny readings. My family assists at the penny reading, but the rules are formed and the arrangements made by the attendants at the night school themselves. I am diocesan inspector of schools, and inspect 22 schools in this district (six of which are in Leamington). The girls usually remain in the schools until they get into the first class; not so the sons of the agricultural labourers. I think that there is no such deficiency of education in the district which I inspect as to require the interference of Parliament to remedy it. I think that the only mode in which the education can be improved would be by requiring a certificate of proficiency as a condition of being permitted to work; but I don't see upon whom the responsibility of summoning the farmers for breach of this regulation can rest; certainly not on the clergyman, as he would thus be led into disputes with the farmers; and I think that the advantages which would be derived from some compulsory scheme would not be sufficient to counterbalance the difficulties to be met with in carrying it out. I have been in the habit of sending my own children to the parish school when they were young, up to about 7 years old. I have been quite satisfied with the results, and I think that my example has acted as an inducement to others in my parish to send their children regularly. I don't think that females suffer any harm morally or physically from the work they do in the field. One great cause of complaint is the "yearly wake," which takes place during the week beginning the second Sunday after Trinity; it lasts three days. I think that our own people do not behave badly, but the difficulty is that it attracts bad characters from Leamington and Warwick. I find that the expense of educating children in the agricultural districts amounts to 1*s.* a week per head. I calculate thus:—Expense: schoolmaster's wages, 50*l.*, and the school pence 60*l.* to 65*l.*; other expenses, such as rent, fire, books, &c., raise the expenses to 100*l.* a year. This would provide education for 50 children in regular attendance; perhaps there would be 70 on the books. The 50 children might attend 40 weeks per annum, which, at 1*s.* per week, would produce 100*l.* per annum. Men's wages are about 13*s.* a week, that is higher than in the country parishes. On account of the proximity to Leamington, women get a good deal of employment there both as washerwomen and charwomen. I used to pay my schoolmaster 50*l.* and the pence; I now give him 36*l.* a year and a capitation allowance, making the pence up to 3*d.* a head; the children themselves pay 1*d.* or 2*d.*; I make it up. Out of 88 children examined by me in two purely agricultural parishes last year there were 24 girls and 11 boys over 10 years of age.

WELLESBOURNE.

79. *J. Ford, Esq.*, Moreton Morrel.
J. M. Mordaunt, Esq., occupier of 500 acres.
Mr. John Moore, bailiff.

The parishes of Wellesbourne Hastings and Wellesbourne Mountford belong chiefly to Sir C. Mordaunt, H. S. Lucy, Esq., and G. H. Granville, Esq. The farms contain about 250 acres, and the soil light, chiefly turnip and barley land. There is very little grass. There is more than enough labour to supply the necessities of the parish. Men go to work from here at Charlecote, Walton, Newbolt Pacey, and Moreton Morrel. The cottages belong chiefly to Sir C. Mordaunt; those belonging to him are let for about 2*l.* with a garden; others at from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, some with and some without gardens. The cottages belonging to Sir Charles are chiefly old, those belonging to other proprietors are principally new; all in decent repair. There is no superfluous labour generally; but this year there are some men out of work in consequence of the root crop having failed. There are not many cottages with three bedrooms. There is one church for the two parishes. There is an endowed school here, and also an infant school. There are usually about two cottages let with each farm, but almost all the population is accumulated within three-quarters of a mile of the school.

The parish of Moreton Morrel belongs chiefly to Mr. Ford, Mr. Little, and Captain Ward, it contains nearly 2,000 acres. It is a very strong wheat and bean soil; there is a small portion of light land on which the four-course system of cropping prevails, but on the remainder wheat and beans are grown alternately. The supply of labour is quite sufficient. The cottages belong chiefly to the principal landowner as well as to a few small proprietors. The cottage accommodation is very insufficient; rent 3*l.* to 4*l.*; only three or four have gardens, but there is an ample supply of allotments, both at Wellesbourne and Moreton Morrel. There is a free school under a mistress at Moreton Morrel very conveniently situated for the population. No resident clergyman. The majority of the wives of agricultural labourers go to the field work; some of them all the year round, but they only do light work; their work during winter consists of trimming turnips, that is piecework, done at 8*s.* to 10*s.* an acre, they also go out with the threshing machine; they are all married women. No harm arises from the employment of women in this neighbourhood. Lads come to work at the age of 10 or 11 at Moreton Morrel; they don't go to plough until the age of 12 or 13 on account of the stiffness of the soil. Very few boys are employed under the age of 10 or 11 for occasional jobs such as scaring, &c. There is very little dibbling done, and that is the only work in which they are employed under their parents. No interference by law is necessary for the purpose of improving the state of education; there has been a great improvement in that respect of late, and as a general rule the labourers take advantage of the opportunities they have. Men's wages are 12*s.*, waggoners and shepherds 12*s.* to 14*s.* with cottage and garden; during harvest the men get 1*l.* 1*s.* per week for four weeks, besides 1*l.* or 1*l.* 2*s.* for beer. As a general rule the reaping is done by strangers, and the regular staff gather the harvest; where the corn is cut by machinery the machine is managed by the regular staff. Mr. Mordaunt does dung carting and spreading by the piece, but that is not a usual practice.

Steam is used a great deal; the effect of that is to require as many men but fewer horses than the old practice.

WESTON.

80. *Mr. F. Wells.*—I farm 260 acres of arable land. The soil is stiff and requires four horses for the plough. I employ about four boys from 11 years old upwards. They are employed all the year round; their wages are 8*s.* a week when they begin; they are employed with the horses; their hours of work are from 6 to 6, except during haytime; they have half an hour for breakfast and one hour for dinner. In winter they work from 7 to 5. When at plough they come in at 4.30. I employ three or four women during the summer; I employed none last winter;

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they do no piecework except stone-picking. The piecework done by men consists in draining, dibbling, and hoeing turnips. Men's wages are about 12*s.* a week; they vary from 11*s.* to 13*s.* Perhaps the work done by the piece would raise the wages about 1*s.* a week all the year round, besides what is earned during harvest. Women's wages are about 9*d.* a day. There are very few cottages in this parish; they are not sufficient in number; Lord Clifford is the chief landowner. My men come from Cubbington. They are very restless and independent because I have no cottages for them; there are about 30 cottages, one half at least have only one bedroom; they belong to various owners. There is no school here except a Sunday school; but there are schools at Cubbington and Hunningham, distant two miles each, to which the children go. The waggoners and shepherds have about 1*s.* a week more than other labourers. Cottage rent is 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. I don't think that any Act of Parliament is required in the Midland districts either for women or children. Cottages have gardens, but they are usually very small; there are also some allotments. Boys are not employed in piecework. An evening school is much wanted for boys after they begin to work. Labour costs me about 2*l.* an acre on my farm, but I think that is more than is usually paid in this neighbourhood.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from Mr. H. J. Carter, Babington; Mr. H. Thornley, Brickenhill; the Rev. A. A. Fanshawe and Mr. W. A. Grimes, Bubbenhall; Mr. R. Hawkes, Charlecote; Mr. D. Galton, Claverdon; Mr. Brierley and Mr. W. Loud, Coleshill; Mr. W. Jaggerel, Cubbington; the Rev. J. L. Morris, Fillongley; Mr. T. Wells, Haseley; Mr. J. L. Colman, Hunningham; Mr. David Bower, Kenilworth; Mr. J. Brown, Kinwarton; Rev. H. Hutchins, Maxstoke; Mr. J. Smart and Mr. R. Potter, Meriden; Mr. S. Gibbs and Mr. J. Jackson, Norton-Lindsey; Mr. J. A. James, Old Stratford; Mr. J. R. Ward, Oxhill; Mr. J. Cattell, Sheldon; Mr. R. Horton, Sherbourn; Mark Phillips, Esq., Snitterfield; Mr. T. Avory, Solihull; Mr. J. Nelson and Mr. M. McNicoll, Stoneleigh; Mr. T. Garner and the Rev. T. Leveson Lane, Wasperton; and J. Dugdale, Esq., Wroxall.

Wiltshire.

WILTSHIRE.

Amesbury.

81. *Mr. William Long.*—I farm 1,800 acres; not quite half is grass. I pay 1,500*l.* a year in wages. I am sure that the great want in the district is the want of cottages. I hire eight cottages with my farm. I require one cottage for every 100 acres to supply myself with labour. I never allow two families to inhabit one cottage. I complain both of the insufficient number of cottages and the want of accommodation among those that exist.

I employ about 30 men, 16 or 18 women, and about 17 boys. Boys are employed from the age of 9 upwards. It is a very bad thing for labourers to be obliged to live on the downs at a distance from the villages, but where stock has to be looked after at a homestead it is absolutely necessary that somebody should live on the spot; farmers ought to be careful to put labourers who have no children in the distant cottages. The medical man here has told me that his work has increased enormously in consequence of the practice of building cottages upon the downs. Where men live at a distance the master is liable to be robbed. I am in favour of education; those who are the best educated are by far the best labourers. All the boys I employ can read and write. I don't want any boys before they are 10 years old; I am pestered to death by the mothers who come to get me to find employment for their boys. No farmers about here require boys until the age of 10, and I think that the parents might easily maintain them up to that age if they did not go as much as they do to the public house. I advocate education because I find that it makes men much more trustworthy and reliable and useful as farm labourers. The instances where uneducated men make good farm labourers are extremely rare.

Girls come out to work at the age of 12 or 14, and we find employment for them. They mix a good deal with the young men, and harm ensues. The language used is often very bad, and the scenes at night in the town are disgraceful. They get a taste for this sort of thing from going out to field work and from overcrowding in cottages. It is impossible to stop immorality by altering the law, or to prevent women working with men; but I think the law should prohibit girls working in the fields under the age of 14.

Ashton Gifford.

82. A meeting was held at the residence of J. Ravenhill, Esq., at Ashton Gifford, on Wednesday, January 20, 1869, for the purpose of meeting the Assistant-Commissioner. About 40 attended, consisting of noblemen, gentlemen, clergymen, medical men, and farmers, and among them the following:—Lord Henry Thynne, M.P.; the Hon. W. Holmes A'Court; the Hon. and Rev. S. Best, of Abbots Ann, Hants, Secretary to the Southern Counties Adult Education Society; Rev. J. Constable, Principal of the Agricultural College, Cirencester; the Rev. J. Wilkinson, Secretary to the Diocesan Prize Scheme Association; Mr. Brown, Inspector of Workhouse Schools; the Rev. J. E. Philipps, President of the Art Exhibition; the Rev. D. Morrice, of Longbridge Deverill; the Rev. C. Lawford, Diocesan Inspector of Schools; the Rev. J. J. Jacob, Secretary and Chaplain to the Wilts Reformatory; the Rev. H. E. Ravenhill, Secretary to the Southern Counties Adult Education Society; the Rev. H. Wightwick; the Rev. E. C. Collard; the Rev. R. Payne, Rector of Downton; Lieut.-Col. Everett; Mr. Bleeck, surgeon, Warminster; Mr. William Davis; Mr. James Rawlence and Mr. E. P. Squarey, of Salisbury; Mr. Stratton; Mr. Melsome; Mr. Chisman; Mr. Snelgrove; Mr. Wilce; Mr. Notley; Mr. Bevan.

The questions proposed by the Assistant-Commissioner, with an abstract of the observations made upon them by the gentlemen present, are given below.

1. What amount of education is it desirable that the children of agricultural labourers should receive?

2. What is the present state of education among the children of agricultural labourers?

The *Hon. and Rev. S. Best.*—I should consider reading, writing, and ciphering indispensable; but they are not education, but only instruments of it. I do not believe in the possibility of education without religion. Religious teaching in some form is necessary, but it need not be dogmatic. The present state of education clearly falls short of what is desirable, and is therefore decidedly deficient.

Mr. Brown.—Children should be taught as much as the time they can devote to school permits. It is impossible to restrict the education to a few subjects. I don't think that anything can be gained by endeavouring to define accurately what should be taught. Religion should certainly be taught; that tests the teacher more than anything else. No education without that is sufficient. Geography also gives children a wide interest, and calls out their dormant faculties as well as mental arithmetic.

The *Rev. J. J. Jacobs.*—I don't think it is necessary for the State to interfere for the purpose of educating a child to an extent necessary to raise him above the normal condition occupied by his parents, although every facility should be given him to improve himself.

Mr. W. Stratton (Kingston Deverill).—We need only teach the children the three R's; we should not educate them above their position. I don't object to

any amount of education, but I think they can best educate themselves by night schools and by reading. Most labourers have an opportunity of improving themselves, and many do so. [Mr. Stratton here mentioned several instances of labourers within his own knowledge who had educated themselves.]

The *Rev. J. E. Philipps.*—We all think that the means of education offered in the schools are sufficient, but the education of children is usually defective, because they don't remain long enough at school to profit by the means of education there offered to them.

3. To what causes is the defective state (if any) of education among the children of agricultural labourers due?

The *Rev. D. Morrice.*—The real cause of the defective state of education is the unwillingness of parents to forego their children's earnings. In a few cases the parents are indifferent about education. Where children go to work at an early age it is not often owing to pressure placed upon them by employers. The parents are usually much more anxious to get their children out to work than the employers are to take them.

The *Rev. E. C. Collard.*—A short time ago I had not a single labourer's son aged 8 in my school; the parents assured me that all their children had been pressed by their employers to go to work for them. Dorsetshire may differ from Wiltshire in this respect, but with me the children leave school at an early age either because their parents are induced by their poverty to send their children to work, or the employer practically employs pressure to oblige the children to come out to work.

The *Rev. J. Wilkinson*—Persons in our condition of life are not sufficiently considerate towards labourers. We should remember that the children's earnings may increase the income of the family by 50 or 60 per cent. None of us are called upon to forego such an addition as that to our income for the purpose of educating our children; and yet our children require for success in their career a high education, whereas, for what the agricultural labourer can see, learning makes little difference, certainly none with the farmer, the usual employer.

The pressure used by employers no doubt varies in different districts. In Hampshire it is often the practice for farmers, when they engage a man, to bargain for his children as well. I don't think, however, that the children are often then taken away as young as 8, because their labour is of very little value at that age, except for keeping birds, or the like. Another cause (not mentioned in the programme) of this defective state of education is the indifference of the owners of the soil; they take little interest in the condition of labourers, except of those who live in their immediate neighbourhood—"out of sight out of mind." Our squires don't do what they ought.

Mr. Brown.—There are many thinly populated parishes where there is a want of schools easily accessible to the children. The teachers, too, are often bad. A good master will teach twice as much as a bad one, and the difficulty of obtaining good masters has probably increased since the introduction of the Revised Code. I should like to require a certificate of proficiency from all school teachers, but this would be impossible at present.

The *Hon. and Rev. S. Best.*—I do not think that the parents are generally indifferent about education, but really useful and practical subjects are so seldom taught in our schools, that they are not made attractive.

The *Rev. J. Constable.* — The real evil is the amount of support given to the lower orders; we think that feelings of independence cannot exist among people below a certain condition of life. In Scotland things are different, because there the people are independent and self-reliant. On two occasions I have threatened to close the schools in the parishes in which I have been if no effort were made by the inhabitants to keep them up, and in both cases the result has been successful. I maintain that the poor do desire education, if you only bring out the good qualities they possess; I have never had to complain of indifference among them. The real complaint is the alienation of the poor from the soil, they must have the means of living, and they are now entirely dependent on their wages.

4. How is this difficulty to be remedied?

5. What real value is to be attached to night schools? Can they be relied on as a systematic means of education?

Mr. Rawlence.—The Factory Acts are not at all applicable to agricultural districts. I have had considerable experience in night schools, and I believe they would furnish all further necessary education, if a boy were kept at a day school until he could obtain a certificate up to the standard of class four before going there.

The *Rev. J. J. Jacob.*—A boy should be able to pass the fourth standard before going to a night school; if he cannot do that, the night school will be of little use to him. There are several reasons why night schools are not of much real use, they are not held often enough, and the boys who want them most like them least, besides which they should be conducted by good masters.

[The Rev. R. Payne was then requested to explain the plan proposed by him of requiring a certificate of proficiency from every child as a condition of being permitted to earn wages; the plan is explained at page 107, and is therefore not repeated here].

Mr. Stratton.—Farmers would be quite willing to dispense with boys' labour under the age of 10 years, except during harvest, when they should be permitted to employ boys between the ages of 7 and 10. I object to the certificate system; if a boy were kept from work up to the age of 13, he would be as useless as a workhouse boy. I object to compulsion altogether, it is impossible to make a good member of society by means of school education.

The *Rev. J. Constable.*—If compulsion is introduced at all it should be universal and apply to all classes; I know other classes besides labourers who require it. My opinion is that certificated masters should be provided in all schools, and that boys should be prohibited from going to work under 10 years of age; the rest the labourers should do for themselves.

Mr. Squarey.—It should be recollected that young boys are not free agents; their parents are apt to prefer the temporary benefit gained by their children's wages to the ultimate advantage obtained by giving them a good education. The principle may be properly admitted, that children are entitled to receive protection from the law when their parents interfere with their obtaining an education which is now open to them. I think that the plan of requiring a certificate of proficiency the only one which provides for all that agricultural children require and that they are entitled to. The certificate should not be available until the holder is 10 years of age, moreover, the standard should not be too high, and there should be a power of dispensation in special cases of incompetency.

[The Assistant-Commissioner here mentioned what appeared to him three objections to the certificate plan,—

1. That it would be unfair on boys who lived at a distance from good schools.

2. That it would be difficult to provide sufficiently frequent examinations.

3. That there would be a difficulty in enforcing the Act, because it would be impossible to have a sufficient number of inspectors, as in the case of factories, and because it would never be enforced if left to local authorities].

The *Rev. J. Wilkinson.*—If there be not a sufficiency of accessible schools, there soon will be under the certificate of proficiency. Parents will see to that. The examination need not depend on the visit of the inspector to the school; centres should be appointed within walking distance of the school like the bishop's centres of confirmation; there a non local inspector

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should hold quarterly examinations. The act requiring a certificate of proficiency would enforce itself. Parents, employers, clergy, would all be interested in enforcing it. Night schools cannot be relied on as a systematic means of education. They are good makeshifts and palliatives. To make them more valuable a money value must be attached to proficiency according to age at night schools as proposed at day schools.

The *Hon. and Rev. S. Best.*—The examinations might be carried on by papers, as is now done in night schools and schools of art. Night schools are valuable as a third school to those who have attained to a certain proficiency, but are useless as substitutes for the day schools.

6. Would it be practicable to annex an industrial department to schools in agricultural districts? And how could this best be done?

The *Rev. J. Constable.*—We have failed to combine the two departments at Cirencester, I have now given up the attempt. It may be possible to make a man handy by means of gymnastics and drawing lessons, but it is impossible to teach practical things. Labourers' children require to be taught to handle horses, no horses can be provided for them in country parishes.

Employment.

1. Is it desirable that the employment of women in the fields should be restricted or regulated by law and, if so, how?

Mr Bleeck, surgeon, Warminster.—I think that the out of door work is physically beneficial to women. Morally it is a bad school, and it causes them to get some hireling to take care of their children when they themselves are out, and the children suffer in consequence.

Mr. W. Stratton.—I have had 20 years' experience as a farmer. I have never seen anything in field work tending to the demoralization of the women employed. The agricultural women are in a better condition than the town women.

The *Rev. E. C. Collard.*—I have again and again heard women say that they would not allow their children to go and work in the fields, on account of the immoral influences to which they are exposed

2. Is the labour performed by children in the fields, physically injurious to them, and what, if any, legal regulations are desirable for the purpose of protecting them from the injury so caused?

Mr. Bleeck, Warminster.—There can be no doubt that to send a very young boy out to work is physically injurious to him; he is compelled to work so early and late, that he does not get enough sleep and grows up stunted. If anything can be done to protect farm labourers, boys should not be employed until the age of 10, and I should prefer 12. I think it very desirable that some restrictions should be applied to the number of hours of work, and it would be very desirable if they could be better fed, as their muscular development is wretched in the extreme. A good dinner of butchers' meat and bread three or four times a week would be of immense benefit in improving the physical condition, and making the boys grow up much finer and stronger men, and at the same time be the best possible inducement to the parents not to take the boys from school at too early an age.

Mr. Melsome.—The only way to give them better food would be to keep their parents from the beer house.

3. What, if any, alteration in the law is necessary for the purpose of improving the cottage accommodation.

The *Rev. J. Wilkinson.*—There are two Acts to be considered,—

1. "The Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act, 1866."

2. "The Artisans and Labourers Dwelling Act, 1868."

The first grants loans at four per cent. on first-class securities with expensive formalities for limited periods. In two years only four loans have been been granted under this Act; the precautions, however necessary and proper, render the Act inoperative. In one case it cost 136*l.* to obtain a loan of 6,900*l.* The second Act gives the initiative to the local authorities, that is, in agricultural districts, to the vestry, who certainly will not move. I should suggest that, admitting that any such exemption is bad in principle and only to be excused under exceptional circumstances, admitting that it would be a bounty out of public funds in aid of wages and indefensible on economical grounds, I would suggest that in respect of all dwellings under 6*l.* annual value, the small tenement rating Act be extended, so that they be exempt from local taxation. I would combine with this indulgence certain stringent provisions, such as the right of inspection to cottages, a condemnation of human pigsties, and the consequent power of compelling the erection of better habitations. But I would chiefly rely on improved moral character, and the rise of social and domestic wants consequent on labourers' increased culture and intelligence.

83. *Mr. Sotheron Estcourt's Observations on the Questions proposed at Mr. Ravenhill's Meeting.

1. What amount of education is it desirable children of agricultural labourers should receive?

1. As much as they are capable of digesting and turning to account.

But they never turn to account the greater part of the learning they now receive, because it is poked into their heads at an age too early to be really comprehended, and it is not supplemented by what they see and learn at home, but the contrary; and it is not kept up, much less increased, after they leave school.

As matters now stand, I think no sort of teaching turns to any good account, except that which is purely elementary; but if in any way children could be induced or aided to carry on their education till 20 instead of 10 years old, then I would let them learn as much as they could be brought to attend to.

2. What is the present state of education, &c.?

It varies so much in different dioceses and different parishes that I cannot give a general answer. In Wiltshire and Gloucestershire education is not neglected.

3. To what causes is the defective state of education due?

(*a.*) To want of schools?

No.

(*b.*) To inefficient instruction?

No.

(*c.*) To poverty of parents?

(See next question.)

(*d.*) To the indisposition of parents to forego their children's earnings?

Yes, but they are not to be blamed for this.

(*e.*) To indifference of parents?

Yes.

(*f.*) To pressure by employers?

I think not. Employers are willing to take children after 10 years old. Parents are willing to let them go and earn their keep.

4. How is this deficiency to be remedied?

(*a.*) The half-time or alternate day system?

I tried this at Bowden, and found it fail. Even in field labour a continuity of the same hand and head in any labour is necessary.

(*b.*) Print-works Acts?

I have never tried this.

(*c.*) By a certificate of proficiency?

Useless unless the certificate has a direct money value.

5. What real value can be attributed to night schools as a systematic means of education?

* The Right Hon. T. H. Sotheron Estcourt was unfortunately prevented from attending the meeting at Ashton Gifford, the minutes of which are printed above [A. 82]. He was, however, kind enough to supply in writing his opinions upon the questions there proposed. These opinions are here inserted.

Night schools are good because they are the only means of keeping up some learning in boys. They are valuable only for such boys as choose to attend them. Therefore, as a systematic means to be relied on, they cannot be depended on. But I think it would be a benefit if half the money now spent on schools for children between 3 and 10 was bestowed on night schools, and if the schoolmaster, often a proficient, instead of grinding out his soul in trying to rouse prematurely some sense in children before their brains are developed, were employed to cultivate only such schools as are frequented by boys between 10 and 20.

The principal objection to a transfer of this master from the present school to the night schools exclusively would arise from the clergyman or manager of the schools. Their Government grants would be diminished, their pet school be less well managed, they would lose a valuable assistant in training the young of their flocks, &c.

Nevertheless, I believe we are at present cutting blocks with a razor. The master is too advanced a scholar and too expensive a luxury for this office of teaching children between 3 and 10.

6. Would it be possible to annex an industrial department to schools?

I tried this for some years at Bowden. I also visited other schools where the experiment has been tried, and my inspection is unfavourable.

I put in a loose note some suggestions which I have long had on my mind, but cannot carry into effect in either of my two parishes because the clergy, farmers, parents, and Government inspector all concur, year after year, to praise so highly the present system that I cannot venture on a change.

[NOTE.—Be content to teach in schools for children, before they go to work, mere rudiments, and let the teacher be a cheap dame or old soldier, or some such person, and let him or her receive the whole of the children's pence, and keep school on the old-fashioned plan.

Bestow all that is now raised or raiseable by voluntary aid or from the Government grants, so far as may be legally permitted, on night schools in summer, converted into day schools in winter, for boys above 10.

I am supposing that such boys would work for masters during the summer, and might obtain such capitation grant from the resources I have above mentioned as would enable them to dispense with work and wages in winter, and attend the adult school.

For instance, it might be possible to board all such adult boys during the period of the winter day schooling, and to give them a supper during the summer night school season, so you would ensure attendance for the sake of board; and the penalty of losing their supper in summer and three meals in winter would guarantee both attendance and attention.]

[The following communication was subsequently received from Mr. Sotheron Estcourt in answer to some further questions addressed to him by the Assistant Commissioner.]

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84. Paper supplied by the Right Hon. T. H. SOTHERON ESTCOURT.

1. Mr. Payne, of Downton, suggested to the meeting at Mr. Ravenhill's house, held January 20th, 1869,—

"That no child should be permitted to be employed for hire in any farm work under the age of 13 or 14 years, unless he or she can produce a certificate signed by some Government officer of having passed the fourth standard of the Revised Code."

My opinion upon this is that it is simply impracticable. Who is to enforce the penalty? How is the child to be fed and clothed who has no such certificate? What will parent, child, and employer think of education if it is to involve a penalty affecting all three?

I am certain the only penalty must remain what it has always been, a lower class of labour and of wages. The real reason why wages in agriculture are so low is, that all the well-educated intelligent boys go from home and enter into superior walks of livelihood. Now if the stupid are to be debarred by law, there will be a great outcry.

2. How to deal with drunkenness and the licensing system?

I think the only check on the former is to be found in the countenance given by the upper classes to sober servants. And on the latter question I think no licence should be granted by any but justices, and to persons, not to houses.

3. *Cottages.*—I see no way of effecting a *general* improvement of these, except by cheapening the cost of building. I am trying Fall's patent, and hope to reduce thereby the cost by one-fourth or even one-third.

Perhaps it would be well if it were the custom for landlords to do no more than erect the bare outside walls; leave the whole fitting up of the inside to tenants, with a right to repayment in case of ejection. This would diminish the immediate cost of building with one, and increase the interest in the cottage and its good keeping with others.

4. Can anything be done to improve benefit societies by legislation?

I think not. Solvency is dependent not so much on rules or a certificate of an actuary as on management. This can clearly be kept in order by none but the members themselves.

5. Your concluding remarks suggest one more point; you allude to the indifference of the labourers themselves to education.

I believe this is chiefly caused by education of children being altogether taken out of the hands of parents, and provided by the clergyman or benevolent persons in a parish on a general system.

It would be an improvement in my opinion if the schoolmaster were paid entirely by the parents, who might individually be aided to any extent by the clergyman or other benevolent parishioners.

The children be taken to church, not by the master, but by the parents, and if the latter fail the children suffer accordingly.

School prizes, not books or other articles, but hard cash (however small in amount) paid to the children themselves, so as to connect in their minds the idea of learning with money; and this money should be receiveable by the master in the form of a penny bank.

T. H. SOTHERON ESTCOURT.

22nd March 1869.

AVEBURY.

85. *Mr. George Brown.*—I have two occupations, 467 acres of my own and 129 as tenant farmer; about 40 acres of which are pasture and 80 down; been here all my life except six years. I employ five boys under 13, and four from 13 to 18, two of them are aged 9, one 10, and two 11, all ploughboys; they begin to work regularly between 8 and 9 years of age, and hang about the yards and stables before that. Extra boys wanted in sowing time at spring and fall, when we have extra teams, and occasionally for scaring, but I prefer an old man for that. I do not send boys out sheep tending on the downs, as they cannot be trusted. Sheep go out occasionally on downs during winter but only for an hour or two.

I seldom employ girls under 13; none of that age are now at work here, they usually begin at 12 or 14.

Women are employed in weeding, hay making, sometimes spreading manure; very little in winter; their position in this county does not drive them to go out; have 11 or 13 usually in spring and summer; all live in the village distant half a mile. Boys come about 5.30, they go to plough at 7, return in from plough at 3.30 or 3.45 to dinner, leave at 6.

All the education labourers want is to understand the agreement with their master; those who come to work after being brought up in workhouses never turn out so useful as others. Those who have been to school and learnt to read and write turn out quite

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as good labourers as others, but not better. I think that if boys remained at school up to the age of 10 it would not be as easy to instruct them in their business as labourers, as if they are allowed to frequent the farmyards and see the operation of farming before the age of 10. I am sure that night schools are very useful, both for the purpose of enabling boys to learn what is useful for them, and also to keep them out of mischief in the evening. I could not carry on my farming operations if I employed fewer boys than I do at present, in fact I should like to have one or two more. It would be often convenient to set a boy on to hold a plough for a man, to enable the man to take some other job. No parliamentary interference is necessary. I find females very useful, without them the corn would get foul, they are indispensable. I hardly know of a case of bastardy which has occurred from their being employed. There is a National and another school in the village; not less than 70 children attend these; it is a practice for the children to go to school until they get employment in the fields. The inhabitants of the parish are very respectful and not insubordinate when properly treated; drunkenness is very rare. The supply of cottages pretty good; no two families live in one house; all the cottages are in the village. I think every farmhouse should stand in the middle of the farm with the cottages round it. Water supply good. Rent about 2*l.* to 30*s.* in the average.

Gardens or allotments. Farmers give their men 10 lug of ground, which they plough, and bring home the potatoes for them when grown.

Wages for men are 10*s.* a week. The total earnings average 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week. Women have 8*d.* and 1*s.* in harvest, and boys get 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* per week, and generally 1*l.* at Michaelmas. They are always hired by the year. The labourer's condition is very much improved since I was a boy.

All the farms round here are managed on the three or four course system, and labour is employed about on the same system as on my farms.

Bishopton St. John.

86. *Mr. Edwin Dibbens.*—I farm nearly 1,800 acres (about 100 water meadows and pasture).

Boys begin to work from about 8 or 10 years old; we require them from Lady-day to Michaelmas, but we keep them on in winter for the purpose of aiding their families and to secure them in the summer; never more than two horses used for ploughing here, except in the valley; one or two small boys are wanted to assist the shepherd; we sometimes want them younger than 10, but as a general rule 10 is quite young enough for them to come out for all purposes. Young girls very rarely employed; sometimes in weeding and hay making. Sometimes we have 20 to 30 women in spring and summer; very few in winter; only four at present, 26 October; sometimes one or two are employed with threshing machines; some have to go a mile to work, but generally less. There are only six cottages in the parishes out of the village. The supply of labour in the parish is very good. Women work from 8.30 to 5, one hour at least for dinner; boys 7 to 5, sometimes kept later than 5 to clean up. I think that all should be able to read, write, and cipher, and it would be no hardship to parents to deprive them of the earnings of their children until they can; but I cannot say that men are necessarily either better or worse labourers in consequence of having been to school. I think the worst women go to the fields and the best to service. I am not very fond of employing them, and think it is very bad for their families for them to be in the fields. Women's labour is not cheap unless well looked after.

The cottages are almost all in the village. A few cottages (about six) belong to the labourers themselves; they are always very bad. Some have been built recently. These men are decidedly worse off than those who pay rent; it costs more to keep them in repair than the ordinary rent, 1*s.* a week. There are some cottages built on speculation let at above 80*s.* a year with little or no garden, but with that exception all have gardens, allotments, or both. Lord Pembroke has allotments to every parish; he has built a great number of cottages. At present wages are 10*s.*, when I came 28 years ago they were 7*s.*; carters about 15*s.* The average earnings of labourers with task work are about 13*s.* or 14*s.* The cost of cultivating the land now is higher than it was when I came, but the produce is also greater than it was.

Bramshaw.

87. *Mr. William Rawlins*, No Man's Land.—There are from 30 to 40 cottages here; some are freehold, some leasehold; they were built by the original occupiers themselves. No Man's Land contains only about 15 acres. Some of the cottages have 30 or 40 poles of ground, some two or three acres. Those who have the smallest quantity of land work as labourers. Three or four acres are not sufficient to give employment to or furnish food for a family all the year round, but a man who has regular work can manage half an acre. We have a right here to turn cows into the forest. The men who have two or three acres of land cannot take regular work as labourers; they grow chiefly vegetables and roots for the cows; they are better off than men who have regular employment as labourers. Some of them go miles away to get harvest work. There is no harvest work to be had here. Boys are not wanted as young here as they are in most places. There is no regular employment for women and children in the New Forest. The small occupiers here sell a little butter, but no milk; some have apple trees and make cider, but not all; and bees are kept occasionally. All took up with the school directly it was established; I have heard them say it was the best thing that ever was done.

Broughton Gifford.

88. The *Rev. J. Wilkinson.*—The Oxford clay provides the best pasture land in Wilts. This formation extends from North Bradley in the south-western part of the county up the valley of the Avon to Malmesbury, then across the watershed down the valley of the Thames to Cricklade in the north-eastern part of the county. In the Avon valley, with which I am best acquainted, it frequently underlies extensive beds of drift gravel 6 or 8 feet thick, which again are covered by 3 or 4 feet of brick, earth, or loam. This is the best pasture land in Wilts; none better than that by the river side in this parish. As the ground rises above the river, the gravel thins out, the clay comes nearer the surface, and the ground is colder. This is the dairy land of Wilts. The farms upon it usually contain about four-fifths pasture. The north-west of this strip is cornbrash and oolite, and contains more arable. In the pasture district the farmers require a little arable land for straw, and to grow roots as winter food for graziers. Boys and women are very little employed upon the pasture land. Boys may sometimes drive the cows from the homestead to pasture, and women occasionally do some "beating." There are 40 acres of common land in this parish. As a general rule commons are very scarce in this county. I do not think there is any necessity for interfering by law with the employment of women in the grass country. Boys are not employed to assist in milking on the dairy farms. The youngest milker in my parish is going 13; he is the youngest I ever knew.

As a general rule girls remain at school until the age of 11 or 12, and boys until the age of 8 or 9; they can then usually pass the third standard, but that is not sufficient to enable them to read, write, and cipher with ease. The fourth standard would give them greater facilities, but not sufficient for self culture, such as implies a taste for literature. If the certificate plan is adopted, some inducement might be held out

to schoolmasters to get the boys on quickly, *e.g.*, the master might receive a bonus of 10*s.* for every boy who passed the fourth standard by the age of 10. I do not consider it any objection to this proposal that it would induce masters to favour particular boys. These best boys would be the leaders of public opinion in the school, and raise others up to their level. On this plan the examination for the certificate must be held frequently, and within walking distance of our villages, as it is important that the parents should not be deprived of their children's earnings longer than is absolutely necessary. It is quite the exception for boys to come to thenight school; they only come when they are making an effort to advance themselves by gaining some particular appointment on the railroads or in the police force. When they do come, they could not usually pass more than the second standard. I do not think that night schools can be looked to to do more than enable the scholars to keep up what they have acquired at the day schools, except in the case of those who have some particular object in view to make them diligent. I should wish very much to supplement the certificate by requiring a partial attendance at school for a few years after the certificate has been obtained; but it appears to me that it would be hopeless to attempt to carry out any such scheme. There are fatal objections to the half-day or alternate day schemes, such as I have stated in my Report on the Agriculture of Hants, Royal Agricultural Society's Journal, vol. xxii. Whatever the regulations, none but the simplest would ever be carried out. Everybody but the clergyman would be leagued together to defeat them. Agricultural labourers require training from an early age in their particular business; but no doubt if you increase a man's powers of perception and general intelligence by means of school instruction you thereby increase his usefulness as a farm labourer, more particularly since the more general employment of machinery.

Day wages here are 11*s.*, and I think the piece-work usually done would raise the average weekly wages to 12*s.* or 13*s.*; besides that every labourer is allowed at least 1½ quart of beer a day, and an unlimited supply in hay-time and harvest; the beer costs the farmers 9*d.* a gallon, and this would raise the wages to at least 14*s.* When I first came here 20 years ago wages were 8*s.* a week. The wages of young men have risen more than the wages of older men, because formerly wages were paid with some regard to the *necessities* of the families; farmers were afraid of the married men with families being thrown upon the parish, and therefore paid them perhaps more than their labour was worth. About one-third of the population in this parish is engaged in hand loom weaving; the children at very tender years assist in "quillying and changing shuttles;" their parents let them out at so much a week. The Workshops Act of last session is a dead letter; we have never heard of it.

Burbage.

89. The *Venerable Archdeacon Stanton.*—I have been vicar of Burbage for 16 years. This is a very poor parish. There is an excess of population here, *i.e.*, more people than are required to do the work of the parish. I attribute that state of things partly to the fact that the cottages have always been let by Lord Ailesbury at very much below the market price. For a cottage with a good garden the ordinary rent has been from 2*l.* to 3*l.* per annum. The rents have lately been raised, and wages have risen a little; but the low rents have, I think, until recently prevented the surplus population leaving the parish as readily as they otherwise would have done. Very few women are employed here on account of the number of men there are to do the work. There are a good many men in the parish who hold small pieces of land from two acres and upwards in extent; they usually grow vegetables, root crops, and turnip seed, and their wives and children do a great deal of work for them; they sell their produce as cheap as the larger growers, but I don't think that that system of letting land has a good moral effect upon the occupiers; they don't take to regular farm work because so much of their time is occupied on their own land, and they get into desultory and irregular habits; their children too are irregular in their attendance at school because they are so often kept at home to work for their parents. I don't think that these men are as well off as many who work regularly as day labourers. If they get an unusually good crop they become extravagant, they don't save, and suffer from want during the winter when no work is to be had. I think that the practice of working by the piece often has a bad effect upon labourers, they often become exhausted by over work, and are induced to go to the public house to recruit their strength; they then indulge in drinking for two or three days and spend all the money they have earned, and are often in great distress during the winter. The very best piece worker in the parish is a man who has 9 or 10 children, he has had parish relief for three of his children during each of the last two winters. They have in fact been in the union house at Pewsey. In this neighbourhood wages are almost always paid monthly; *that is a very bad plan*, the shopkeepers are obliged to give credit, and are obliged to charge something extra on that account; the people are always in debt, they become embarrassed, and are tempted to be dishonest. The cottage rents are usually paid half-yearly; that plan is more convenient to the occupier than paying more frequently, and I think it is the best plan where the occupier can be trusted. Nothing tends so much to ruin girls' characters as working in the fields; the demoralizing language they hear, and the gross indecencies they see, have the very worst effect upon them. I decidedly think that women under 25 should be prohibited from going to field work except during harvest time.

Education does much to prevent their going to field work. Those girls who remain at school long very seldom go to field work; education disqualifies them for it; they feel above it. Some girls go out to service as young as 9 or 10. I think that physical injury is sometimes caused to young boys by the early work they perform (handling the plough, &c.).

I came to this parish in 1852. In 1855 the expense of the school amounted to 49*l.* 7*s.* 3*d.*; last year (1867) they amounted to 179*l.* 16*s.* 7*d.* In 1855 the children's pence amounted to 9*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*, last year they amounted to 33*l.* 3*s.* 11*d.* These figures about represent the progress which has been made in education in this parish since 1855; wages have risen during that period, but the children don't remain longer at school now than they did then, although many more come to school. They have learnt much more by the time they leave than they did formerly, because the teaching power has improved, and because there is a good infant school; the children usually leave the infant school at the age of 7, when they can read, write, and cipher a little, and have learnt to behave well and are better able to take in instruction than they otherwise would be. It is difficult to name the age at which the elder children leave the National mixed school, they leave in a very desultory manner, but the bulk of them leave altogether before they are 10 years old, and before they have passed the fourth standard of the Revised Code. Hardly any children come to the school from other parishes (not more than four), although I would receive them if they brought a letter of recommendation from the clergymen of their own parishes.

I have observed that the people here have become *much more decent, orderly, cleanly,* and better behaved since the good schools were established in this parish than they were before. The education has been the cause of a good many young men and women leaving the parish who would not otherwise have left it, but there has been no lack of labourers on account of the numerous population of the parish. Farmers' sons don't usually attend the school, only the children

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of *little* farmers. I think that those who remain at school up to the age of 10 or 11 can usually pass the fourth standard; I think that those who can pass the fourth standard can read and write with sufficient facility to keep up by themselves what they have learnt; that the fourth standard represents an amount of education sufficient for the requirements of agricultural labourers. Night schools cannot be relied upon as a means of extending education; very few of those who attend them do more than revive what they have previously forgotten. It is very desirable that the Government should pay for results at night schools without requiring certificated teachers. I am opposed to compulsory education in any form; I prefer encouragement to compulsion, and think that education is making satisfactory progress. I think that the half-time system might, in many cases, be applied to agricultural children; boys might be employed in cleaning knives, shoes, or the stable, &c. in the morning, and might go to school in the afternoon. I don't think that parents can afford to keep their children without their going to work after the age of 8 or 9 in this district. I don't think the certificate plan would answer; it would cause great hardship in poor parishes where the means of obtaining instruction were not good, and where consequently dull children could not get on fast. It would be impossible to make attendance at night school compulsory after work has commenced, on account of the fatigue which the boys have undergone. Lads who come to a night school regularly after hard work deserve great credit. They sometimes fall asleep over their books.

I am decidedly of opinion that the Legislature will do better by encouraging education as they have been doing than by attempting to enforce it by compulsory measures.

THOMAS STANTON, M.A., J.P.,
Vicar of Burbage and
Nov. 6, 1868. Archdeacon of Wilts.

90. *Mr. W. H. Gale*, Burbage.—I farm about 450 acres. There has been a good school in this parish for many years. Many boys have left this parish to get employment in other than agricultural work, in consequence of the education they have obtained here. I cannot understand why a man should not be able to plough, &c. just as well when they can read and write, as when they cannot; but I have not observed that the educated men are much more useful than others. I don't think schools have been established long enough or sufficiently generally to enable a sound opinion to be formed as to the effect of education. I have two machines, which I send about this district in charge of some of my men and let out to the neighbouring farmers. It is very inconvenient to me that the men who have charge of these machines cannot read and write; when they have to make appointments for the hiring of the machines they have to come back to me for me to write the letters for them. We have always had plenty of labour here, although the best educated of our boys have gone away. There is a charity here of 60*l.* to 70*l.* given in flour every year; that induces many to remain here who would otherwise leave; this is quite a pauper parish. Many girls now go to service who used to go to work in the fields, but I do not find that the cultivation of my farm has been rendered more expensive in consequence of the changes which have taken place in the parish. The men about here don't do much work when put to day work; but when they are put to work at piecework, they can do as much as any men I ever saw. There is always enough work in road mending, &c. to be done to keep the men employed in winter as well as in summer. I see no objection to old women working in the fields; there may be a greater number of illegitimate children among field workers than among others, but I attribute that to their leading more healthy lives; some of my under carters live over the stable; they board themselves, but I always supply them with milk or broth or small beer before they go out to work in the morning. I have no reason to complain of my men for being disrespectful to me. I have had as good a set of men during the last three or four years as I ever had before in my life; they never leave me.

I think boys are placed to work too young; if labourers' sons are compared with other boys, it is evident that the former are not so big as the latter; when they arrive at the age of 15 or 16 they earn higher wages and begin to grow. I don't think that the early work is productive of disease, but it certainly prevents the early development of the frame. As regards education I think all ought to be able to read, write, and cipher; that amount of education should be forced upon them, not by law, but by the parents and the employers. I think that farmers would be put to some little inconvenience if they had no boys to work for them under the age of 10, but considering the necessities of the case I think they might be expected to dispense with boys' labour under that age. I think it is absurd to say that boys could not learn their business unless they begin to work at the age of 9 or 10. Fewer boys are employed now than used to be, and I think that fewer still might be employed. From Christmas 1866 to Christmas 1867, 12 of my men earned on an average 13*s.* 9*d.* each per week.

CALNE.

91. *Rev. John Duncan*, vicar of Calne.—I have been here three years. I was incumbent of Lyneham for six years before I came here. I don't think that the work performed by women and children in the fields is the cause of physical injury to their health; they may suffer from insufficient food, but this cannot be attributed to field labour.

As regards education there is a deficiency. Assuming that reading, writing, and arithmetic are sufficient, there can be no doubt that many boys in this neighbourhood fail to acquire this amount of instruction; this is due to their leaving school too young, the result of which is, either that the children never acquire the power of reading and writing, or acquire it so imperfectly that they soon lose it. I do not think that any general complaint can be made in this district on account either of the insufficiency of the school *accommodation* (the quality of the teaching is often inferior) or of the indifference of the parents. The poverty of the parents of a large family is the principal cause of the boys being insufficiently educated. This complaint cannot be made to the same extent of the girls, who usually remain at school as long as can be desired; that leads to the opinion that it is only the need of obtaining the wages of the boy which occasions his being removed at so early an age from the school. The chief occupation for boys are bird keeeping and plough driving.

From what I have heard from the farmers, and from what I have myself observed, I am of opinion that the half-day and alternate day systems are inapplicable to agriculture; but I think there should be some fixed age below which it should be illegal to employ a child; that age might be 10. Some higher age should be fixed before which children should not be permitted to go to work unless they can at least read and write; when they have passed the higher age they should be permitted to work without any test being required. I think that a standard is suggested by the present system of the Committee of Council, which contemplates that a child of 10 years old should have passed the fourth standard. I don't think that any further attendance at school should be compulsory; but every facility should be given for the acquisition of further knowledge. I think that important results would follow from this plan: 1st, the parents would endeavour to keep their children regularly at school in their early years, in order that they might go to work at 10 years old; and 2nd, the employers would be anxious to provide a good school, or to improve the already existing one in order, that they might get the

labour of the children at the age of 10. I think it is likely that in this way the highest attainable scale of education would be reached without a compulsory law. Night schools cannot be made to do the work of day schools.

The majority of farmers would not, I believe, from my acquaintance with them, object to children under 10 being prohibited from work. They would object to the half-time or alternate day system.

That the poverty of the parents of large families is a real obstacle to their keeping their children at school can hardly be doubted. I have known large families which from the wages earned in winter had only a halfpenny wherewith to pay for each meal of each member of the family ; without the proceeds of the allotment ground and the assistance of others (including the farmers of the parish) they must have starved. The farmers are not to blame for this. It is a matter of supply and demand. The parents of such families could not afford to loose the earnings of their children, however small the earnings might be.

A good schoolmaster is undoubtedly an inducement to the parents to send their children to school. I have observed this; but it is not an inducement strong enough to overcome the demand of poverty for the 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week earned by the child.

I do not think that industrial training should have a place in elementary education. The parents of the poor object to it, and I think rightly, as taking up the time required for learning to read and write, which cannot be learnt afterwards as a trade can. Needlework should be taught to girls ; this is desired by the parents.

A great and rapid revolution appears to me to have been going on in the English labourer within the last few years ; it is due to the meeting together of two things—the education of the poor in our village schools, which have given to the bulk of the population the power of reading ; and the penny newspaper, which has given to the labourer matter to read, and interesting matter which he likes to read. It would be unwise to overlook this. The labourer is very rapidly becoming another man than he was some years ago, and will make his voice heard in the future. Hitherto his intelligence and spirit have been crushed by the absence from his life of all hope and possibility of elevation. Education, facility of locomotion, an amended law of settlement, are greatly altering the labourer's condition and character.

I think that education will fail in its proper object unless the dwelling houses of the poor are sufficient to accommodate the families with decency. This has by no means been always the case. Insufficient cottage accommodation has done fearful evil in this country. The cottage supply is entirely dependent upon the will of the landowners. Where a landlord has neither the taste nor the means to provide good cottages then I think that the law should interfere. The owner of landed property occupies a different position from the owner of all other property in this respect—the landowner who neglects his duty inflicts much more serious injury upon others than the owner of other property. Insufficient accommodation for the poor is one of our principal present evils. No effort should be spared to remedy it. The rights of property may well be curtailed if by their curtailment this evil can be remedied. I do not object to a farmer's having two or three cottages with his farm. I have not seen how the system works when a large number is let with the farms. Many of the villages in this neighbourhood are scattered, *i.e.*, the cottages are not collected upon one spot; the men have consequently, for the most part, not far to go to work ; but I am in favour of concentrated villages, as affording facilities for the education of children, and as having other advantages. I am strongly opposed to mop fairs ; no doubt in one respect they are a convenience, but they are very demoralizing, and there is no more necessity for having them here than in other places where they do not exist.

In a letter to the Assistant Commissioners, dated November 24, 1869, the Rev. J. Duncan writes as follows :—

If my evidence on the subjects of your Commission is of the slightest value, which I do not suppose that it is, there should be added to it my opinion that were the plan of a minimum age adopted, as I have suggested, the wages of labourers would not be diminished, inasmuch as—

(1.) Labour would be scarcer by the withdrawal of the little boys, and therefore the wages of both the parents of families and of the elder brothers in families would rise.

(2.) Labour would be scarcer by the emigration of young lads to better parts of the country, which would ensue on better education.

(3.) Labour would, perhaps, be more valuable, inasmuch as it would be in a higher measure skilled labour; but not much weight should, in my opinion, be attached to this in the case of farm labour.

92. *Mr. J. Spencer*, agent to the Marquis of Lansdowne. — Boys generally commence the agricultural life in this neighbourhood as "crow boys," or keeping birds from the newly sown corn in spring and autumn. The usual wages for this employment are from 3*d.* to 5*d.* per day ; in some cases 6*d.* The boys have to be in the fields at daylight and remain till dusk ; afterwards they get employment with the farmers' teams. I do not think that the number of boys employed on farms varies much with the description of soil, because, although they may not be engaged in driving plough, there are many other occupations, such as harrowing, rolling, &c., which boys can assist in doing ; and such work is incident to all classes of soils, increased, as a matter of course, where the rotation of crops follow each other quickly. I don't think that the services of carters' boys can be dispensed with in this neighbourhood without causing some inconvenience and adding to the expense of cultivation. Old men who are able-bodied can get more profitable employment, and the infirm could not compete with boys, and, indeed, could not perform the work that boys are called upon to do.

I am of opinion that no boy should go to work under 10 years of age, and even then he should be a strong boy of his age to be allowed to work full time each day. Many parents with large families cannot afford to keep their sons idle up to the age of 10, and I think if they are compelled to send them to school a grant should be made by the Government to assist with the maintenance of every child who remains at school up to a certain age. I don't think that by keeping children at school for a longer period than they are kept at present would have the effect of raising the parents' wages, at least in this neighbourhood, where the supply of labour is in excess of the demand, and the labouring population have not sufficient means of moving to a distance, to make it probable that a rise of wages should take place. As regards education, I am in favour of supplementing the present system very considerably, so as to give every boy and girl a chance of obtaining an education up to a certain point ; and to effect this I think that in many places the number of schools must be increased. My inclination is opposed to a compulsory education, although I should prefer that to the general ignorance of the population in many districts at present. In this neighbourhood there are many middle-aged and even young men, who cannot write or even read. I think that a more decided benefit would arise from the *general* establishment of night schools in rural districts, where boys who had been only imperfectly educated might get improvement without infringing upon their labour hours ; and from knowing the benefits which night schools have effected in this neighbourhood I can strongly advocate their use, both as a means of giving a finish to an education already commenced, when the boys have had the opportunity of going to school, and also of imparting a certain amount of instruction to those who have had no previous education, and at the same time inducing habits of morality by keeping those who attend them from bad company and evil habits.

It is much the practice for women to go out to work in the fields in this neighbourhood ; besides the ordi-

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nary work of weeding, hay-making, &c. they also find considerable employment in June and July in pea picking, a great many peas being grown in the neighbourhood for the Bath and Bristol markets within three or four miles of this place. The peas are picked mostly by women and girls, at so much per sack. Young girls go to work usually with their mothers or neighbours. The employment is a healthy one, and as a number are employed together, and they are superintended by the master, there is but little to say against the employment of young girls in this occupation casually. Girls of from 14 to 17 years of age are employed in field labour of a light nature, but not generally, as they usually obtain situations from home at that age as domestic servants. I don't think that Parliamentary interference would do any good with respect to the out-door employment of females in this neighbourhood.

With respect to the education of females, I think that during the later period that they attend school considerably more care should be taken in teaching them the rudiments at least of such branches of domestic economy as cooking and the preparation of food, baking, brewing, washing, &c., as also some information on the laws conducive to the preservation of health, cleanliness, ventilation, and the management of the sick, as I find, with but few exceptions, a great want of knowledge and even of ideas on such matters among the wives of our labourers, and owing to which they make bad housewives and nurses of the sick, and incapable of making the most of their husbands' and their own earnings, in the way of providing for their families. The same observations apply to some extent in the education of boys, who I should like to see receive some kind of instruction in rough carpentry and mechanics, such, for instance, as to show the principles of construction involved in making a wheelbarrow, cart, or plough, &c. They should also I think be taught the general principles of the screw, inclined plane, lever, and pulley, &c. This is the more necessary, now that machinery is fast taking the place of manual labour in farming operations, and of course the more a man knows about the working of machinery the more valuable would he be, and the higher wages would he command, and also because it would lead them, if possessed also of other good qualifications, to places of trust and responsibility, as overseers and bailiffs, and would also assist us in getting rid of a surplus population.

There are a number of young men in this neighbourhood for whom at certain seasons of the year there is but little work, and who could not get work in manufacturing districts could they get there, owing to want of skill in manufactures, and the branches of labour depending on or connected with manufactures, and from want of education. These remarks apply also to labour connected with railways and their traffic, excepting the construction of earth works. The average wages here may be stated as 10*s.* and 11*s.* per week during winter, and 11*s.* and 12*s.* during summer, carters and "milkers" usually getting 1*s.* a week extra. At the lower rate the men have usually either beer or "beer money" equal to about 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, which is increased during harvest. All able-bodied men disposed to work can earn from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a week by piecework in spring and autumn, and from 15*s.* to 18*s.* by hoeing wheat and turnips. Of course for mowing and reaping they get much higher wages, but with some drawbacks when the seasons are wet. The farmers are getting more into the habit of letting piecework to their men every year. The surplus labourers here are in the habit of going into the down district (when labour is not so abundant) as soon as the autumn sown wheat requires hoeing. They then follow on with spring sown crops, and then with swedes and turnips, which take them on till the harvest. This over, they return here, and get what work they can during the autumn and winter, the usual employment being draining, quarrying, &c. I think that the price of labour has risen from 20 to 25 per cent. within the last 30 years in Wiltshire. This applies to both men and women.

The piecework done in the county is chiefly hoeing swedes and turnips and pulse and grain crops, mowing, reaping, and harvesting, and during the winter, trenching, grubbing, &c.

The cottages on Lord Lansdowne's estate are not usually let with the farms, for out of 481 cottages on the estate, 49 only are let with farms, and these in districts where labourers are not so plentiful. Letting cottages with farms round here is the less necessary, owing to the large supply of labour in Calne, Bremhill, and Studley, in which most of Lord Lansdowne's farms are situate; but I consider it necessary where there is a short supply, as on the down, or where the men would have to walk a long way to get to their work. I do not consider that there is any necessity for letting cottages absolutely to the farm tenants with their farms; there is, however, much to be said on both sides of the question. The case could be met where the necessity arises by the landlord allotting a certain number of cottages to each farm, and allowing the farmers to select the tenants for them, which would of course be their own labourers. The cottages on the Bowood estate are let at rents varying from 40*s.* to 84*s.* a year; the latter are new ones, and contain everything necessary for the comfort of the occupiers. All or nearly all have gardens of from 20 to 40 poles in extent. Lord Lansdowne has also 580 acres on his estate let out to 832 labourers and small holders as allotment land. This system was commenced many years back, but was largely increased about 30 years ago when great distress existed among the Wiltshire agricultural labourers. The land is let out at the usual agricultural rent of the locality, the landlord paying the rates. The quantity let to each tenant varies from 40 poles to 2 acres, and in some few instances $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Where so much as 2 acres are held by one it arises from exceptional causes. The tenant has not the opportunity of getting constant employment, or he forms one of the class alluded to above who are compelled to leave their home in the spring and summer to seek for work on the downs, and we find that the land fills up their spare time on their return; the cultivation of it during the summer being undertaken by their wives and children. In other cases the tenant has probably strong lads at home who assist. In these cases I do not think 1 acre or even $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre too much for a man, as it is desirable that he should have sufficient to change the rotation by growing potatoes, &c. one year, and the next wheat, beans, or barley. He is thus enabled to get some straw for littering his one or two pigs, which of course is converted into manure for his land, without which he would have no right to become an occupier. By these means he obtains potatoes enough for his family and to fatten a pig, and the larger holders manage to get sufficient wheat to provide their family with bread for a good portion of the year, or if they grow beans, these, beyond what go to help to fat the pig, are sold, and bread purchased with it.

These allotment lands are well managed, very many of them admirably so, and the produce exceeds the general average of the district; the rents also are paid with but few exceptions very regularly.

It has often been observed to me that the largest of the allotments was too much for any one labouring man to occupy. In this district I do not think so. In places where the labouring population have regular employment and good wages 40 or up to 80 poles would be ample; but, as I have before stated, the increased size of the allotments on this estate has arisen to meet an exceptional case, where the supply of labour is in excess of the demand, more particularly during the autumn and winter months, at which time the allotment has their labour, and fills up their spare time which they would otherwise find a difficulty in employing at that season.

Of course, the larger holders require to be looked

after; that they cultivate properly and follow the rules for cultivation laid down for them.

Castle Combe.

93. *Mr. Benjamin Blake.*—I farm 250 acres; about 100 grass. I have had the farm seven years, but have lived for 20 years at Castle Combe.

I usually employ three boys from 9 to 14 all the year round; sometimes an extra boy with sheep, but I don't want one this year, because there are no turnips. Two are ploughboys, and one for general purposes. Some employed dibbling beans with their fathers, but not many. No girls employed. I occasionally employ women in spring and summer; scarcely ever in winter, except when we have a machine. All come from Upper Combe, distant a quarter of a mile. My shepherd lives one mile off, because he can't get a cottage. Hours of work, from 6 to 6, and in winter during the light. Boys are not wanted in the stable after 5 or 6 in winter. Women work from 8 to 6, except in harvest. I don't think it desirable to restrict the age at which boys should begin work. I don't think they go out to work here before 9. They are not injured in health. I don't think that too much education has any good effect upon them. I think that all should be able to read and write; not so much need for ciphering. There is an ample supply of boys here. I think that we are better supplied with labour here than in the surrounding parishes. There is a larger population than is necessary to do the work in this parish. I would just as soon employ a boy who cannot read and write as one who can, so far as his usefulness to me goes, but I think all boys should be able to read and write for their own sakes. A good many boys go away, but that may be not because they can get better employment elsewhere, but because there is an over population here. I sometimes employ the boys who have been at school until they are 13 or 14. I don't find they are at all more useful than others.

Wages here 10*s.*, with beer in summer (two or three quarts); women 10*d.* a day, and boys begin at 4*d.*

I think that the neighbouring farms are managed in the same way as mine.

I had a farm at Yatton, where there was not much opportunity of education, and I found I was as well supplied with labour there as here.

94. *Rev. R. C. Christie.*—I find that the children of labourers remain at school up to the age of about 11 or 12; that is the general rule. There are about 12 or 13 boys who come to our school during the winter in the morning and evening, and go to work for farmers in the afternoon; that can only happen when the night school is open. The farmers find work for them. A good many boys go away from our school and get well-paid situations as clerks, &c. Besides my ordinary Sunday school I have an adult class on Sundays, and one man who attends it is 38 years of age. There are no children in the village who are growing up without being able to read and write. A good deal of pressure has been used to induce them to attend school. Our schoolmaster has 90*l.* and the mistress 35*l.* a year, besides her Government certificate of 20*l.*, with a house rent free for each. The school has been as good as it is now for the last 20 years, and there has been no lack of labour in the parish during that time. This is a purely agricultural parish. The wages here have not been particularly high. Up to one year ago 10*s.* was considered high. The boys between the ages of 8 and 10 are rather irregular in their attendance; they go away from school for gleaning and potato digging. After the age of 10 they again become regular till 12. The farmers say that they think the education given here is too good, but they assign no reason for that opinion. The boys who attend this school are certainly of a better class than those who generally attend National schools. There is a co-operative store here, which has been in operation for three years. The sales last quarter amounted to 192*l.* 10*s.* 1½*d.* We deal in grocery and drapery. All deal with it who are out of debt, and so can afford to pay ready money. There is a village lending library of 800 books, which are lent to the parishioners on the payment of 1*d.* per month.

Chippenham.

95. *Mr. Edward Little*, Lanhill.—I am well acquainted with the district for 10 or 12 miles round Chippenham, and with the system of agriculture and the mode of employing labour there. I farm 400 acres, and have been engaged in farming for 30 years. On the whole I think about two-thirds of the district I have referred to are arable. In the valley of the Avon, from Malmesbury to Meltsham, the cultivation is principally pasture and devoted to dairy purposes; the district to the west and north-west of the vale is the "cornbrash" formation, and it contains more arable, and is mostly devoted to sheep farming. On the arable land women are employed in weeding corn and picking couch on the fallows from April until hay time, and occasionally in dibbling beans and potato planting, which, however, are not grown largely as a crop. In autumn and winter they are employed in threshing with machines, chaff cutting (in which they prepare the hay for the machines), and in pulling and cleaning turnips (which are pitted), and dung spreading. Boys are employed in driving plough, tending sheep (*i.e.*, assisting the shepherd), pig-keeping, and "starving." On the grass women are employed in clod-beating and cleaning the pastures in the spring, but chain harrows are more used for this purpose than formerly. There is no special work for boys on the pastures; occasionally they are used instead of women. None under 12 can be trusted to milk. I know of no employment which I consider injurious either to women or children. Perhaps cleaning turnips in winter may be injurious to women, as it exposes them to the cold and wet, because they are obliged to go out in rain, &c. to supply sheep with food, but are usually supplied with thatched hurdles as a protection. I cannot recollect any instances of cases where injury has been thus caused. I have now four boys in my employment. They went to work at the respective ages of 6, 8, 10, and 11. I think the ordinary age is about 9. The boy who began to work at 6 is the best I have, and can read and write now. As a general rule, when they once come out they are employed all the year round. I don't think that farmers could spare them without inconvenience after the age of 9; there would not be enough boys to do the work if you restrict the age to 10. Wages for boys are 4*d.* a day at the age of 8; women 9*d.* (they work from 8 to 5). Men's wages are 10*s.* and beer (two quarts a day in summer and one in winter); some, however, give 1*s.*, or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week now in lieu of beer. Carters, shepherds, and herdsmen get 2*s.* a week more than other men; carter gets 1*s.* for every load of corn taken out, and shepherd gets a gratuity at the lambing season of 1*l.* to 2*l.*, and a plot of 20 perches for potatoes. No men are, as a general rule, hired by the year, but occasionally shepherds and carters and under carters are so hired. The object is to secure their services; they are rather indisposed themselves to accept a yearly hiring. I don't like hiring fairs at all, and think we could do without them. I have not hired a man or boy at a fair for seven or eight years. It is the usual practice to let cottages with the farms, but Sir J. Neeld, of whom I rent my farm, is in the habit of keeping all his cottages in his own hands, and letting them to the nominees of the tenants. The rent, 1*s.* per week, is paid half-yearly, and they are let subject to a monthly notice to quit. That plan has been in operation here for more than 20 years, and is, I think, the best plan which can be devised. I think that where there are good schools (of which there are many in this district) the children attend as regularly as can be desired, and I thing that if you could establish *good* schools everywhere no compulsion would be necessary. I think that all should be able to do the three R's fairly, and that they are better labourers if they have acquired

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that instruction. In those parishes where there are the best schools there is as ample a supply of labourers as there is in parishes where the supply is not so good, and although a certain number of the boys go away to get better places, there is always sufficient to do the work required by farmers. There are many worse districts in the county than this. The farms vary from 500 to 100. The 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114. has not been made any use of here. I find that good cottages cannot be built under 150*l.* The rent here varies very much; from 25*s.* to 50*s.* an acre; and the cost of labour on the pasture varies from 15*s.* to 20*s.*, and on the arable from 30*s.* to 35*s.* per annum.

DOWNTON.

96. REPORT on the PRESENT CONDITION and PROSPECTS of the WILTSHIRE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER.

[Paper communicated by Earl Nelson, Trafalgar.]

Our corner of Wiltshire, bounded on the west by the Avon and on the south by the New Forest, is rather a peculiar one.

The villages of the plain are always scant of labour, and in the summer are dependent on extraneous help. We, on the contrary, generally find sufficient for summer work, and consequently have too often to deal with many out of work in the winter both at Whiteparish and Downton. There is nevertheless a demand for cottages on the outlying farms, and indeed all over the district, from the farmers on the one hand and the people on the other, and yet though there is no apparent decrease in the population there are many proofs that the farmers, even among us, are in fear of a scarcity of hands. It is curious to trace the causes of this accumulation of labour in our corner of the county. At Whiteparish the "Hop Gardens," though they have long ceased to exist, still give a name to a portion of the village.

At Downton, the large water power, now only used for a mill and a paper factory, originally had cloth works. While at Morgans Vale, Redlynch, and Hamptworth bordering on the New Forest, the common lands give facilities to the squatter, and subsequently the enclosures furnished building sites for the freeholder and the cottage speculator.

In these districts we have three distinct types of cottages, the comfortable two-storied mud house in a large orchard or garden of a sufficient size to pay the rent or (in the case of a freehold which most of them originally were) the interest of the mortgage too often upon it.

Next the low mud hovel on a small plot cribbed from the roadside by the squatter. And thirdly, the two-bedroomed thin walled cottage in a small garden at 5*l.* a year, by which the cottage speculator gets interest for his investment.

From a general knowledge of the people for the last 35 years, I have no hesitation in bearing my testimony to their great improvement in soberness, general intelligence, and independence; the young carry themselves better, are brighter in their expression, their hair better kept, their clothes better, and their appearance altogether in advance of their forefathers. I cannot agree with the political economist who would place the agricultural labourer below the same class in towns, either in intelligence, position, or morality, and although their code of morality is not so high as that among the upper classes of society, it is much more generally and strictly observed than the higher code attempted among ourselves.

A glance at the men who generally come to me when out of employment in the winter, will give a good idea of the two extremes among them.

There are a certain number who, from habits of drunkenness, old age, or bodily infirmity, or natural idleness, or stupidity, are always depending on casual work, and could only expect to receive a low wage for that which would be badly and irregularly performed. But among the winter unemployed I get some of the best labourers of the district, men who are the best wood men, bark men, sheep-shearers, or turnip hoers, fully to the shepherd, carter, and foreman in the farmer's regular employ. These men never work for the farmer except by piecework, and are willing to make out the winter by casual jobs at 10*s.* per week.

Having sometime ago a place vacant as woodman, it was refused by two of these, though the place was considered worth more than 1*l.* a week would be in the town.

I would gladly see all the able-bodied sober labourers brought up to this level. If you put aside for a time the bad managing wife, those in ill-health, and at trying times the very large families, it would not be so difficult to do this as is generally imagined, for as I before stated they have already made a great advance on their position in former times, but there are still several things which keep them down.

Though I ask for a remedy for these hindrances to their well doing, it would be as disheartening as it is untrue to consider all that has been done a failure; the undoubted advance which has been made must have arisen from some beneficent cause. The National and British schools have done a good deal, though much fewer than we could wish have gained the full benefit of their teaching. All have gained something by the greater order and cleanliness which is part of our school system. All must have been imperceptibly raised by the higher type of master and mistress now set before them, and though it is thought hard to build good three roomed cottages for those who do not appreciate them, a good cottage must ever be a great educator to the family brought up within its walls. Again, the relaxation in the old settlement laws (which I hope soon will be entirely abolished) has already done somewhat to this end. The effect of railways (without which the cry against the old settlement law would long ago have been irresistable) have done much to open their minds to enable them to beat about for work to bring them in contact with men better educated than themselves instead of their past confinement in person and in ideas within the four corners of their parish.

But allow me to make a few suggestions for a still greater advance by the removal of some existing evils.

And first as to education. It is clear that some modification of the Factory Acts must be applied to the agricultural labourer. I have met with two proposals for effecting this. Mr. Grant, a late school inspector, suggests that no child should be allowed to work till he is 8 years old, unless before that he has passed the lowest certificate which he might do at 7, and that no child should work for more than half the year till he is 12, unless he passed the second certificate, which he could do at 11. Mr. Payne's is a simple but more arbitrary plan of saying they shall not work without a certificate of proficiency, but it is very difficult to enforce any law unless it is thoroughly accepted by the people, and neither plan would really effectually educate the children. This can only be done by the night school, and I should strongly urge the Committee of Council on Education to allow children to go to the night school whenever they left the day school, at whatever age that might be, and some inducements should be held out to boys and young men to attain to higher certificates of merit. I believe if more money was given to night schools to encourge education by securing a good teacher, and by a liberal system of prizes for different orders of merit, and a prospect held out to the best boy in a district to get some appointment under Government, it would give such a stimulus to the night school that there would be a much better attendance and a great willingness to pay higher fees for the instruction.

But to make any proposal a success the local authority or committee of management must be a reality, and this can only be done by forming district boards, to consist of the leading managers of each school in the district, with *ex officio* members from the magistrates and guardians of the poor. All returns should

be sent to the Committee of Council, and all grants transmitted through this district board, and they should be empowered to enforce any new law on the subject. The energetic educationists who are now buried in their own school would gain a much larger sphere of influence.

And now I would say a word as to cottage accommodation. I do not think a really good pair of cottages with hollow walls, shooting and outhouses can be built under 350*l.* or 175*l.* each, and the least that they should let for is 6*l.* a year.

If by thin damp walls, no shooting and drainage, and scant sleeping accomodation, you seek to reduce the price to enable you to make a profit with a lower rent, you at once do away with the great educational power which a good cottage has, and your cottage of such a type would soon compare badly even with the old mud thatched cottage, which has certain peculiar comforts of its own. How then is the rent to be obtained, for unless you can get a fair return for your money, people will never build enough or good enough cottages.

I find that while my cottages run from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* with very fair gardens, the speculator's inferior two-bedroomed cottage with a very small garden, if any, would let for 5*l.* If all cottages were brought up to this, I think wages must be raised to meet it, but at present the wages are reckoned on the landowner's low rent, and other poor people have to pay their 5*l.* out of the low average of wages thus formed; the other 1*l.* might, I think, be obtained for a good quarter of an acre garden ground, which in allotments would generally fetch three times the average rent of the land of the larger farms.

But while an increase of cottages is the manifest remedy against overcrowing and the gang system, the seeds of a greater evil are likely to take root if the landlords and the public are not warned against it. The tenants ask for cottages to be let with their farms, and on outlying farms this is a necessity, and some farmers seeing the advantage of this from the hold it gives them over their labourers, are renting cottages in the villages round to underlet to their labourers. I willingly admit that a large majority of our tenant farmers would never dream of using this as a means of oppression, but in the hands of a capricious master it is a fearful power to be able to turn a man out of his house and garden at a short notice, and goes terribly to sap the proper wholesome independence of the labouring classes.

Under this power some deny them from keeping a pig, some claim the work of the women of the family in the fields, whether they consider it the truest economy or not. I have known a case in which a parish shopkeeper speculating in cottages has obliged his cottage tenants to deal with him at his high percentages under fear of immediate dismissal.

A general arrangement for a full month's notice to cottage tenants would be some remedy.

The helplessness of the labourer under such an arrangement may be imagined when I describe the system or rather want of system upon which the rise or fall of wages is regulated. When bread is high complaints are made by different men to their employers, and at last, after some weeks pinching under high prices, a rise of a shilling is announced. When bread is lower again some day a general lowering of wages is simultaneously agreed to by the farmers at their ordinary, no individual farmer taking the responsibility, but all acting together on some arbitrary principle unknown to the labourer, but it is useless for him to resist; even while I write such a mysterious fall from from 10*s.* to 9*s.* has been agreed on, but though bread is from 3*d.* to 4*d.* a gallon lower, cheese, butter, and bacon are excessively dear, and potatoes are generally a failure.

This system of keeping the general wages down to just above starvation level has a very deteriorating influence, and much jealousy and suspicion takes the place of sympathy and mutual good will between master and man, which a legalised plan by a mixed committee or arbitration for the regulation of the scale of wages would tend to secure.

But after all, perhaps the greatest evil they have to contend with is the tick system at the shops, and yet it is next to impossible for them to leave the shop and take to ready money payments. They know that their pig is too often made the security on which the tick at the shop is based, and that they are obliged to kill it at the dictation of the shopkeeper at times disadvantageous to themselves. They know that they pay more for their tea and other articles and get them of an inferior quality to those supplied at ready money prices to myself, but though I have offered to pay their debt on their promise to leave the shop, they will not do so; their position is so precarious at a sudden fall in wages, at loss of work, or from sickness, that not wishing at once to go upon the union, they would starve if they had not the shop at hand to trust them. Living so near to the full amount of their regular pay, trusting to piecework for their rent, fuel, and clothing, the least accident sends them into debt, and I fancy few of the average run of labourers are not a week or fortnight behindhand at the shop.

A better plan on some fair principle for the regulation of wages, a ready and immediate system of relief when a man is really disabled, nurses and parish cottage hospitals in time of sickness, and a course of industrial training for the girls would somewhat palliate this evil; but until some of the things I have referred to are altered for the better, it will be in vain to look for any general rise of the labourers class to that independent position which is essential to their real comfort and to the good of the nation.

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98. *Mr. George Mannings*, Downton.—I am a miller and malster, and farm 300 acres of land. I don't think that farmers require boys to work for them under the age of 10 years. The parents don't care anything at all about education; they were not nearly as indifferent formerly; I don't think that the Factory Acts could be applied to agriculture, *i.e.*, the fixed rules as to time could not, but I approve the suggestion of granting a certificate as a condition of employment. I think parents could afford to keep their children up to the age of 10; the money they earn before that is not sufficient to be of much importance to them. I think 15 is rather too late to keep them from work in any event. Girls are usually employed here in indoor work, shirtmaking, &c.; they used to be employed in lacemaking, but that manufacture has ceased.

It is very much the custom about here to let cottages with the farms; the farmers let them by the week, with the power of turning the inmates out at a week's notice; that applies to all except yearly servants, who have their houses given them by the year; I think that that plan is often made a means of oppressing the labourers. Besides that, there being a large number of houses at Downton, some of the farmers speculate in house property; they hire every house they can obtain, and compel all their labourers to occupy these houses, even although they may be previously provided with a convenient house. The farmers make use of their cottages to make their labourers work when they otherwise would not work, and sometimes at a price which they would otherwise refuse. A farmer has plenty of opportunities of oppression if he chooses to make use of them. I don't think they often compel the women and children to come out because they have abundance of men's labour. I have never heard of cottages being taken by tradesmen for the purpose of compelling their tenants to deal with them. There are many cottages about Redlynch and other places near here which have half an acre or an acre of land attached to them, some of the cottages belong to the occupier. These men do not take work regularly as labourers, but do jobs in piecework and earn a great deal of money in that way. I think that every cottage should have a quarter

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of an acre at least, and where the family is large, more. It answers to give a good deal of land to the tenants of the cottages, because they can afford to pay more than an agricultural price, and that helps to lessen the loss which must necessarily occur in cottage buildings; I think a man could generally manage half an acre and work as a day labourer besides. The allotment system was introduced here about three years ago; but the farmers now get the allotments into their hands and underlet them.

Draycot Cerne.

99. *Rev. C. R. E. Awdry.*—It is quite clear that no legislative interference is necessary on the ground of health. There are about 150 people in this parish. There are always 30 in attendance at the school. There are only one or two boys or young men in the parish who can neither read nor write. I have now 18 candidates for confirmation aged from 14 to 21, and all of them could read and write when they first came to me. The youngest boy who has left my school was aged 9. I think that all who live in the neighbouring parishes can read and write unless they have refractory and ill-conditioned parents. I don't think it is desirable to avoid all education; I think they should be able to read well; I don't care about their writing; I have no objection to their being taught to write, but they are always ready to learn it for themselves; I also think that some arithmetic is desirable. The clever boys who are educated at Christian Malford are not nearly as useful for field-work as others; the farmers won't have them. I am strongly opposed to over-education; the servant class have certainly been injured by it. The boys leave my school about the age of 9 or 10; they can then read capitally. I never bother my head about writing; I don't find that they forget the reading they have learnt. The girls leave about the age of 13 or 14. The farmers will never give assistance to education, and should be compelled to do so. The boys go out scaring too young on Sundays and all. They ought not to be employed seven days in succession. I don't think that the power of being able to read and write would injure them as farm labourers.

East Grafton.

100. *Mr. Stagg.*—I farm 500 acres, 80 of which are grass. I don't employ any boys younger than 10. I don't employ young boys for shepherding, because in this district, where there are hedges, they are not wanted for tending, and are useless unless they can carry hurdles. I have been here 28 years. The supply of labour of all classes has diminished during that period; there is a great scarcity of boys. There are no men out of work in winter. There has been a short supply of cottages in this village, and the young men, when they have married, have been obliged to leave. The most handy man I ever had left because he could not get a cottage; three others also left. Those who remain are less well behaved than they used to be, more particularly the young, but they are as well qualified to do the work as the men I formerly used to get.

The school has been established during the last 20 years. The people are certainly not so subordinate or respectful as they used to be before its establishment. The weekly wages of labourers always used to be the average price of a bushel of wheat; they are now equal to about the price of 1½ bushel. My head carter has 12*s.* a week, 4*l.* harvest money, one gallon of ale a day during harvest, and one quart of small beer a day during the rest of the year, and 1*s.* whenever he goes out with corn, which he does on an average about once a week. That amounts to about 16*s.* a week. I employ more men now than I used. Boys come out to work at as young an age as they ever did. There are plenty of cottages here, but some are occupied by men who don't work in the parish. I have had until lately no cottages with my farm, and if one of my men left me I could not put another into his house. I have often been put to great inconvenience on this account.

East Knoyle.

101. *Mr. J. C. Corbin.*—I farm 680 acres, of which 280 acres are grass and down. We employ three boys under 18, one aged 9, second 11, and third 14. They are employed all the year, but I could do without No. 1 in winter. Two are shepherd's boys; the other minds cows and goes errands. No carter boys under 18; find men more useful. Plough with two horses. Have extra boys sometimes when carrying. No girls employed and no women in winter; but a little in spring, not more than two. They have about half a mile, at furthest, to come to work. Boys work from 7 to 5 in winter, and to 6 in summer; one hour for dinner. No restrictions needed on account of health.

This hamlet (Upton) is about one mile from East Knoyle. The people are very indifferent about education. More went last winter to night school because the clergyman promised a supper. I wanted to form an evening class in my house, and invited all who chose to come; none came, not even our own boys. We could do without them up to 10, and then we do not want them in winter for a year or two. I don't find those who are educated are much better labourers, but it is a bad thing for a boy not to be able to take up a Bible and read a chapter when he wants to. The educated might be more useful where machinery is used. Under carters are engaged by the year because they are inclined to leave. Wages of men of that class have increased more than others.

Great Durnford.

102. *Mr. Stephen Smith.*—I farm over 700 acres, about 50 acres grass; some down and small water meadow. I employ six boys all the year round; not younger than 9, and generally older. Had only two extra this summer, one for pigs and one for horses; no use for scaring. Been short of boys lately. I think that farmers would be put to serious inconvenience if they were prohibited from working after the age of 8. Employed no girls this summer. Girls come out about the age of 12, and do the same work as women, *i.e.*, weeding and hay-making. I employ from 5 to 12 women, as I can get them; only one has gone to work constantly this autumn. They begin about April and go on till harvest. They don't hoe turnips. Boys are not employed in singling turnips or weeding.

There are sufficient cottages except during harvest time, and they are conveniently situated. I have 20 cottages; I don't allow the occupiers to take in lodgers. Good water supply and ventilation. All have gardens of about 12 to 15 poles. The labourers all have allotments. There are some permanent allotments, but I let each man have nine perches of land at a rent of 1*s.* 6*d.* per perch. I manure it and generally plough it once, and they dig it afterwards.

I think all my neighbours manage their farms in the same way as I do. Men's wages are 10*s.*; women's 6*d.* in short, and 1*s.* on long days; boys 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and upwards; the shepherd's boy has 1*s.* a week more because he is out in all weathers; little boys at first 2*s.*

Heytesbury.

103. *Mr. T. Wilce*, farmer, and *Mr. Snelgrove*, maltster, and churchwardens.—The cottages are not usually very far from the land to be cultivated, but where they are at a distance the time occupied by women in going to their work is reckoned as the master's time. Boys when they first begin to work get 3*s.* to 5*s.* a fortnight; it is usual to pay wages fortnightly about here. Boys do not usually begin to work until the age of 10. No harm arises from the older women going out to work in the fields. Education certainly disinclines the people from agricultural employment. We have always been well supplied with agricultural labourers. There is a factory near, and that always attracts a considerable population. The factory is preferred to agricultural labour on account of the higher wages earned and the society

obtained from the numbers working together. Educated are decidedly more useful than uneducated men as agricultural labourers, especially since the use of machinery has been introduced; but if boys remain at school too long, and learn too much for their position, they become discontented when they grow up, and will not betake themselves to agricultural employment. We are often obliged to employ labourers because they are old men, and we do not like to turn them off, although the work they do is not worth half the wages we pay them. The great evil is being obliged to pay all men, good and bad, weak and strong, alike; but it is impossible to pay different scales of wages to day labourers, because if you did the men paid on the lower scale would all leave you. We are certainly in favour of sufficient amount of education to give a man an acquaintance with the three R's. We think that by means of night schools we improve the education boys have received in the day schools. We have here penny readings, and we endeavour to read papers on scientific subjects connected with ordinary work which may be useful to the men as labourers.

Farmers might easily dispense with the labour of boys up to the age of 10, and we think that the employment of boys should be prohibited up to that age. Mr. Wilce always requires that a boy should have attended school before engaging him; he does so because he wishes to support education. The public opinion is certainly not now in favour of school rates. The boys are wanted all the winter; we keep them on because we have work for them to do, and not because we dislike turning them off in the winter months. The only mode of providing for education after work begins is by night schools, and we do not think that any compulsion is necessary to induce them to attend the night schools; they are quite ready to attend without that. The shepherds' boys never go to church except in the evening, when they are free. Here, where there are no enclosed fields, their services are absolutely necessary all day long. Two or three of the men who have the care of the stock must have cottages on the farms, but as a general rule cottages should be placed in the villages. Labourers who have families are preferred for cottages on the farms, because a man who has one or two boys to help him can take charge of a team of horses; but such men usually require extra remuneration as an inducement for them to live away from the village, and an extra shilling a week and garden or potato ground is usually the inducement employed.

Horningsham.

104. The *Rev. J. J. Jacob.*—This parish contains 2,488 acres, and there was a population of 1,065 in 1861, but there are not nearly as many now. The best boys go away to London or emigrate, and others who poach and get into trouble go to the iron-works in Wales. I have been here 10 years. When first I came there was a glut of labour in the parish; they used to come to me and complain of want of work; and after harvest Lord Bath and the farmers used to meet and divide the men between them for the winter. I suggested to the men that they had better go away, and now there is not a single man out of work, and the farmers are sometimes placed in great difficulties for labourers. There are] but few young men now in the employment of farmers; the wages of men of that age have not risen very much. Men's wages were 9*s.*, now they are never less than 10*s.*, and in summer 11*s.*

There are three dames' schools which take children under 6 years of age, when they come to Lord Bath's school; some boys never come to our school. The education difficulty is the indifference of parents. The children pay 2*d.* a week, and Lord Bath provides clothes for each child with 8*s.* 8*d.* every Christmas; I think that has the effect of keeping the children at school longer in this than in the surrounding parishes. If any compulsion is necessary, it should be to make them regular in attendance from the age of 5 or 6 up to 12. The irregularity arises from the children going out to pick up acorns (for which the farmers pay them 6*d.* a bushel) and other small jobs; they are not much employed in scaring; nine agricultural boys left our school last year; they averaged about 11 years and 9 months. There was formerly a silk factory here, which was given up some time ago; there was a surplus population in the parish in consequence, which is now disappearing, and the population is now about sufficient for our wants. Those children who have left school over the age of 12 could about pass the fourth standard; the remainder could pass the second or third. We have a night school; 60 on the books and 33 in average attendance; some boys have learnt everything they know at night school and can read fairly. I find that those who have not attended the day school exert themselves and make great progress at the night school; but all make steady progress. I don't think we need compulsion; public opinion among the poor is in favour of education and coudemns those who neglect it. I was at Fisherton near Salisbury; there the education was kept up by the boys attempting to get places as errand boys, in which attempt they failed unless they could read; the girls there went out early to nurse babies. I think that the education difficulty can be got over if the clergy use their influence. Lord Bath lets very few cottages to the farmers; he keeps most in in his own hands. There are 246 cottages in this parish. The average age at school is certainly lower now than formerly, I presume because there is a greater demand for labour.

Latton.

105. *Mr. Edward Lane.*—I am well acquainted with this portion of Wiltshire as far as Malmesbury, Purton, and Swindon. About one-third is grass. I farm 400 acres, half of which is grass, and have been here 17 years. Women are greatly employed in agriculture; they work as follows:—

March to end of May, hoeing the different corn crops and couch-picking.

June, July, and August, hay and harvest.

September to 1st March, stubble raking, chaff cutting, turnip cleaning, winnowing, and threshing with a steam machine.

Hoeing is always piecework. Each woman undertakes the work alone, but sometimes brings a sister or a child to help her. Couch-picking is always done by the day; for that purpose three or four go out to work together. Where women are used for chaff cutting, they turn the machine under cover, but a great deal is done by horse or steam power. In turnip pulling, the women pull the turnips up and clean them, and put them into heaps for the shepherd to use; they ought never to be employed in that work. It is usual for three or four to work with the steam threshing machine; they feed the machine and take away the chaff. Women's wages are 1*s.* a day in summer and 8*d.* in winter, when hoeing they get 3*s.* an acre. I think they average about 1*s.* a day while at piecework. Men's wages are 9*s.* to 10*s.* in winter (October to May); from May until harvest they have an increase of 1*s.* a week, and during harvest, when they are not reaping, they receive 2*s.* a day. Carters and shepherds receive 2*s.* a week more than common labourers. Boys begin to be employed at the age of 10 in driving plough; that occupies them all the year; they do not often begin as young as 10; we plough with three horses as a rule, sometimes only two. The carter boys come at 6, they go home at 7 for breakfast, and go out to plough from 8 to 4, leaving off for one hour for dinner, and they stay to clean the stable out after the team comes home. Young boys not usually younger than 10 are also employed for bird keeping and pig keeping. For bird keeping they are employed in July and August; not so much in the spring, when men are employed with guns. Boys are not employed above four months in the year for these jobs. Girls begin to go out with their mothers at the age of 15

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or 16, but do not work before that. Boys receive about 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* for driving plough, and about 2*s.* a week for bird keeping. All the women go to field work who have not families to keep them at home. Where there are only two or three children they are sometimes sent out to be taken care of by other women, but if more than two or three, the eldest stays at home to look after the others. Many women who work in summer never go out to work in winter when wages are low. I employ three boys under 16 on my farm of 400 acres.

Statute fairs are held in this neighbourhood at Cirencester, Highworth, Swindon, Wootton Bassett, and Malmesbury, and in all the large town in the county; in arable districts they are held once a year (Michaelmas), and in dairy districts twice, at Michaelmas and Ladyday, because the dairy farmers require additional hands in summer. My experience is that if there were no mops, you would have a more respectable and lasting set of servants; all the out of door servants who attend to horses, sheep, and cattle, are hired at mops as well as dairy maids; 10 times more immorality arises at mops than at any agricultural employment. Men are hired at mops for 12 months, and the general practice is for masters to ask their men, when the 12 months have expired, whether they intend to remain longer. Dairy and nurse maids are boarded in the farmers houses, but as a rule no men are boarded. No work is done on Sundays except attending to the sheep, horses, and cattle. As a general rule women and boys don't live more than one mile from their work. Women who have families detest mops, because when their husband gets a new place they have to move. Women work from 8 to about 4.30 in winter, and in summer from 8 to dark. They are very healthy. I have observed no evil consequences arising from the field work. We have only had four bastards in this parish born during the last 15 years; two were the children of domestic servants, and the other two mothers were women who did not go to field-work. Girls are invariably smarter, more tidy, and less immoral for going out to field-work. In winter I could dispense with women's work by using machinery, but in summer I could not. No pressure is put upon the women. Few go out to turnip cleaning. All the young men and boys in this parish can read and write; almost all the children go to school; the parents like to send them because they desire them to be educated, and also because they wish to get them out of the way while they go to field work. New cottages with two bedrooms and a quarter of an acre of garden let for 52*s.* a year, those with three bedrooms for 70*s.* Where they are the property of small owners the rent of three roomed cottages is about 4*l.* a year without a garden.

Manningford Bruce.

106. *Mr. J. Stratton.*—Cultivation is chiefly arable; the Pewsey Vale is almost entirely arable, east of Devises. I farm 900 acres, 600 under plough the remainder sheep-walk and pasture. We hardly ever employ boys before 10, we had rather not; employ them all the year round; in exceptional cases the very young ones go home to school in winter; they begin by bird-keeping and driving plough; probably about nine now at work for me under 13; wages begin at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week.

I have two girls at work now aged 12½; 12 is the youngest age they ever come to work; they are employed in weeding, spreading dung, and other light work, they do the same work as women; they will work all winter when fine. I have only six girls altogether at work now.

Married women don't care to go out except in harvest, no women at work now over 15; wages, women, 8*d.*, girls, 6*d.* and 7*d.* I used to employ 20 women; I think they earn their money very fairly, and that it is cheap labour where superintended; I always send a foreman, an old man, and 8 or 10 women to work together.

The village at which they reside is close to my farm, but the farm extends for three miles, and they sometimes have to work in the distant part, the time occupied in coming and going is my time.

The hours of work are, in summer, 7 a.m., and in winter 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. or dark, with two hours rest in summer, and 1½ hours in winter; boys from 6 to 6 except when carting.

I think it very desirable that some steps should be taken to improve the education of the labourers' sons, but I think it would be very difficult to manage boys if they did not go to work before the age of 12; I employ more boys than I want now in order to assist their parents; I don't think any system of partial school attendance practicable when boys are at work. I think that 11 is early enough for them to begin to learn their trade; up to the age of 11 I could let the boys go to school in winter.

In the case of females no restrictions are necessary. There is a dame's school here carried on by a woman and her nephew. On Sundays I and my family attend to the children the whole day, they attend well because I put the screw on. There is a night school in winter. There is no cause of interference with education except early labour.

Cottages are sufficient in number; all are in the village and are not much crowded; only one cottage out of about 20 lets for more than 40*s.* a year with garden.

All have gardens and allotments up to half an acre besides if they like; I charge 2*l.* an acre for allotments and pay rates and taxes. I don't at all object to their having half an acre, it does not interfere to an inconvenient extent with the work they do for me.

Wages, 10*s.*; cowmen, 12*s.*; head carter, 12*s.* and house, and double pay for one month in harvest. I pay wages once a month, but as a general rule I let the wages run for two months (but this year for three months) at harvest; almost all the piecework which is done is done at that time.

[Mr. Stratton was good enough to supply me with the following calculations of the earnings of 11 of his labourers during the three months which included harvest.

		£	*s.*	*d.*	
1.	-	11	17	11½	with wife (reaping only).
2.	-	12	12	7	without wife.
3.	-	11	5	1½	do.
4.	-	11	4	5	do.
5.	-	11	4	0½	do.
6.	-	12	0	10½	do.
7.	-	10	6	3½	do.
8.	-	10	13	4	do.
9.	-	9	15	5	do.
10.	-	11	10	4	do.
11.	-	10	16	9	do.
		123	7	1½	

= 11*l.* 4*s.* 3*d.* each.

These men had no beer. The head carter earned 9*l.* 4*s.* during these three months, besides having his house and garden rent free.—F. H. N.]

Orcheston St. George.

107. *Mr. W. B. Canning.*—I farm 1,870 acres (about 300 grass). I employ six or eight boys of 10 to 14 years old all the year round. I very rarely employ extra boys, sometimes one, but last year none; they are not employed much here because this is two horsed land. I don't employ them for scaring, but they are employed with horses all the year, and with sheep from about May to October, but young boys are not often employed for that. Young girls about 12 go weeding and hay making, I sometimes have three or four; if

they ask for work we give it them, but don't want them. Of women, old and young, we may have 15 through the spring and summer. They weed in spring, make hay, and now (September 28th) pick up docks and couch; they work in winter at spreading dung and threshing if they like. We always find them work if *they* like.

The village is less than one mile off; the time employed in coming to work is my time, and they leave this farm house at 5 p.m. to go home, stop work one hour in the day. No restriction is necessary in this district.

In Tilshead parish I know of one family living on the down who don't attend school except on Sunday; that is the only family I know who do not attend.

There are sufficient cottages in point of number, and they are conveniently situated. I have 26 cottages; that sufficient with the under carters, who sleep over the stables and board at the carters; good water supply. All the cottages have gardens; we allow each man 20 poles of land which we manure and plough. Men's wages, 10*s*. I think that ordinary labourers earns 13*s*. to 14*s*. a week, women 8*d*. and 10*d*. in long days, boys 2*s*. 6*d*. I allow beer without limit in harvest, haytime, and threshing. I offered 1*s*. a day in lieu of beer during harvest; it was refused. Some of the best men I have can neither read nor write. I cannot say whether or not the educated are more useful than the uneducated.

I was at Chisledon, near Swindon, before I came here. I think women worked more there than here, and children as much. I always have considered, wherever I have been, that the greatest evil in country parishes, are the beer shops.

PEWSEY.

108. *Mr. William Fookes*, Pewsey Wharf, Marlboro'.—I occupied a farm of 400 acres on Salisbry Plain for 16 years, but I have now given it up. There is no trace of public gangs in this country, and the only mode in which private gangs are at all employed is the practice which sometimes prevails of sending from six to 12 women out to weed together under the superintendence of an old man, but in all cases labourers of all kinds act as free agents. I know this county thoroughly, particularly the chalk district, and I know of no part in which the health of the women and children who work in the fields is at all injured by the work they do.

I think there are many cases in which the education should be improved. I don't think that a man is necessarily a better labourer for having been educated, but he is not a worse one. The very best man I have ever employed could neither read nor write, and did not wish to learn. Many farmers attribute the present unsettled condition of the agricultural population to increased education; this is a great mistake; in my opinion it is due entirely to the variety of employments now open to men and to the increasing facilities of communication, and a conviction among the labourers that if they don't get employed here they can in other places. Farmers must compete with other employers of labour, and I think the wisest course for them to take with respect to their labourers is to try to convince them that they may be as well off as agricultural labourers in Wiltshire as in any other employment. Boys under the age of 10 are very little employed by large farmers; they are more employed by smaller farmers, but their labour is not of much value in agriculture.

I don't think it can be said to be impossible for labourers to keep their children at school up to the age of 10 or 11, because some parents do keep them at home up to that age as it is, and what some do others might do.

The Factory Act, I am fully persuaded, after giving the matter full consideration, is *wholly* inapplicable to agricultural districts; this is not my opinion alone, but also that of some others, whose experience in public matters *generally* makes those opinions of some value and weight.

I have made careful inquiries among the farmers in this neighbourhood in order to ascertain what amount their labourers earn on an average. I have examined the books of six farmers in the chalk district, and ascertain that in every case all the able-bodied men at work upon their farms have been earning on an average from 13*s*. to 14*s*. per week throughout the year. This is besides potato ground which is allowed to each man. Skilled men earn more. This is considered an over populated and consequently a poor neighbourhood, and I think I am justified in inferring that what can be earned here may be earned universally throughout the chalk district of Wilts.

The cost of labour has increased lately; it probably averaged about 25*s*. per acre on the chalk land, and 15*s*. per acre on the grass lands; that amounts to 250*s*. per week for 100 acres. As a general rule about one boy at least is employed for every 100 acres, and is paid 2*s*. 6*d*. a week; if the very young ones were prohibited from working, the gross expense might be increased 1*s*. or 2*s*. a week, but that is nothing compared with the whole outlay for labour.

I think that mop fairs should be put a stop to; there is no reason why they should exist in one district more than another, and great evil arises from them. In some parishes there are feasts and frolics every year; they lead to great immorality and dissipation, and interfere with the farm labour for a week.

I have frequently known men leave this district to go to Kent, Surrey, or Essex to get work, but return after a time when they found they were not as well off there as here.

PRESHUTE.

109. The *Rev. A. G. Bleeck*.—There can be no doubt that the state of education in this parish is at present decidedly defective, partly from not sufficiently competent teachers, and more especially from the scattered nature of the parish. There is a population of about 90 who live on the downs, and are out of the reach of any school; the children there are growing up without any education at all. There are schools accessible to all the rest of the parish, and I think that all the children are in the habit of attending school for a short time, but certainly not long enough to enable them to learn to read and write easily, and retain what they have learnt. This parish is six and a half miles long, and about three and a half broad. There are two schools in it, not much more than infant schools; the teachers in both cases are uncertificated mistresses; I am unable to get certificated teachers, because there are no houses for them, and the schools are not sufficiently well supported to enable me to provide the accommodation required under the revised code as the condition of a grant of public money. The attendance of the children in this parish is not as general or as regular as I have found it in other parishes. There is not a sufficient population in my parish on the downs to support a school there; they are within the reach of Rockley, which is a hamlet of Ogbourn, but there is no school there. The only mode I see in which education could be provided for these scattered cottages is, by means of an itinerant master, who might take classes in different cottages or farmhouses on different days of the week. I doubt whether any system of education short of compulsion will be really effective; I am myself in favour of compulsion, but if that plan cannot be introduced, I think that the "certificate" plan would be most likely to prove successful. I don't think that boys should ever be allowed to leave school before 10; but I think that they might learn enough for their position by the age of 10 if they attended regularly. The poor are not utterly indifferent about education, but they manage their children so badly, and are so unwilling to forego any chance of their earning a casual wage of any sort, that they will accept any excuse for keeping them at home. The farmers are in many cases opposed to education, and attribute to it much of difficulty they meet with in

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getting sufficient labour. No doubt domestic servants are more difficult to get, and are not as good or as ready to work as they used to be, but that is not due to education, but to the increased facilities of communication which enable servants to hear what is going on in other places, and what other employments are to be had, what increased indulgences or greater liberty are granted, &c., &c.; these circumstances make servants restless, unsatisfied, and constantly desirous of changing places. The same observations apply in a degree to farm labourers. Middle-class employers generally, such as farmers, tradesmen, and that class generally, are also indifferent to and not disposed to support training colleges [for domestic servants] that is because they (the middle-class employers) cannot get servants to suit them from those institutions. The fact is that girls trained there are highly trained as servants, but are accustomed to certain indulgences, and a more comfortable and luxurious style of living, and to be petted and made much of, which they cannot obtain anywhere but in first-class places. A boy who has left the day school at 9 or 10 would forget all he has there learnt in about two years, unless he keeps it up by reading at home, or by attending the Sunday school or the night school. I have a night school, and allow any boys to attend it who have left the day school. Night schools cannot be relied upon as anything but partial and imperfect substitutes for day schools, unless they are kept open summer as well as winter, and not less than three or four nights in a week. I don't disapprove of three or four cottages being placed in each, in fact I think every employer *should have* one for his shepherd, one for his carter, one for his bailiff, and perhaps another for a useful general labourer; but I think it is unsafe to let them have more. I know cases where the labourers who occupy cottages under the farmers have been exposed to great oppression and unfairness in consequence of having their employers for their landlords; besides it has a very demoralizing effect in the hands of unscrupulous and unprincipled employers; and therefore I consider it to be a useful check on all employers and employed when an impartial and intelligent agent keeps the control over the majority of the cottages on an estate in his own hands. The divided nature of the proprietorship of this parish has had an unfavourable effect on the general well being thereof. There is no uniformity either in the character of the dwellings, the amount of house rent, or the selection and encouragement of well conducted tenants. There is no one pervading sense of care or interest in their general welfare, so often visible on the estates of high-principled conscientious landlords, which leads the tenants to feel that they are looked upon as somewhat more than mere engines of labour, and gives them a higher self-respect, and induces them in their turn to give a more careful heed to their own lives, and that of their children; but in the present instances, the landlords are, to say the least, careless and indifferent about their tenants' dwellings, seldom or never visiting them personally, and not sufficiently alive to the necessity of being ever careful to keep a constant watch on all arrangements conducive to the health, physical and moral, of their cottagers. Lodgers are nominally discouraged, and even forbidden, but in too many cases overcrowding is unavoidable from insufficiency of apartments; and I have known more than one instance in which suggestions made by myself or other influential persons in the parish, for the application of remedies to the abatement of some nuisances, have been altogether unattended to, or only imperfectly carried out. What I may call the absenteeism of the proprietors (who are many, and small holders, and who seldom or never personally interest themselves in the cottages) has had decidedly a demoralizing effect on the occupiers, who feel themselves uncared for and let alone, and who in too many instances have been the weedings-out of more strictly regulated estates, that there is a very low standard of life, and a carelessness and indifference to the opinions of others concerning them. Self-respect being but low, drunkenness is, I am sorry to say, a universal failing, and the habit of running into debt and deferring payment much too common. Under these circumstances it must not be surprising that education is not in a very flourishing condition in this place. To no place would I feel sure a little moderate coercion be more useful than to this; but I must suggest that in strict justice that coercion should be impartial, and should include both sides, both landlords and tenants. A little legislative interference regulating the condition of some of the dwellings, insisting upon a decent number of apartments, and the invariable supply of fresh water and certain necessary conveniences in every case, should *precede* the desirable enforcement of attention to the mental culture of their inhabitants; then having learned that they are held in *as high* estimation as the beasts of the stall, they may begin to think that they are in one respect *superior*, and be induced to seek, for its own sake, the cultivation of that talent which distinguishes them from the beasts, and which might in a while open to them purer pleasures than they at present even dream of, and might one day induce them to prefer the reading room and the institute to the beershop and the skittle alley, and the cultivation of melody and the line of beauty to the uproarious shouts of drunken revelry and the filthy scriblings of obscene jests; but let me in conclusion again assert my earnest conviction that an Act enforcing the duty of the landlord in *providing decent habitations* for him, must accompany, if not precede, an Act for *educating* the labourer.

SALISBURY.

110. Messrs. Rawlence and Squarey, Salisbury, land agents and extensive farmers.

The employment of women and children in agricultural labour is not prejudicial to their health. It is invariably the practice for all, except those employed as shepherds, to go home in wet inclement weather. No young girls work in the fields as a general rule, except during the haymaking and harvest. Girls from 15 years upwards are generally in service, and there are not more than 10 to 15 per cent. of girls employed in labour. The practice of women going out is decreasing; indeed, during the winter it is with difficulty that enough can be obtained to carry on the ordinary work of the farm. We do not think there is more immorality among the women so employed than amongst those otherwise occupied. Nor do we think that field work causes women to neglect their families more than any other calling. It very frequently happens that the children are taken into the fields, &c. where their mothers are employed. If therefore it be necessary for the Government to interfere in the case of outdoor labour, it is equally necessary in other cases. Mr. Rawlence employs boys on his farm of 1,000 acres, situated close to Wilton, from the age of 8 upwards; between the ages of 8 and 12 he employs them between the months of March and October only, and sends them to school in the winter months; although he could, if he thought proper, find employment for them during the winter months; from the age of 12 upwards he employs them continuously all the year round. Mr. Rawlence does not find that the cultivation of his farm is rendered more expensive in consequence of his adopting this system of employing boys, but we think that in out of the way country parishes, where there is a scarcity of labour, the system might have the effect of increasing the expenses.

About 35 years ago the uneducated labourers were the most contented we had; but now education has advanced so far generally, that all have received some smattering of it, and the young men before they marry are all anxious to try the labour market, and to find occupations in other than agricultural employment; and being thus independent, more difficulty is found by the employer in arranging the terms of their wages. As a result of this it may be pointed out that the wages of young men from 15 years of age

until they marry have increased 30 per cent. more than the wages of men of other ages. For example, Mr. Squarey lately wished to engage a man of 18 or 19 as under shepherd; the wages asked by the candidate were 10*s.* a week, dog to be kept and a tax paid, lodging free, and 50*s.* at Michaelmas, about 13*s.* a week. It is true these terms were not conceded, but 10 years ago such a man would have received 7*s.* a week and 30*s.* at Michaelmas, 7*s.* 9*d.* a week. This shows a rise of about 60 per cent.; during the same time the wages of older men have only increased about 10 to 12 per cent. It is useless for farmers to think that they can resist the demand for education which has now set in; such resistance would be impossible, and the proper course for them now to adopt is to direct it and to make such provision for the education of their labourers as may least interfere with the working of the farm.

Education can never become general unless some compulsory system is adopted to overcome the indifference of a large number of parents, and the best form which compulsion could take would in our opinion be the system of requiring a certificate of a certain amount of proficiency as the condition of employment. The amount of education which would entitle a child to a certificate should be moderate. It should embrace good reading, writing, and an efficient study of the first rules of arithmetic. With the opportunities afforded by night schools, the education of the abler and more energetic amongst them would reach as high a point as the State may feel itself called upon to insure. This first thing to be done is to provide good schools. Small parishes are unable to do this, but in the chalk districts of this county all the population is collected in the valley and then the villages are near together. In many cases two or three villages might be consolidated for the purpose of maintaining a really efficient school at some central spot, without the distance from the cottages being too great for all the children of those parishes to attend. In the grass country in the north of the county this system of consolidation would be far more difficult, because there the population is distributed in scattered cottages and not concentrated in villages as is the case here. It is impossible to lay down any strict rule as to the age up to which the labour of children could be prohibited without interfering to an inconvenient extent with the earnings of the families. No two cases are alike, and each must depend upon its own merits. We always recommend our clients to build five cottages with three rooms to every two with two rooms, *i.e.*, we think that five-sevenths of the cottages built should have three bedrooms and two-sevenths two bedrooms. A few cottages should always be let with the farms, in order that the farmers may supply themselves with carters, shepherds, &c. and the more important of their labourers, and these cottages should be left to the absolute control of the farmers. We have known of cases of oppression which have resulted from this system; on the other hand it is most necessary that the farmer should be well supplied with labourers, and after considering the advantages and disadvantages of different plans we are decidedly in favour of the system of letting a certain number of the cottages to the farmer without any restriction. We think that no legislation can be of any use for the purpose of improving the cottage accommodation. Any law passed with a view to increase the amount of accommodation or to compel an unreasonable removal of minor nuisances must necessarily interfere with the free development of building and render the expense of cottage building greater, and so thus probably diminish the number to be built. The remedy will come of itself, as everybody now sees the necessity of good accommodation, and is making an effort to provide it. Indeed, farms cannot be let in outlying districts without an invariable stipulation for an increased number of cottages. Moreover, the rising generation of labourers appreciate more than their predecessors the additional comforts of a good cottage, and, as a rule, they stipulate for the occupation of these. We have tried Mr. Moule's dry earth system for cottages and find it answer well when under proper control. Indeed, we regard it as the true solution of the nuisance difficulty. There are no mop fairs in this neighbourhood, but it is very generally the practice to hire the more important labourers by the year; this system is beneficial, because it gives the labourer a settled interest, and frequently leads to a permanent service.

We have made great use of the powers of the various Lands Improvement Companies for erecting labourers' cottages on settled and other estates and approve their powers.

We think some modification might be permitted when a large number of cottages is built as to the number of bedrooms, &c.

We may conclude by remarking that an increased area of garden attached to a cottage is to the landlord a cheap means of limiting the loss of interest on capital and the building of cottages. Labourers are invariably willing to pay 4*d.* to 6*d.* per pole for garden lands, which agriculturally are not worth more than 1½*d.* to 2*d.* This system may not be safely applied beyond an area of 40 or 50 poles for each cottage.

Savernake.

111. *Chas. G. Bolam, Esq.*, agent the Marquis of Ailesbury, Savernake Forest, Marlborough.—I have been acting as agent to the Marquis of Ailesbury for about 18 months; before that I was for seven years in Northumberland and Durham assisting in carrying on a farm and a general land agency business.

The Savernake Forest estate lies in a ring fence embracing the parishes of Collingbourne Kingstone, Collingbourne Ducis, Burbage, Easton, Great Bedwyn, Little Bedwyn, Shalborne, Preshute, Mildenhall, North and South Savernake, and parts of Milton and Wootton Rivers, Chute and Blagden, and St. Mary's and St. Peter's, Marlborough.

The greater portion is upon the chalk formation, the remainder upon the London clay and upper greensand. The forest itself occupies an arear of nearly 4,000 acres, and carries during the summer months, besides a very considerable herd of deer throughout the year, large flocks of sheep belonging to the tenants of the surrounding farms. These flocks are daily tended by shepherd boys and driven to and from the farms.

The farms on the estate vary in size from 150 to 1,000 and 1,200 acres. In the parish of Burbage there are a number of small accommodation holdings of from two or three to 20 and 30 acres. The land being very rich and productive the tenants are enabled to raise good crops at a comparatively small outlay. They pay an accommodation rent for these lands, and make a livelihood by growing vegetables, seed, &c., and making milk and butter for the markets. They are as a body almost worse off than many of the labourers, their capital is small, their work is fitful, at times very hard at others slack. The result of these intervals of comparative ease is too often the formation of vicious habits, and their want of education and training prevents them from profiting by this start beyond the ordinary farm labourer.

This system of "small holdings" is liable to great abuse, and when indiscriminately indulged in, tends greatly to unsettle the labourers. Numbers of men endeavour to get hold of even an acre or two, by means of which they hope to become independent; they throw up, perhaps, good situations and struggle on upon the produce of their land, getting into a worse position each year.

I think it advisable to have a certain number of these holdings upon an estate, and to select tenants for them only from farm labourers who have reached a certain age and had some experience of work, and who can bring characters from their employers for honesty, industry, intelligence, and skill.

It would, I believe, be a great incentive to labourers

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to persevere and earn such characters and give up their surplus earnings, if they could look forward to becoming possessed of one of these holdings, and so improve their positions; they would also be available as a sort of "reserve force" in time of harvest, turnip hoeing, &c. Their experience and steady training would enable them to succeed where younger, inexperienced, and untrained men would fail.

As to the employment of women in agriculture I cannot see any objection to the system if under proper regulation. I would not allow any girls to work unless with their mothers; by girls, I mean women under the age of 20, or even 23 or 24. I consider that from the age of 16 or 17 to 21 or 22 women in the rank of life of labourers particularly require to be protected from any influences likely to have a prejudicial effect upon their morals.

At this period of their lives too they are generally looking out for places in domestic service, and any time passed in field work would prejudice many people against them, indeed the question is often put to the girl by masters or mistresses, except in the case of the farming classes, who look mostly to the physical aptitude, "whether she has worked in "the fields," and an affirmative answer often closes any further attempt at an engagement. I do not intend to say that farmers are careless as to the morals of their domestic servants, only that they prefer and require general utility to appearance or refinement.

In every parish, or nearly so, there are a certain number of unmarried full-grown women, widows or married women without families, who depend almost entirely upon field work for their living, and these are the women whom the work does not harm, as their habits are formed and their chances and need of other employment gone by.

It is a question whether female labour on farms cannot be altogether dispensed with. In my opinion it can be reduced materially without affecting farmers' profits; for instance, "muck spreading" and turnip hoeing, often done by women by day work, can be done quite as cheaply by men on piecework, at the same time for weeding and for winnowing grain in the barn, and other jobs of this kind, women are very useful, and indeed almost indispensable, and cheapest labour on a farm.

Upon this estate farmers complain of the difficulty of getting women out into the fields to work. This dislike to field work on the part of women I cannot understand; the hours are not long, from 8 o'clock a.m. till 4 or 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner; the wages are certainly not tempting, usually from 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day, yet in the face of the outcry about low wages, it would seem an object for a woman to help where she has the chance.

I have seen women about here, who have refused field work, out in the very roughest whether collecting firewood, and even venturing into the copses among the saturated underwood; at other times out from 6 and 7 o'clock in the morning until dark gathering acorns for sale, be the weather wet or fine.

There is a strong impression among many people, and particularly clergymen, that field labour demoralizes women; this is no doubt true to a certain extent, and particularly when the master is indifferent and negligent, at the same time it is difficult to account for the greater morality of the women in the northern over those of the southern counties, when the former work in the fields to a very much greater extent than the latter. I think that if the standard of morality was taken in the respective classes of sempstresses, domestic servants, non-field workers, and field workers, it would be found that it was highest in the last named class.

I believe that field work conduces to their health; indeed, I know a case of a girl in domestic service in delicate health, being advised by her doctor to leave her place and go to field work for six months; at the end of this time she returned to her place recruited in health.

I do not think that, as a rule, women who do not go out to field work are any cleaner, tidier, or more civilized than those who do; they have ample time and opportunity to look after their families and keep their homes clean and comfortable, but too often both are wasted and abused at home.

In the employment of young boys on farms there is, no doubt, that great abuses exist, for instance, they are employed very often at the ages of 7 and 8, and without having had any schooling at all.

A certain number of boys are useful on a farm, and to become good farm labourers they should commence early; but I cannot see the economy or desirability of employing them permanently so young as 7 and 8, or even 9 and 10.

They are much employed in this neighbourhood as carters' boys to drive the teams when ploughing, their ages varying from 8 to 11 and 12.

I cannot understand the system of employing boys for this purpose. I have, in the north of England, always been accustomed to see reins used, and there the third horse, when required, is driven abreast with the other two. This I consider obviates the necessity for a boy with three horses, and with two it is simply absurd. When four horses are yoked a boy is necessary, but then I maintain he will drive steadier and better, and amply repay the trifling extra wage, if he is a well grown boy.

It is argued, "how can a boy learn to plough and "to become used to horses if he does not commence "early, and he cannot start better than in the way "here alluded to."

I think it is much more likely to spoil him and prevent his ever becoming a good ploughman, for he is often bullied and abused by the carter, and made to do all the rough work. In rough ground he can hardly walk, and "hangs on" to the leading horse, seriously checking it, and when the horses are in the stable he is made to take off their harness, and do the little grooming they get. He is the carter's "fag," his presence too is an incentive to idleness on the part of the carter in the field. In more than one instance I have seen the carter sitting down smoking his pipe, leaving the plough to go by itself, and the boy to manage the three or four horses, as the case may be, and during the operations of rolling and harrowing it seems to me to be an exceptional case where the carter drives the horses. He usually loiters about merely watching the progress of the work. In the same manner on the road he will go to sleep in his waggon and leave the boy to drive the horses, sometimes as many as six. I have myself seen what might have been serious accidents but for the assistance of persons happening to be at hand.

The unfortunate boy is generally made to suffer, although utterly unable to control the horses. These are, I admit, abuses and might be stopped if farmers would look more into the matter.

The usual method (in many counties) of teaching boys to become ploughmen is to start them at once with the plough raftering or cross ploughing for an hour or two each day under the care of the bailiff or the head carter, and at the end of a month or six weeks they are ready to take their places with the other carters. The boy is generally past the age of 15 when he makes his first essay.

The great difficulty at present is for agricultural labourers to keep their children at home sufficiently long for them to acquire the proper amount of schooling. They may do so when there is only one, or at most two boys in the family, but where there are more their parents cannot afford to do so.

Many labourers admit that it is cheaper to keep a single boy away from field work until he is of an age to earn at least 3*s.* a week, for the extra expense in washing, firing, clothes, and food is not met by any less sum than this.

I believe that field work is beneficial to the health of a boy, provided the hours are not too long nor the

work too hard, and that he is not compelled to go out in very rough weather.

They are also employed, though principally in driving the ploughing teams, in shepherding, going with the waggons, tending the pigs and cattle in the open fields, bird-keeping, &c. I know many farmers who employ extra boys merely because they are begged to do so by the parents as a matter of favour.

I am convinced that it is a far more economical and satisfactory plan to employ as few boys and old men as possible, but to have a staff of well paid and highly efficient men hired by the year, with the assistance at hay-time and harvest of any extra hands that may be necessary to keep up with the mowing and reaping machines.

If boys are employed they should be well looked after whilst at work, otherwise they get into idle mischievous habits, and grow up to be "tricky" and "shirking" labourers.

I would strongly advocate the passing of an Act of Parliament forbidding boys under the age of 10 to be employed in agricultural labour (except at harvest time, when they could assist their parents), and not even at that age unless they could read and write; to prove this a certificate from the inspector of schools should be given, and I would further compel their attendance either at day or night schools so many hours in the year. I think this could be done without interfering appreciably with farm work.

I think it is a matter of the first importance that agricultural labourers should be properly housed. Any attempt to improve them or their children must fail, unless their homes are made comfortable and adequate to their wants. Upon this estate their are from 1,200 to 1,300 cottages, some in good others in bad condition. Every effort is being made to improve those that will admit of improvement, and to build new ones to replace those that will not.

Hitherto the cottages, with a few exceptions, have been kept in the hands of the landlord, and let from year to year at extremely low rents, with large allotments, ranging from a quarter of an acre to an acre; for these cottages and allotments rents varying from 20*s.* to 40*s.* and 60*s.* have been paid. The tenants have been expected, in consideration of the low rents, to keep their cottages in repair, but have, as might be guessed, *not* done so, except in a few cases.

The consequence of letting the cottages so cheap, and with such large allotments, has been to give the labourers quite a mistaken notion of their position. They have worked hitherto for the farmers very much as a favour, and have on the least pretence left them to live for a time in idleness on the produce of their allotments.

This many people might consider a proper independence of the farmer on the part of the labourer. In my opinion it has been a great drawback to the labourers themselves, as well as the farmers, by generating an antagonistic feeling between them, and creating in the former an aversion to a regular system of living, and that proper control without which they cannot be well trained. I firmly believe that a great deal of the poverty, misery, and crime which exists is traceable to this system, and the effectiveness of the labourers reduced to a minimum.

I think that labourers should pay such rents for their cottages as will encourage landlords to build new and improve existing ones. Upon this estate the cottages are mostly collected in the villages. The labourers prefer this to being spread more evenly over the country. It is more sociable, they are nearer the clergyman and the doctor, the church and the school. Scarcely any cottages are as far as two miles from the villages. I think it is an important thing that the labourers should be as near as possible to their work. If a man has to travel two, three, and four miles to and from his work he must exhaust a good deal of strength to no purpose.

In my opinion the collection of the cottages in the villages in this manner is a serious evil. The public-house is the favourite rendezvous, and every kind of mischief originates there. Apart from this there is always in these country villages an undercurrent of vice and immorality, petty tyranny, gossip, and cliqueism, which is an effectual check on all attempts to raise the self-respect of the labourers and their wives and families.

The best arrangement for the farmer, and that which conduces most to the real well-being of the labourer, is when the cottages are in close proximity to the homestead; I mean the cottages for the staff of regular yearly servants. The cottages for the "day labourers" may, without inconvenience, be further removed. Where this is the case I have almost invariably found that the labourers are well cared for by the farmer's family, and in all ways more happy and comfortable. As I consider that it is most essential that farmers should have proper control over their labourers, I am giving to each, in proportion to the size of his farm, so many cottages, usually four, for which he pays extra rent. These cottages are for his principal servants, such as shepherd, head carter, groom, and bailiff, who hold them as part of their wages. The remainder are kept in hand by the landlord, and let on a weekly tenure; but each farmer will have the option of nominating tenants to so many more. This system I have been led to adopt by seeing to what great inconvenience and loss some farmers have been put to by men leaving them suddenly and yet retaining their cottages. It pressed hard upon the labourer himself in many cases, because if turned away from a farm to which his cottage was contiguous, he could, perhaps, only procure work on a farm some distance off, thereby not only causing him a long walk to and fro, but perhaps in like manner the man who replaced him. Whereas, if each farmer has a certain number of cottages in his own hands, and the power of nomination over so many more, he can at every change have his labourers near their work.

The men, too, in changing places, will in future have cottages ready for them to move into.

The Union Chargeability Bill has removed many obstacles in this neighbourhood to the adjustment of cottages to the requirements of farms.

As to the mode of hiring farm servants, although I deprecate statute fairs, I am an advocate for the system of yearly hiring. I think a farm servant should be as much bound as a domestic servant. The term of hiring might, however, be shortened to a quarter, and I cannot see why it would not work as well as the longer period if universally adopted, at the same time in the former case both the farmer and the labourer might secure themselves against the objections to this system, the one by insisting upon the production of a good character from the last employer, and the other by ascertaining the reputation of the person to whom he is about to engage himself.

In the north of England, besides making every possible inquiry respecting his future master's character, it is usual for the man to insist upon examining the cottage allotted to him, and seeing that it is suitable to his wants. Both master and servant must form a pretty accurate idea of what each has to expect from the other, and if deceived should make the best of the bargain until the year expires.

I think the nearer the approach to the day system the less will be the interest taken by the zealous labourer in the farm, and consequently in his work, for the obvious reason that he may not remain to see the results of his thoughtfulness and industry; and with a man of an opposite stamp it would tend still more to unsettle him and further reduce his effectiveness.

The principle of short hirings would strike a blow at the system of demanding characters, and I consider it a thing of the first importance for the labourer himself that he should be taught to believe it his highest aim to earn this passport to a better situation with the happier influences it brings to bear on his family as well as himself.

An important consideration with respect to yearly

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hirings is that the wages are paid to the labourer in sickness or health; not so in the case of the "day labourer." I also advocate the payment of wages partly "in kind." I believe in this way the labourer escapes the temptation to get into debt at the shops, and he undoubtedly gets a better quality of food, and at cost price. His purchases are reduced to a minimum, and the necessity for frequenting markets and fairs—generally resulting in vice and debauchery—obviated in a great measure. Of course the plan is open to abuse on the part of the farmer, but I have generally found the latter anxious to supply the best and most wholesome food, and the most comfortable accommodation he can. Indeed, except where labour is in excess of demand—an evil in itself—a farmer who did otherwise would find great difficulty in obtaining a good labourer. Men are becoming so much impressed with the idea now-a-days that farming can only be remunerative in proportion to the amount of skill, capital, and zeal brought to bear upon it, that it may be safely and confidently left to them to urge on every measure which will improve their labourers, and enlist their most cheerful and enlightened services.

Every cottage should have one good living room and a back kitchen, to serve also as a washhouse, with a copper and an oven downstairs, and three bedrooms upstairs. It should also have out-offices, with a pig-stye and a garden of 40 perches.

I would not allow any cottage to have more than this quantity of garden ground, and it should adjoin his cottage where possible. If he has more than this he is not worth so much to his employer, for he cannot attend properly to his own land without encroaching on the time and strength which ought to be spent in his master's service. For a cottage and garden as above described a labourer on this estate pays from 80*s.* to 90*s.* a year, 15*d.* or 17*d.* a week. I have raised the rents of the cottages throughout the estate to such a sum as will remunerate the landlord for laying out money for improving them. I have been told by many of the labourers that they would willingly pay more rent for better cottages. The cottages on this estate are too numerous, and are a heavy burden upon it, and by providing accommodation for a surplus population cause the supply of labour to be greatly in excess of the demand; consequently wages are low as compared with more thinly populated districts, and the quality of the labour affected; yet I can get scarcely any of the people to move to districts where the case is reversed. I attribute this in a great measure to apathy and indolence. The standard of work in this neighbourhood is decidedly low in comparison with more enterprising districts, and the labourers who have migrated thither have found this out and returned, preferring the easier work with its lower remuneration.

It is unfair to condemn farmers in this county, as some persons have done, for paying low wages. Although a strenuous advocate for high wages, I consider that they pay as high wages as the return from their labourers' services will permit them. It is for the labourer to qualify himself, so that from his superior work a larger sum may be profitably set aside by the farmer as a wage fund, from which the former will then draw his increased pay.

Education alone will enable the labourers to comprehend the true theory of the wages question, and stimulate that circulation so necessary to equalize the supply and demand, and better food and healthy competition will do their work in raising his energy and ambition.

On this estate every stimulus is given to education. There is a school in every parish liberally supported by the noble owner, as well as other institutions to benefit the labouring population.

Few estates are so well cared for in these respects.

STRATFORD.

112. *Mr. Edward Waters*, Salisbury.—I farm 800 acres of land. I pay wages fortnightly; my cottages are let weekly. No work is done by the piece in this neighbourhood which requires the labour of children to assist their parents. Day wages are 10*s.* a week; 15 or 16 years ago, when wages were at 8*s.*, I found that every able-bodied man I employed earned on an average 13*s.* a week. Young boys are not employed in minding sheep on my land, but they are so employed by some of my neighbours. It is the custom in this district to hire the shepherds and carters by the year every Michaelmas. The contract of hiring is in writing. My head carter is paid 2*s.* a week more than the barnsmen; he has also 200 faggots a year, 2 tons of coal, a fat pig at 1*s.* per score under the market price [this was allowed because the carters were not allowed to keep pigs.—F. H. N.], 12 gallons of ale during harvest [it is the usual custom in the neighbourhood to supply beer daily, but Mr. Waters paid extra money quarterly in lieu of beer, and allowed these 12 gallons to his carter as a gratuity.—F. H. N.], 5*l.* in money, and 1*l.* for drilling, 1*s.* for every load of corn taken over five miles, and 6*d.* per load for corn taken shorter distances. The under carters are paid in a similar manner, but rather less. The head shepherd has 2*s.* a week more than the barnsmen, house rent free, 3*l.* after the lambing season, 3*l.* at Michaelmas, 2*l.* at my option [*i. e.*, as a reward for good behaviour.—F. H. N.], 1*l.* for "cripping" [trimming], 1*l.* if he wins a prize for any sheep at a cattle show, and 18 gallons of ale at lambing time.

WILCOT.

113. *Mr. Lewin Arnold.*—I farm 750 acres (100 grass).

I usually begin to employ boys about 10. Some few commence younger. Younger boys are often to be found idling where work is going on, but are not employed themselves. I employ about 11 boys under 13. They work with carters, and one or two with shepherds, but in summer, from Lady-day to autumn, only.

Employ girls from the age of 12, but not often as young as that; they work with women, and receive from 4*d.* to 9*d.* a day. I have now six receiving less than woman's pay. In summer I employ 21 women and girls; they are regularly employed in summer and in fair weather in winter. Women generally work separately from the men, and usually in two or three parties, no man being employed to superintend them. All live in Wilcot; the farm is in the village. Women work from 7 to 6 (two hours for dinner) in summer, and 8 to 5 (one hour for dinner) in winter. Boys work from 6 to 6; they do not feed horses before going out to work.

I think that boys had better be at work after the age of 10, but up to that age they are better at school. No restriction on the employment of females is desirable.

The school is not under inspection. There is only one family who do not attend, but boys leave at 8 or 9. Boys once 9 are rarely found at school.

The cottages were all rebuilt by Colonel Wroughton, to whom they belong, about 25 or 30 years ago; rent 1*s.* a week, no overcrowding permitted; good gardens. I give potato ground to all my men, from 8 to 20 perch to each, at a nominal rent. I manure it for them.

Last year I employed 21 men, one of whom was the bailiff and one superannuated; the remainder earned an average 13*s.* 6*d.* a week.

It is difficult to calculate accurately what the women earn, because they are so much at home, but four women who worked most regularly last year earned on an average 3*s.* 10*d.* a week each, besides what they received in harvest, day wages being 9*d.* Labour cost me last year 33*s.* per acre; that is about 8 per cent. more than it cost four years ago, and the productiveness of the farm has not increased in proportion.

WILTON.

114. *Mr. W. Robson*, agent to the Earl of Pembroke, Wilton.—I am well acquainted with all this district of Wiltshire as far as Wiley, Fovant, Salisbury,

and the border of Dorsetshire. I think that boys usually begin to work at about the age of 8, and work continuously from that age. I think it would be very difficult to restrict the employment of boys. The employment of women in many places leads to great discomfort, and to great immorality, but I cannot see how the Government can interfere. It is always the practice to let cottages with the farms in this neighbourhood, without any restrictions as to the mode in which they may be used. On a broad principle, I think that that is a good plan. I have very seldom met with cases where the cottagers have been badly treated. Many cottages are let on life leases; these leases are granted at a nominal rent on payment of a fine. The lessees are often without the capital necessary to keep them in repair. The leases are assignable, and are sometimes assigned to tradesmen who compel the tenants to whom they let them to deal with them. None of these leases for lives are now being granted. Generally speaking, cottages ought to be placed near the church and parish school, but where the land to be cultivated is at a distance from the village, a few cottages are absolutely necessary near it, for the accommodation of those who are employed in looking after the stock; but they are so placed as to be at a convenient distance from the church where the situation of the farm admits of it. The farms in this neighbourhood vary from 300 to 1,200 and 1,500 acres in extent. In the bottom of the valley are meadows, next to that comes the superior arable, next the inferior arable, and above all the downs. The farmhouses are usually in the valley, with two or three "steaddings" [homesteads] on the hills. The usual cottage rent is from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with gardens. The Union Chargeability Bill has certainly been very beneficial, and has given a greater scope to labour. I have used the General Land Drainage Act very much and decidedly approve of it; it gives an hereditary estate the means of improving itself. Two or three cottages to every 100 acres would be absolutely necessary for the proper supply of labour in this neighbourhood. The price of labour is about 1*l.* to 1*l.* 15s. an acre, according to the amount of down there may be on the farm. There are schools in every parish on Lord Pembroke's estate. There are no statute fairs in this neighbourhood. There are allotments in nearly all the villages; they are let upon the condition that no corn is to be grown upon them, and that not more than one-half is to be planted with potatoes. They are let at a rent of 3*d.* a pole. There are usually gardens round the cottages as well. Farmers now see the benefit of allotments; they become savings banks for poor people. There is a custom applicable in several parishes about here for people to collect "snap" wood; this gives them the right of entering certain woods and breaking off the dead wood. I think it is a bad thing for the people, because the women sometimes stay at home to collect this wood when they might be out at work.

115. *Mr. Eyres*, schoolmaster, Wilton.—I am auditor of the Sydney Herbert Co-operative Society; it was established in June 1867. Last quarter, ending September 17, 1868, the sales amounted to 12*l.* 16*s.*; they have been decreasing in amount ever since the first quarter; that was the most flourishing quarter. The principle has been found to act well, but difficulties have arisen among the members as to the management of the society. The store supplies mutton, bacon, and grocery. There is a branch store at Broad Chalk, to which goods are supplied from here; there drapery is sold besides the articles sold here. There is also another small branch at Bower Chalk.

WINTERSLOW.

116. *Mr. William Whitlock*, occupier.—Cultivation is chiefly arable, with a small quantity of pasture and some woods and maiden down, or permanent feed for sheep.

Boys work from 10 to 12 years of age; their work principally consists of going with the horses all the year, Sundays excepted.

Very few girls employed, and then only in the hay season and harvest, seldom under 15 years, and generally in the same fields as their parents; most of the girls are away from home as domestic servants.

Women are employed to a very small extent (excepting the harvest and haymaking, and then assisting their husbands). I employ on my farm regularly, about four days in the week, two married women, and I farm nearly 1,000 acres, principally arable. The distance to work varies, according to the situation of the farm, from 200 yards to a mile.

The boys come at 7 o'clock in the winter, and leave at 5; and in the summer, spring, and autumn their time is 6.45 in the morning and leave at 5.30 p.m., the hay season and harvest excepted, when of course they work much longer occasionally. The women come at 8 and leave at 5.30, busy times excepted. I consider that boys ought to be kept regularly at school until they attain the age of 10 years, by which time, if properly taught, they would be able to read, write, and know the simple rules of arithmetic, which is all they require in their position afterwards as agricultural labourers.

I consider that girls ought to be kept regularly at school, and taught the same as the boys, till 12 years old, and, in addition, plain needlework; they ought not to be permitted to work in the fields under 15 unless their parents are with them.

There is a good National school, two infants' schools, and a dissenters' school, also Sunday schools at the Wesleyan and Baptist chapels, also two Church Sunday schools. Nearly all the children receive education according to their position, and in some instances more than is necessary for them. In a few instances the parents are to blame for not keeping the children regularly to school, but this is the exception and not the rule.

There are sufficient cottages in the parish, but many labourers are obliged to walk half a mile or more to the different farms to work for want of cottages on the farms, which is an inconvenience to the labourer and a loss to the farmer as well. A large number have good gardens, and those that have not sufficient can cultivate their own if they wish, as the poor in the parish own 20 acres of garden land, which is divided among them, and each poor man can occupy his own allotment or let it, which he thinks best.

The primary cause of destitution and neglect of education in our parish (and the same would apply to nearly all in the south of England) is the great temptation afforded by the beer-houses in causing the poor to spend their money and time out which ought to be made use of at home. In our village last year there were established night schools and a reading room, but owing to the beer-houses being open they were badly attended. Now I will, as briefly as possible, state, in my opinion, what would meet those evils. In the first place, in every village where the inhabitants are less in number than 1,000 the sale of liquors ought to be prohibited on Sundays, and where they exceed that number special licence ought to be granted to houses, according to the number of inhabitants, to supply on certain hours of the day; secondly, I would suggest the limiting the sale of beer in all villages from 6 in the morning till 7 o'clock in the evening in the winter, and in spring, summer, and autumn from 5 a.m. till 9 p.m.; thirdly, the number of beer-houses ought to be made less than they are at present, and ought to be in proportion to the inhabitants.

I make one more remark on the education of boys, and that is, boys who have not acquired the education as before stated by the time they are 10 years of age ought to be compelled to attend night school at convenient times to their employer, from 6 to 8 in the evening, until they have acquired the necessary education, which ought to be decided by a Government inspector.

P.S.—There is in our village more than 500*l.* spent in beer and consumed on the premises of beer-houses

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by the poor, and the greater part on Sundays and late in the evening on other days; this certainly is a great evil, and results in causing pauperism, and ignorance, and neglect of home. I have been an employer of labour in the parish now 25 years, and pay away for labour only to my farm servants over 600*l.* per annum, which I trust will be a sufficient apology for troubling you with these remarks.

Wootton Rivers.

117. Extracts from letters from the Rev. W. J. Brodribb.

The parish of Wootton Rivers (a moderately fair sample of a Wiltshire agricultural parish) contains rather more than 400 inhabitants; of these almost all are farm labourers.

The school (which is under Government inspection) has an average attendance of 80 children, 1*d.* being in almost every case the weekly fee; it is a mixed school, and there is a class-room for infants. The children leave, on an average, at 8 years of age; in not a few cases they leave at 7. As a matter of course the training which they get is extremely slender and imperfect. An attempt is made to supplement this deficiency by means of a night school. This, though useful, appears to be a very inadequate remedy. Under the existing state of things I am convinced that the educational grant in such a parish as this fails to be productive of much permanent good, inasmuch as the school has not a fair chance of doing its work thoroughly and effectively. It cannot, in my opinion, have such a chance unless the children's schooling is prolonged to at least the age of 12. I cannot see how this is to be accomplished without the extension of the Factory Acts to agricultural districts.

In another letter, dated 10th November 1868, the Rev. W. J. Brodribb says:—

As to the mode in which the Factory Acts can be best applied to agriculture my impression is, the half-day at school and at work would be most convenient and effectual. For the children themselves I am decidedly of opinion it would be the best; for the employer it would, I think, be most easily arranged. But I ought to add that I am persuaded that any such arrangement, whether by the half-day or the alternate day, would at first be distasteful to employers generally.

Though there would, no doubt, be formidable difficulties in the way of a pure system of compulsory education, I cannot but think that an application of the principle of the Factory Acts to our agricultural population would be an important step in the right direction.

* * * *

The average rate of wages in this parish and in the surrounding district is governed by the price of wheat. When wheat is at 2*l.* 10*s.* per quarter (a fair average price) wages are 8*s.* a week. Lately wheat has been exceptionally dear, and wages have fluctuated between 9*s.* and 10*s.* a week. Some three or four years ago, when wheat sank to 2*l.* a quarter, wages were at 7*s.* a week. Persons who have been many years in the neighbourhood remember them to have been as low as 6*s.*

The following is the basis on which I calculate an agricultural labourer's earnings in this parish:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Wages, at 8*s.* for 52 weeks -	20	16	0
Harvest and piecework -	7	0	0
	27	16	0

This gives an average of 10*s.* 9*d.* per week through the year.

If you estimate in addition the value of his garden-stuff, potatoes, &c., I should reckon this as an average of 3*l.* a year. This will bring his weekly receipts up to about 11*s.* 10*d.* I am inclined to believe this to be a favourable estimate of a labourer's earnings throughout the year. No account is taken of sickness, &c. I believe this to apply generally to the district about Marlboro' and to what is known as the Vale of Pewsey. It is, however, one of those matters which it is difficult to ascertain with precision. Farmers are reluctant to give exact information, and the labourers are barely able to do so.

Wroughton.

118. *Mr. J. B. Bevan.*—I farm 226 acres, all grass. Most of dairy farms have some arable land. I keep 70 cows; a milker to each 10. I employ two boys, aged about 15, all the year round. I seldom employ additional boys. The boys assist the milkers; they should begin to do that about the age of 10 or 12, in order to get accustomed to it. During the day they have ordinary farm work to do, such as driving horses, &c. No young girls employed. Women are employed at hay-making, thistle drawing, clearing pastures; none in regular employment; they come in February, and go on until hay-making and harvest. I employ four or five women; they come out when they like. I have four cottages with my farm; that is sufficient at present, because all the wives and one daughter come out to work. When insufficient I get labour from Wroughton (two miles). Women work from 8 to 5; they leave home at 8, and have one hour for dinner.

No cases of hardship arise from the employment of boys.

With a view to education, it perhaps might be as well to prohibit boys from working up to 10. I think a restriction up to 10 would not be inconvenient in this locality, as a general rule. I think it desirable that boys should be educated, but I don't think that they would necessarily be better labourers on that account. No restriction on the employment of females is desirable.

The children attend a school at Wroughton, about a mile and a half from the cottages, until they go to work.

There is a demand for cottages, caused by the railway station [at Swindon]. The artizans walk far to work; the labourers not. Most of the farms are well supplied with cottages, and are not overcrowded. Each of my cottages have three bedrooms; all have gardens or allotments of from 20 to 40 poles.

My head cowman has 12*s.*, two quarts a day which cost 6*d.* a gallon, and a house, worth 2*s.* 6*d.* rent free, = 16*s.*

Other milkers have 1*s.* a week less; allowances the same.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from Mr. E. Tanner, Amesbury; Mr. T. Shear, Berwick St. John; Mr. Edgar Young, Broad Chalk; Mr. Flower, Chilmark; Mr. Bryan Wood, Chippenham; Mr. Jeffery, Donhead St. Andrew; Mr. Gay, Mr. T. Stacey, and Alfred Seymour, Esq., East Knoyle; Mr. Kellow, Fonthill; Mr. Futcher, Fovant; Mr. Kingston, Grittleton; Mr. Stratton, Kingston Deverill; Mr. G. Wedlake and H. B. Caldwell, Esq., Monkton Farley; Mr. Godding, Savernake; Mr. Tovey, Stanton Fitzwarren; Mr. Brunsdon, Stratton St. Margaret; Mr. Mayo, Swallowclift; Mr. W. Read, Swindon; Mr. Allen, Tisbury; Mr. R. Long, West Acton; Mr. Brown, Winterbourne.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Bengworth.

119. *Mr. G. Field*, gardener.—I have lived in the neighbourhood all my life. I grow fruit and vegetables in about equal quantities. I don't employ children under 14 or 15 years o fage, except for minding birds on radish beds, &c. for about a month in the spring. The boys whom I employ for that purpose are about 10 to 12 years of age, but I should not usually employ more than one, whom I pay 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, and his breakfast and dinner on Sundays. It answers better to employ big boys, to whom we pay 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week, than small boys for bunching radishes; I pay my men 13*s.* a week in addition to beer, worth 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. The wages of my men last week ran to 15*s.* 9*d.* a man. It was brought up by the work they did overtime. In some weeks the men earn 18*s.* I employ five or six women regularly; they have 1*s.* a week, and more when they work overtime. The day wages are paid for all the work done between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.; and work done except between those hours is paid extra for. The women whom I employ are almost all married women. We don't pay in wet weather; I think that the extra money the men earn by working overtime is enough to make up for what they lose in wet weather; but this is not so with women. The women earn a good deal at pea-picking; I paid one woman 18*s.* or 19*s.* for a week's work. We have generally sufficient labour here; but many of the men who occupy only one or two acres come to work for us when they have nothing to do on their own ground. I pay 1*l.* per week during the harvest months.

120. *William Humphries*, gardener.—I have six acres of land. I grow all kinds of fruit and vegetables. I employ a boy now aged about 12, he has been working for me two years; but I think that gardeners usually begin to employ boys from the age of 8 upwards. The boys are employed from January to October. The employments are bird-minding on the radish and other seed beds (from January until April), then washing radishes, asparagus, &c. and weeding up to June, then picking fruit of various kinds until October, and from October to January they are not wanted again. They have about 3*d.* a day at first, and work from daylight until dark; in January from between 7 and 8 until 4, and now [May] from 4 a.m. until 6. p.m. on market day, but from 6 to 6 on other days. The girls are employed almost as much as the boys. I should not like to employ my daughter; I don't think the work is suitable for young girls, they hear obscene language, and it leads to immorality. I don't think the children employed are physically injured by the work they do. A man who employs his own children probably puts them to work for some time before they are 8 years of age, but that is the age at which boys are usually hired to work. There is no difficulty in getting boys to work, the parents are all anxious to get them out. I think that gardeners would be put to considerable inconvenience if no children were employed under 10 years of age. No machine has been used here by which birds can be effectively kept away for a continuance; the birds get accustomed to every machine. I am in favour of compulsory education; it would be inconvenient, but I think that the benefit which could be ultimately derived from it would be sufficient to compensate for the temporary inconvenience it would cause. I employ women in the same kinds of work as children.

Wages for gardeners are 12*s.* a week with drink, or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more without drink; in the summer time for every hour they work before 6 a.m. and after 6 p.m. they receive 3*d.* Women have 1*s.* a day and 1½*d.* for beer, and 2*d.* an hour for extra time; and boys under 12 get from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a week, no beer money, but about 1*d.* an hour for overtime. The men are not paid in wet weather, and the extra money they earn by overwork would about make up for what they lose in wet weather; on an average they would earn about 12*s.* a week throughout the year.

Bransford.

121. Meeting at Mr. J. D. Onley's, February 2, 1869.

PRESENT:

Rev. B. H. Cocks, Leigh.
Mr. Onley, owner and occupier, Bransford.
Mr. George Essex, landowner and occupier, Leigh.
Mr. Trinder, occupier, Leigh.
Mr. James Essex, occupier, Leigh.

Bransford is a purely agricultural parish, and the greater portion of Leigh is agricultural; but a portion of the parish runs up to Malvern, and contains a suburban population. There is a good deal of glovving done on this side of Worcester. It is done by the wives of labourers; most of the daughters go to service. The best gloveresses who have no families earn 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week, but a woman who has children cannot probably earn more than 2*s.* a week.

There are at least 200 acres of hops grown in the two parishes of Leigh and Bransford. There are no fruit gardens, but a large quantity of cider is made here. The orchards are attached to the farms and in some cases to the cottages, and in the latter case the employers usually lend them a mill to make their cider.

As a general rule, women work very little in the fields, and the practice for them to work in the fields is diminishing. Mr. G. Essex has 13 cottages, and can rarely get above three or four women to come out to work. Mr. Trinder used formerly to have all his turnips topped and tailed by women, but now employs men, because the women won't come out. They are also employed with the threshing machines, but only on the ricks.

Boys are employed at bird-tending, &c. from the age of 11; but don't go to regular work with the team until about 13. Several employers about here have been summoned for allowing the boys under 13 to have charge of their teams.

Women are employed in hop-tying. They get 4*s.* 6*d.* an acre if there two poles to the stock, and 9*s.* if there are four poles to the stock. A woman if she works continuously can tie four or five acres, but they usually take less and work from time to time.

In the hop-picking time the whole of the inhabitants turn out, and a considerable number of pickers come from the manufacturing districts. A woman will pick about seven bushels a day and earn 1½*d.* a bushel; it requires a very good picker to earn 2*s.* a day. There is a saying here that 1*s.* earned indoors is worth 2*s.* earned out, and probably fewer women go to work here than in any other parishes around the neighbourhood.

The work is not injurious to the health of the women employed, but Mr. Cocks thinks that the cottages of the field worker are less tidy, and their children less regular in their attendance at school, than of those who don't work in the fields. Mr. Trinder's experience as to the condition of the cottages does not confirm this.

There are two schools under certificated masters here, one in Bransford and one in Leigh. As a general rule the children attend well up to the age of about 10 or 11. Most of the boys in the first class are the sons of artizans and shopkeepers.

Mr. Trinder and Mr. J. Essex thinks that a certain amount of education should be rendered compulsory as a condition of employment. The other gentlemen present think that every child should be able to read, write, and cipher, but that in this district there are few who cannot do so, and that the increasing desire for education will be sufficient to remedy whatever defect at present exists. The farmers generally encourage their labourers to send their children to school.

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Women and a few children are employed in picking up the apples which are shaken off the trees by men.

The supply of labour is sufficient, the cottages are tolerably good. Rent, from 4*l.* to 5*l.* with gardens; if no garden, the rent is about 3*l.* Men's wages here this year were 9*s.*, last winter 10*s.*; they are usually 1*s.* a week more in summer than in winter. Waggoners have 12*s.* a week. Cider is given all the year round; two or three quarts in winter, and sometimes as much as six in summer.

All except waggoners have piecework. Waggoners have 1*l.* a week in harvest, and about 12*s.* to 15*s.* in haytime. The others earn about 1*l.* a week in harvest, and about 15*s.* a week for about a month in haytime. The cider given is worth at least 2*s.* a week all the year round.

The hop cultivation is always done by the piece, and when there are four poles to the stock, the men receive 24*s.* an acre, and a man can take about four acres. Where there are only two poles, they get 12*s.* an acre. Here a great deal of the hoeing, &c. is done by horses. The men have drink whether at piecework or day work. Labourers pay about 15*s.* or 16*s.* for coals when hauled by the master, which is usually done. The practice of boarding the farm servants is being discontinued. The farms contain from 200 to 600 acres. Boys get about 2*s.* 6*d.* for tending, and 3*s.* 6*d.* when with the teams.

Bromsgrove.

122. Meeting held at Bromsgrove, February 9th. 1869.

Mr. Whitehair,	occupier,	Grafton Manor.
Mr. Wilson	„	Crutch.
Mr. Cole	„	Bromsgrove.
Mr. Rowe	„	Droitwich.
Mr. Smith	„	Grafton Manor.
Mr. Aubrey	„	Hanbury.
Mr. Lees	„	Upton Warren.
Mr. Gibbs	„	Dodderhill.
Mr. Featherston	„	Stoke Prior.
Mr. Russon	„	„
Mr. Partridge	„	Hanbury.
Mr. Edwards	„	Upton Warren.
Mr. Birch	„	Stoke Prior.
Mr. W. Partridge	„	Hewell,

And about ten other farmers.

The nail trade is carried on to a considerable extent in the district between Oldbury and Bromsgrove. The trade has been going down for a number of years, and those who were formerly employed at it are always anxious to get farm work to do if they can. They usually supply us with all the surplus labour we want.

In this district a few women are employed continuously, and a greater number during the hay time and harvest; they are usually married women. Their wages are 8*d.*, 9*d.*, to 1*s.* a day without beer, and they work from 7.30 to 6 p.m. Their work consists of weeding, stone picking, turnip pulling, haymaking, &c. The labour is not physically injurious to them. It is thought undesirable that young women should work in the fields, but they very seldom do work about here. The homes of the women who go to field work are tidier than the homes of the needle or nail makers. There are about 1,500 people dependent on the salt trade at Stoke, and 4,000 to 5,000 on the needle trade about Redditch, and about 7,000 on the nail trade.

Boys are employed from the age of 9 or 10, but not many under the age of 11 to 13. Those who are employed under 11 or 12 are engaged in bird-tending, running errands, and occasionally in leading horses in harvest. They are not continuously employed under about 12. They are paid from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week; the work does them good.

In Grafton Manor there are six farm houses, and only one cottage; no church or school. It was extra parochial, and contains 1,375 acres. Population 50.

There is a school under a mistress at Upton Warren. At Hanbury there are two schools; at one there is a master, and at the other a mistress. The school is not under Government, and there are a considerable number of dissenters there.

There is a good school at Dodderhill, under a master.

At Stoke Prior, which contains 1,579, there are three schools; one under a certificated master and mistress, and the others under mistresses. Stoke Prior adjoins Bromsgrove, and some children from there attend the Bromsgrove schools. There are schools accessible to all the inhabitants of these parishes.

As a general rule the agricultural labourers are anxious for education, and in this respect compare favourably with the nail makers.

It is thought that as a general rule it would be desirable to make the education more practical. It is not thought that there is any necessity for Government interference to improve the education in this neighbourhood. There is strong land and light land in this neighbourhood, and on the former more boys labour is necessary than on the latter. The gentlemen present are of opinion that a law is desirable for the purpose of improving the education of agricultural labourers, although not generally necessary in this neighbourhood. The most convenient form of such a law would be to require regular attendance up to a certain age, say 10, and attendance for the winter months up to a later age, say 12. It is suggested by one gentleman that the restriction should not be applied to cases where children are employed under a labourer in doing contract work, such as singling turnips, &c.

Men's wages are 11*s.* to 13*s.*, sometimes beer allowed all the year round; with the piecework usually done the wages would usually amount to 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week. Very few lads are boarded; they are either carters' or cow boys, aged about 16 to 20.

There are statutes at Hanbury and King's Norton, Inkberrow, Pershore, and other places; a good many, both farm and domestic servants, are hired there. The gentlemen present differ in their opinion as to whether any harm comes from statutes. Some think they are convenient and harmless, and others that no good servants can be obtained there, and that they are a cause of great immorality.

In Upton Warren there is not sufficient cottage accommodation to supply the labour necessary for the cultivation of the land.

In Hanbury there is a bad supply both in number and quality. The rent is 3*l.* to 6*l.*, average about 5*l.* All have gardens or allotments. A good many labourers live in Bromsgrove.

Broughton Hackett.

Sir, February 24, 1869.

123. Being deaf I find it useless to attend public meetings, but hearing that you are seeking information with the object of promoting measures for bettering the condition of the agricultural labourers, I, a country clergyman of 33 years' standing, beg to offer you certain facts and inferences therefrom.

When I first came into this neighbourhood 29 years ago, both my parishes were full of poachers and other bad characters, and miserable half-starved ragged folk who constantly begged and made a parade of their poverty. During the first three years, at each recurring quarter sessions and assizes, there were some of my parishioners for trial. My congregations were small, there was no respect paid to the clergyman, nor did the people appear to respect themselves. The only schools were small dame schools, where little was taught at a charge of 6*d.* weekly; but a few big boys went to a school four miles off.

At the present time, I believe, there is not a single poacher, and I can call to memory only one prosecution for crime within a dozen years, we have few of the miserable begging class, my congregations are doubled, every respect is paid to the clergyman, and often respect of the most delicate and gratifying character. We have a school for boys and girls

within a reasonable distance at a low charge. The population is rather less, though the houses have increased about nine per cent., and there seems to be rising up a feeling against female labour out of doors, except at haymaking, harvest, and fruit picking seasons. The number of illegitimate children have diminished considerably, and the people *most decidedly value very highly the opportunity of educating their children.* As an instance of this I heard of a man taking his two boys from work at 2*s.* 6*d.* each weekly, in order to send them to school, thereby resigning at least one quarter of his income.

The weekly wages (at day work) have not, I think, greatly increased relatively to the increased cost of living. The only advantage the men have is that each cottager (almost all) has a field allotment of a quarter of an acre, which is a very great help. The squire is a Roman Catholic. His charities seldom pass through my hands. There is no co-operation, and therefore it cannot be said that I work under favourable circumstances.

The children are not overworked.

My inferences are that the new Poor Law, which was *very new* when I came here, has done much to discourage begging, but I attribute the improvement very much to our school, which has amongst other things taught the people to husband their resources, and by raising them in the social scale enabled them to labour more efficiently, and thereby earn more at piecework. Yet our school is condemned by the inspectors, who have no knowledge of what schools are really doing, and judge only by the quickness with which children *can give out what is in them.*

The diminution of population relatively to the houses seems to show that the people have a growing objection to receive lodgers.

The farmers are trying by degrees to give up the custom of partly paying the men with cider; but this must be brought about gradually.

I will tell you now my system. I have explained to the people in and out of the pulpit that every man, however poor, is entitled to respect in his own house from the highest in the land. That as I would not allow a duke to interfere in my affairs, so I have no right to interfere in the affairs of the labourer. If His Grace were to presume to meddle in my house, I must either resent his interference, or plead my comparative poverty and ask help. The labourer chooses the latter course, and becomes a beggar. If he *comes to me* begging, I then am at liberty to ask questions, and I do ask; but if he wants wine or other things medicinally, which are of course beyond his reach, I do not ask questions except as a doctor does; I say, "I give as one friend to another, after the same "fashion as the squire gives to me a brace of birds." Money I seldom give, but when I see it is really needed, I prefer giving the larger sum once to the smaller sum twice, because I wound the man's pride less. I also give secretly, and discourage too many thanks. So far from treating them as children, I always treat them as if they possessed more judgment than in my own mind I give them credit for, trying to the utmost not to wound their feelings.

It used to be the custom for clergymen to look up non-churchgoers and those who neglected school. I have avoided this, aiming at making them feel that church and school are for them to use if they value them, and that I am aware that they are not generally so stupid as not to value them, that in fact they know their own interests.

It so happens that between 1863 and 1867 I left my parishes in charge of a curate, and I took charge during that period of parishes in Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Surrey, and I did not find any better church attendance, school attendance, or better morals, greater cleanliness, more independence, *i.e.* self dependence, or anything to make me feel otherwise than proud of my own labouring parishioners. I attribute much of my success to the fact that I have no rich people to give alms, nor any fund whatsoever to draw on except a small amount of sacramental alms, and the trifle which I, who am not rich, can afford.

I come to the conclusion that to check female labour in the fields, to prevent pauperism, to encourage education, to promote cleanliness, honesty, and general good conduct, we *must not meddle too much, but must encourage self-respect and pride, and show respect ourselves towards the cottagers.*

I deprecate most earnestly any attempt to force education, or to check female labour by legislation. I am convinced, by long experience and much thought, that almsgiving largely is most mischievous, especially when given by trustees, whether of endowed charities or of funds collected from living donors, the said trustees not distributing their own money, but what belongs to other people. I believe most firmly that the four millions annually given in London is one great cause of London pauperism.

From these observations you will rightly conclude that I consider the cottages generally a disgrace to the owners, and a great cause of the evils we would remove. A family cannot respect itself if it is forced to live like pigs.

You may be assured that the agricultural mind is not nearly so dull as is usually supposed, but it is decidedly slow of utterance, it feels the difficulty of expression, just as an uneducated man, however intelligent, would feel the difficulty of writing down in clear language matters which he may thoroughly understand. The reports of inspectors on this head I consider contemptibly worthless.

When I was ordained, 33 years ago, not one parish in forty possessed a day school; now not one parish in forty but what has a school within reasonable distance. If so much has been done in one-third of a century, why should Government be in such a hurry to meddle? Give us parsons credit for an earnest endeavour and determination to complete the good work. For my own part I cannot help feeling that there is jealousy, and a desire to deprive the deserving of all credit for what has been done.

I have tried to compress as much as possible, but I could give illustrations of any of my assertions and suppositions, if asked for.

I am, Sir,
Yours very truly,
W. M. Sherwood,
Vicar of White Ladies Acton, and
Rector of Broughton Hackett,
near Worcester.

Churchill.

124. *The Rev. R. P. Turner.*—The land here is light, generally two-horsed land. No young boys are employed; none regularly under 14. I have not observed that the improved education has had the effect of rendering the people more respectful and subordinate than they used to be. Perhaps the children now feel that they are in a better intellectual position than their parents, and consequently pay less respect to them than they used. That may be in some degree owing to our being in the neighbourhood of a large manufacturing district. The children at our school pay 3*d.* a week if out of the parish, and 2*d.* for the first, and 1*d.* for every other child resident in parish. I don't find that the 3*d.* fee has the effect of preventing the parents from sending their sons. At present 16 children at the school are ex-parishioners. I am one of the trustees of the Stewpony Becher Club. It admits members who reside within 12 miles of Stewpony (Staffordshire). We insure against sickness, old age, or burial expenses. Members are not permitted to insure for sickness unless they insure for an annuity as well; but they may insure for either burial expenses or the old age annuity alone. No money is deducted for any kind of feasting. On December 31st, 1867, there were 204 members in the club (viz., 180 males and 24 females) and 39 honorary members. The accounts of each fund (annuity, sickness, and funeral) are kept distinct.

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	£	s.	d.
The balance on the funeral fund amounted to - - -	491	3	5
On the annuity fund - -	2,684	18	2¾
On the sick fund - -	465	8	9½
On the auxiliary fund, deficiency	1	11	10

The auxiliary fund is kept to meet current expenses.

The accounts are audited by an independent member every year, and overhauled by an actuary every five years. We don't allow the money to be invested in any but Government securities. At the last quinquennial division the sum of 600*l.* (being one-third of the apparent surplus of the property of the society) was distributed among those members who had not received any allowance from the sick fund during the preceding five years. There were 39 members who received more than 6*l.* each. I think that the examination of the accounts by an actuary should be made compulsory, in order to give benefit societies a legal status.

I am also trustee to the Stewpony Allotment Society. The object of the society is to supply labourers with garden allotments. We have hired land in 22 parishes in Worcestershire and Staffordshire. The total amount hired is 193 acres, let out in allotments of one and a quarter acre each. This society has been going on for 23 years, and is now self-supporting ; it is managed by an agent under the superintendence of some of the local gentlemen. We take the land at a farming rent, and charge 8*s.* an acre extra for expenses. Not more than half may be cultivated with one crop. The tenants may grow corn, but I don't think that answers well to them. We give a first and second prize every year for the best two allotments in each parish. The farmers don't object to this system. The labourers are very anxious to have allotments, but at the end of the year 1867 the arrears of rent due from the tenants amounted to 45*l.*

Claines.

125. *Thomas Gale Curtler Esq.*, occupier and owner.—Population (census 1861) was about 8,000, and contains about 4,500 acres, but there are three districts taken from the parish in or near Worcester to which this return does not refer ; the population now left in Claines proper is about 1,500, and the acreage as near as I can calculate 3,800. The cultivation is of arable and pasture ; the arable is suited to the growth of all cereal crops, and is so used. A considerable acreage is used as garden land ; there are no hops. Boys from 11 to 14 years old are employed to a small extent on the farms, but very few. None on my farm or on my property, and no girls are employed to my knowledge. There are very few women employed. There are a few of the older women employed in spring and summer. Distance to work under a mile. The hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., having half an hour for breakfast or luncheon and one hour for dinner.

I think no boy ought to be employed in agriculture under 12 years of age. I know of no necessity for restricting women, but I think that no young female under 18 should be so employed.

There is an excellent National school supported by voluntary contributions and the children's pence ; there is no endowment ; it is well attended by the children of the poor, and those of almost every family in the parish are educated there.

Many of the cottages are very good, some otherwise ; sufficient in number for agricultural purposes, but many are occupied by persons from Worcester, so that there is always a demand for cottages. They are conveniently situated for the farms ; not overcrowded except in some cases where the children are numerous. Overcrowding kept down by the inspector of nuisances. Generally well supplied with water, and well ventilated. All or nearly so have gardens, and many of the tenants have allotments of land, which they pay rent for. The cottage gardens of course vary much in size.

P.S.—I consider this parish is exceptional on account of its proximity to Worcester. In many parishes boys from 9 and upwards are employed, two or three from one family, and earn a considerable sum towards the general support, without which much distress would arise, and I consider it is impossible where there is a large family that children could be supported and decently clothed for a school unless some provision could be made in lieu of the loss of such earnings.

Droitwich.

126. The *Rev. W. Lea*, St. Peter's, Droitwich.—Women and children are not much employed in farm work in this district. The women who do work are generally the wives of the labourers who work on the farm. They are employed in dropping beans and potatoes, haymaking, wheat hoeing (sometimes), dressing ground (*i.e.*, spreading the manure dropped by cattle), stone picking, tending the engine when thrashing, topping and butting swede turnips. This last is the only objectionable work, it is often very wet.

In the fruit parishes, *e.g.*, Ombersley, they have in addition the picking peas, gooseberries, currants, and plums ; this is generally taken by the pot ; they make on an average 15*d.* a day. Then at the potato harvest they pick up and separate the seed from the potatoes for sale, and in spring when the buries are opened "spurt" the potatoes.

Girls now seldom go to field work ; they take in gloving, which keeps them from going out to service or field work ; they get 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week, and spend it on dress.

Hours of work for women 8 to 6. Boys go out about 10 bird-tending, pig-tending, errands, driving plough, but, as a rule, are not regularly employed by farmers under 12 or 13.

Evesham.

127. *Mr. F. P. Webb*, land agent—I have lived here for 16 years. I think there are about 3,000 acres of garden ground within two miles of this place. The average rental of the garden ground is 4*l.* an acre. Some of the accommodation ground in the town is let at the rate of 30*l.* an acre. The principal crops grown are asparagus, rhubard, potatoes, carrots, parsnips, onions, cucumbers, peas, radishes. The gardens usually contain fruit trees growing between the vegetable beds, which consist of plums and damascenes. Currants and gooseberries are also grown. The gardens vary in size from ½ to 30 acres.

Women are employed in weeding (usually hand weeding), which lasts through the summer, planting peas, beans, and potatoes ; sometimes in scaring birds ; also in picking bush fruits and getting up potatoes. There is nothing for them to do in winter.

Children are employed chiefly in weeding, planting, scaring birds, and a little in picking fruit. Boys are more employed than girls. The women nearly always work by the day, and earn 1*s.* a day and beer during summer.

In the case of bean-setting women are almost always employed by the piece by farmers, and by the day by gardeners, because in gardens beans are generally grown in small quantities. Children are useful from the age of 9 to 15, except just to frighten birds, for which purpose younger children are useful. They earn 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day. The occupation for boys lasts from the middle of February until August. The number employed under 10 is very small ; gardeners would not be put to inconvenience if none were employed under that age. The busiest time of the year is from May until the end of August. All the female and child population go out to work then ; the children who are too young to work are wrapped up and laid on the ground where their mothers are at work. Gooseberries and plums are usually picked by the bushel. No work is done, either by women or children, which is unhealthy. Cottages are very scarce ;

the rent in or close to the town varies from 5*l.* to 10*l.* a year, with small gardens. Men's wages here are 2*s.* a day and beer. There is very little work to be done in the gardens in winter. I employ a large portion of the surplus labour in draining; I have about 200 in my employment now. The men who take the small gardens are very little better than labourers; they could make a living out of it if there were not so many public-houses. I think that a law which required children to attend school up to the age of 10 would be very useful; it would be very useful for the boys if not for the employers. I want to see technical education; I think such an education might be given by taking boys occasionally into gardens and showing them the practical operations of gardening.

Fladbury.

128. *C. Randall, Esq.*, Chadbury Evesham, occupier of 750 acres and land agent.

J. Webb, Esq., occupier of 800 acres at Fladbury and land agent.

Very few women are employed here; about one to every 100 acres, irrespective of those who go out to intermittent work. About 60 acres in Fladbury are gardens, and about 20 acres of hops. There are some large farms about here, some of 500 or 600 acres; but on the best land there are some small holdings of from 20 to 50 acres. These small holders do a great deal of the work themselves; they give no regular employment for labourers, but engage them for a short time for particular jobs and then discharge them. Women are very little employed; I have hardly ever employed any under 20 or 25. Boys are of use from the age of 10 upwards; but we know of no part of the county where they are of much use, in our opinion, under that age. In small enclosures they may be useful for scaring birds under that age, but where the fields are large and the land stiff they are not strong enough to get over the stiff clay land, and the birds do the damage before the boys can get at them. It is dangerous to give them a gun. As a general rule the supply of labour here is sufficient, except in the busy times, but Mr. Webb finds that the men don't care about earning high wages; if they are put to piecework they will not work long hours. Mr. Randall's experience does not agree with this. The lowest wages at Fladbury are at 10*s.* a week, and at Chadbury 11*s.* No drink is given in winter except for special work, such as threshing, but it is allowed in summer. Mr. Webb gives beer instead of cider; it is not so intoxicating. He had a difficulty in making this change at first, and some of his men, but not the best, left him in consequence. In harvest the men have 18*s.* to 21*s.* a week. Mr. Webb's men won't cut wheat; he employs men from a distance for that and for turnip hoeing. At Chadbury the men prefer reaping to other kinds of harvest work. Women's wages are 9*d.* now [February] and 10*d.* or 1*s.* a day in summer. Boys are never employed in weeding in this county, as is the practise in the eastern counties; and the only employments in which the children assist their parents are in picking peas, fruit, hops, and in planting beans and potatoes.

If a law is necessary at all, we think that it should be made illegal to employ any children under the age of 10. We have a strong impression that boys are more useful and teachable when they have received a moderate amount of education. Reading is certainly desirable, but it may not be practicable to insist on such writing as would be of any value.

The tendency of late years has been to scatter the cottages over the land. Some landlords let cottages with their farms, and some do not. It is most desirable that cottages, say one to every 100 acres where the farms consist chiefly of arable land, should be in the hands of the tenants. It is important to them that they should be able to provide cottages for their principal labourers, and Mr. Randall finds from experience that labourers so situated are better cared for in cases of illness than where they rent their cottages directly from the proprietors; moreover, it is an inducement to landlords to build additional cottages, as most tenants will willingly give a higher rent to their landlords than they charge their labourers. The cottage accommodation at Fladbury is very bad, except in the case of the new cottages. There is no nuisance inspector there; the law which makes overcrowding a nuisance should be made compulsory.

In Mr. Randall's parish, Norton and Lenchwick, the accommodation for labourers is very good. The cottages, which exceed one to every 50 acres, belong to the proprietor of the estate, H.R.H. the Duke d'Aumale.

The Acts of Parliament which enable owners of life estates to borrow money for improvements and charge it upon the inheritance are very useful; but we think they would be rendered still more useful if the money could be paid off within shorter periods; holders of leases for less than 21 years could then borrow money upon their leases. Power should also be given to borrow money to improve old cottages besides building new ones, *i.e.*, for making additions to old ones, not simply for repairs.

[Statement of the earnings of some of the labourers of Mr. J. Webb's, at Spring Field, Fladbury.

	s.	*d.*
Shepherd - - -	13	0
Cottage - - -	2	0
Extra (lambing, &c.) -	2	0
	17	0
Under shepherd - - -	11	0
Extra - - -	1	6
	12	6
Head cowman - -	12	0
Cottage - - -	2	0
Harvest, &c. - -	0	6
	14	6
Second cowman (no cottage) -	12	6
Head waggoner - - -	12	0
Cottage - - -	2	0
Extras (harvest and allowance when going out).	1	0
	15	0

The expense of picking 11 acres of hops on Mr. Webb's farm at Fladbury in 1868 was 72*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.* (exclusive of male labour, *i.e.*, pole men, &c.). This was about an average sum. It was earned by 46 women, all of whom brought children, varying in number, with them. Of these 11 with their children earned sums exceeding 2*l.* each, and the remainder, with their children, less.]

Hanley Castle.

129. *Mr. Drinkwater.*—I farm about 300 acres, about half grass; I have been here five years. I employ about two boys to drive plough from the age of 12 upwards. I employ younger boys occasionally for leading a single horse in turnip hoeing or wheat hoeing, and apple picking; that work only lasts a month or six weeks. Wages for boys to drive plough are 6*d.* a day, and for the smaller boys 4*d.* or 5*d.* I employ women for hoeing, haymaking, and in harvest; I should employ more if I could get them, but they are most of them employed in gloving and slop work. One woman I employed last year in tying in harvest earned 5*s.* a day, but that is a rare case; when employed by the day they receive 10*d.* or 1*s.*, but about 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* for piecework in harvest time. They are not as much employed here as in Gloucestershire, where I lived for 18 years on one farm. I think the educated men are better labourers than uneducated. Farming is quite a different employment

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from what it was; the implements now used are far more complicated than they used to be; the old men can more readily turn their hands to any farm work except machinery; but the younger men, if educated, can usually make themselves useful in using the machinery which the older men don't understand. The men about here would be more useful if better educated; I have never yet met a man who has been over educated; but I think it is a matter which had better be left to the employer and the employed and the parents of the children.

My carter has 2*s.* a day and three quarts of cider, and 1*l.* extra at harvest, or he may be let off his carter work and go to piecework if he likes, but he usually takes the money; carters can do nothing but their particular work; he will have four quarts after Lady-day; and he has a plot of potato ground.

Ordinary men have 11*s.* and cider; I don't think our men earn less than 12*s.* about this part (besides cider).

We profess to allow two quarts per man in winter, and three quarts to shepherd and carter; but it is raised one quart per head in summer. In hay time and harvest it is unlimited; they usually drink five or six quarts a day then, and I have known a man cutting beans drink 16 quarts. Drink is always given when at piecework as well as day work. Women have one quart in winter and two in summer. Boys begin with one quart. In Gloucestershire they drank more.

It makes old men of them before they are young, and prevents them from obtaining many comforts which they might procure if they had the value of their drink (about 2*s.* a day) in money. I see no way of getting off this practice, because farmers are not united; if all would agree to do without it, it might be done at once, but it is impossible for individual employers to do away with it. Individual labourers won't accept the value of their cider in money for fear of offending their fellow workmen. In order to introduce the plan of giving money instead of cider, two difficulties must be overcome: (1) the farmer who sold cider to his labourer would have to give credit for it, and the labourer might leave before he was paid off; (2) the employer must supply his labourers with casks, which would entail expense.

Hartlebury.

130. *Mr. H. H. Griffin*, occupier of 500 acres, about three-fourths arable. I have lived here all my life. This is a purely agricultural parish. In this parish and in Ombersley, which joins it, a great quantity of potatoes are grown; I should think from 300 to 400 acres in this parish alone. Some few early peas are also grown. The soil is peculiarly favourable for potatoes, and there is an easy communication from here to the black country, where they are sold. I employ from 13 to 15 men regularly, but cannot get a woman who belongs to this parish to come out to work; the only women who ever work on my land live in Kidderminster, and they won't come out under 2*s.* a day. I have not been able to get any of the women who live here to work for me for the last five years. I employ four boys of from 10 to 13; one of them is a carter boy, and the others work with sheep, and weeding, &c. I employ them all the year round.

Boys begin at 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a week, with beer. The potatoes are usually both planted and got up by Irish; we cannot get a sufficient number of our own people to do it; the sorting in winter is usually done by our own men. The lowest wages I have given for two years are 11*s.* a week for *old* men with beer or cider (three quarts from Lady-day to Michaelmas, and two from Michaelmas to Lady-day). There are too many public houses about here. I pay wet or dry. My men have been with me many years; the labourers are apparently contented, but very independent, and a very bad class of labourers. I have not a single man who I can set to thatch or drill. There is no gang-work here, except sometimes some of the Irish contract to get up a field of potatoes and bring a number of their own people to help them; but they are chiefly women, very rarely children. There is an old endowed free grammar school here; children are admitted from the age of 7 years on reading a chapter in the Testament. There is also a dame's school, but a good infant school is wanted. The children don't remain long at school; the mothers who don't work themselves, send their children out at an early age to earn wages. I think every one should learn to read and write, but they should come out to work at about 10. The supply of cottages is improving. Rent, about 4*l.* 10*s.* All have good gardens.

King's Norton.

131. Meeting at Breedon House.

J. Baldwin, Esq., landowner.
W. Lort, Esq., landowner.
The Rev. J. Birk, Unitarian minister.
Mr. Walters, gentleman.
Mr. Hudson, gentleman.

The parish of King's Norton contains the ecclesiastical districts of Moseley and Withal, where there are churches, chapels, and schools. There is also a parish school at King's Norton. The two latter schools have both masters and mistresses, and are under Government inspection. There are also schools in connexion with the Unitarians, for Baptists, and Independents. This parish contains a few manufactories; some artizans who work in Birmingham live here, but the remainder of the population is engaged in agriculture. In this parish about two-thirds of the land is grass, but in the surrounding parishes a smaller proportion. Birmingham is supplied to a considerable extent with milk from this neighbourhood. There are no market gardens. The soil is stiff. The farms vary from 50 to 250 acres. There are also a considerable number of small occupiers of from 10 to 50 acres. The men who occupy these small quantities of land are either labourers or small dealers in hay, straw, vegetables, &c. Their position is rather above that of day labourers.

In this neighbourhood a few women are employed in stone-picking and bean dropping in the spring, and in haymaking, &c. in summer. They are employed to a greater extent towards the south and east; here they are very little employed in winter; but there are manufactures to employ them here, and they can also get washing to do. Girls do not work in the fields. The work does the women no harm morally or physically.

Boys are employed for plough driving from the age of about 10; they are employed a little for bird scaring, &c. before that. There are schools within access of all the inhabitants, but the charges at the Church school vary at the will of the clergymen, and are sometimes too high to enable the parents to send their children. As a general rule the children attend school. Some of the poorest are prevented from attending for want of proper clothes, but the parents are usually desirous of educating their children.

There can be no question that the education is defective and requires to be remedied by law; interference would be unnecessary if the parents were themselves educated.

No child should be employed under 10 years of age. School attendance should be made compulsory up to that age; free schools provided supported by rates. Mr. Hudson finds that at the age of 10 children can read quite well. At the dissenting schools they are taught reading and writing, but not arithmetic, on Sunday afternoon. They leave the school at the age of 10 or 11, and are absent a short time during the year before that, but not enough to interfere with their progress. It would be undesirable to require any school attendance after work commences; but perhaps they might be required to pass an easy examination as a condition of their employment.

There are scarcely sufficient cottages; many men have long distances to go to work; but the cottages

are tolerably good. Men's wages are from 11*s.* to 15*s.* a week, and usually 1*l.* a week for six weeks in summer; beer allowed in summer, and in some cases all the year round. Women have about 1*s.* day, and boys from 3*s.* to 4*s.* a week; scarcely any live in the houses now. Cottage rent is about 4*l.* to 6*l.* a year, usually with a small garden. The agricultural labourers do not take to factory work unless they begin young; some of the factory hands go to harvest work, but otherwise they do not take to agriculture. There is such a variety of manufactures about Birmingham, that men can usually get employment in one or the other.

[Mr. Baldwin was good enough to let me see some cottages he had built. They consisted of eight cottages in one block, built in two rows of four each, placed back to back. Each cottage contained a good sized living room and small pantry on the ground floor and two bedrooms above; the rooms were high and airy. There were four privies and two ovens to the whole block. The cost of building was 60*l.* for each cottage, and they let for 3*s.* a week each with a very small garden. These may be taken as a fair specimen of the better sort of cottages which are to be met with in the neighbourhood of large towns.—F. H. N.

Malvern.

132. *Mr. H. Lakin*, land agent.—A large number of cottages used to be let with the farms, but that practice is going out, because the farmers don't do the cottage repairs which always fall upon them, and because they frequently change their tenants, and the cottages are pulled about by each set of tenants who come into them. I think it is a good plan to let cottages upon the farms for the head labourers, and would be a good thing altogether if not abused. The labourers who live in these cottages are often subjected to undue pressure. The cottage rent is 3*l.* to 5*l.*; all have gardens. I have built a few cottages with three bedrooms and oven; the building of them has cost from 120*l.* to 130*l.* apiece.

I think that the large quantity of cider consumed is the great evil in this county. Some of our hardest and roughest workers are the greatest drinkers of cider; but then they probably cannot work six days a week; they are drunk one or two days. The average wages here are, I should say, 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week, besides cider. I have lately adopted the plan of paying 2*s.* a week additional in money on Lord Beauchamp's estate, in lieu of cider. We sell barrels of 25 gallons to the labourer at cost price (4*d.* to 6*d.* a gallon), and send it to their cottages. The labourers are perfectly satisfied with that arrangement; it has only been in operation six months, but it appears to act thoroughly well.

133. The *Rev. John B. Wathen*, Guarlford, rector of parish.—Cultivation is for wheat, barley, beans, and roots; also we have several extensive hop-yards and orchards of pears and apples, which in the seasons give unremitting employment to young persons and children. Guarlford is an entirely agricultural district, lately separated from Great Malvern parish, containing about 8 to 10 farms, chiefly belonging to two noble landowners, who support the clergyman in his labours to do good.

Boys are employed at 10 to 12 years of age at bird-keeping in the spring, at hop-picking and fruit gathering in the autumn. The waggoners and ploughboys are, as a rule, 13 years old. Girls are employed at hop-picking and apple and pear gathering from 8 to 16. Each farm about 10 to 12. Women are not employed to a great extent; a few clean roots, pick stones, hay-make, and sheave-bind, and of course go with their children to hop-picking; a few wheat-hoe. Distance to work, from one to two miles and less. Hours of work, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and to twilight in winter.

No lad should go to work before he is 12, as I think he ought to be in school to that age; moreover, his little frame is much injured by exposure to the elements, and affects him through life.

I think no female ought to go in the fields, except with a parent at hop or fruit picking.

There is a very good National school, under a certificated master, mistress, and teacher for infants; the average in attendance is 108.

Cottage condition is very fair; more would be desirable, but that want is being met; they are conveniently situate, not overcrowded, because the landlords will not allow of immorality, under the penalty of expulsion. There is plenty of good water, and the ventilation depends upon the tenants in opening their windows, which are ample; they have not all gardens; there is an allotment ground in the neighbourhood, of which some take advantage.

Madresfield.

134. The *Rev. G. S. Munn.*—During the last two years more money was paid per acre for getting in the harvest than had ever been done before, but less was taken home by the men; the reason was that the cider was very strong; the men get drunk by the middle of the day; they go to sleep under the hedges, and only do half a day's work. Whenever there is a good crop of apples the farmers don't put any water into the cider, and the labourers are prevented, by the strength of the cider, from earning high wages in harvest time.

The practice of giving cider has been given up on Lord Beauchamp's farm (which is very large) within the last six months; no difficulty has been caused thereby. The language heard in the hop-gardens is very bad. There is one man here who will not allow his wife and children to go into the hop-gardens. Great pressure is put by the farmers on the parents who live in their cottages to induce them to send their children to work. Many children are taken from school too early to learn even to read, write, and cipher easily. The age at which the children leave school has risen since we have had a master. There is no public-house in this parish, but there are plenty all round. A man who has had a drop of drink during the day gets a taste for it, and wants another drop in the evening. It is often the practice for one man to drink the cider allowed for another fellow-workman who may not want his.

Martley.

135. The *Rev. H. J. Hastings.*—I have been clergyman here for 25 years. The farms in this parish average about 150 acres. Every farmer likes to grow a few hops, but I think that there is only one who grows as much as 15 acres. I think that the majority of women are in the habit of going out to field work, and all go to pick hops. Some of the most respectable women in my parish go out to work in the fields. The fruit grown here consists of apples, pears, plums, and cherries. The women and children are employed to pick up the fruit from the ground when it is shaken down from the trees by men.

Women's work consists in stripping bark for a tan-yard which there is here, then picking cowslips [for a wine factory at Worcester.—F. H. N.], and hop-tying; then hay and corn harvest; then hop and fruit picking. This occupies them from about April until nearly Christmas. No children are employed in stripping bark until the age of 13 or 14; but young children are employed in picking cowslips, hops, and fruit. The extra hands necessary for the hop-picking come from Stourbridge, Dudley, &c. and the mining districts. When here they usually sleep in the barns and sheds; but the men are separated from the females, and I do not think that much actual immorality takes place, although there may be some loose talk in the hop-garden. The gloving here is rather superseding the out-of-door work. I think the out-of-door work is preferable. The gloving girls are reckoned of rather easy virtue. A man comes from Worcester every week, and brings work for the

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glovers; they make from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* a week at that. In the case of the cowslip and hop-picking the children are not employed by the farmers, but rather by their parents. There is no work done on Sunday, except what is necessary. When I was a boy a great many men and boys were kept in the farmhouses; that was a much better plan than the present; the carter was close to his work, and could feed his horses in the morning on Sunday, and was then free to come to church; the boys, too, were kept under some control. Now the carter lives, very likely, a mile from his work, and the boys earn enough at the age of 13 or 14 to be independent of their parents.

136. *Mr. Rogers*, occupier, Martley.—I farm 250 acres; about two-thirds are grass, and about 20 acres of hops. We are not well off for labourers, I don't know why; we don't give them money enough, I suppose. We have not as good men as when we used to board them in the house.

I employ, perhaps, 8 or 10 under 15; the youngest may be about 12. I don't employ quite as many as that in winter. They get about 4*s.* a week at first, and 10*s.* a week for men, and cider. You cannot provide the cider for 2*s.* a week. I am sure it is a bad plan to give cider; they drink too much; some of them think nothing of five or six quarts. We could do with half the fruit trees after a little. I have tried to give money instead of cider, and have sold them cider, but I could never succeed for long, the men left me; but I don't think they drink quite as much as they did. During harvest a man will earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a day for five weeks; but they don't earn much extra at other times of the year; they may earn 11*s.* a week, on an average, throughout the year.

We employ some women all the year round if they will come; they have 9*d.* and 1*s.* a day at hay-making; always cider.

It is desirable that they should be able to read, write, and cipher; they would be more useful as labourers, and better in every respect if they could; but I don't think it would do to force it upon them; they would kick if you did, that is, if it kept them from work after the age of 10 or 11; but they should receive all the education possible up to that age.

Overbury.

137. *Mr. W. Creese*, Teddington.—This is a hamlet of the parish of Overbury. I occupy nearly 500 acres, partly in Teddington and partly in the adjoining parish of Beckford. I have lived here all my life. This is a purely agricultural district, about one-third in pasture. There are no market gardens or hops here, but there are a few hops in the adjoining parish of Ashchurch.

Boys come out to drive plough at 11, and occasionally as young as 10. The land is stiff at Teddington, and requires four horses to plough, and sometimes more; but the greater portion of Overbury parish is light land. I employ eight boys now; the youngest is aged between 10 and 11, and receives 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. The remainder range up to the age of about 15 or 16, and their wages vary up to 6*s.* I scarcely ever employ additional boys. I don't employ very young boys to scare birds. They are very little employed under men who take piecework; the turnip hoers do all the work themselves, and there is very little dibbling done.

I employ from eight to ten women continuously, except in the dead of winter. They stop at home when they like, and more so if they have families; those who have several young children don't go out at all. They are principally engaged in wheat hoeing; not so much in bean and turnip hoeing, which is rather harder work than wheat hoeing. The women leave their homes at 8, and return at 5.30 or 6, except in hay and harvest. They stop for luncheon half an hour, and dinner one hour. The women here have 10*d.* in long days, and 9*d.* in the very short days. They hoe wheat by the acre, otherwise they do no piecework. The women all think the work very healthy. One woman who has worked for me has gone out to work not because she wanted the money (for she had plenty), but because she was in bad health, and thought it would do her good. The women earn a great deal by gleaning. I have known a family glean 12 or 14 bushels of wheat. The boys are not put to any work which does them any harm. I know the practice for many miles round here; the practice which prevails here prevails as far as Tewkesbury, Upton, Evesham, and Pershore, and I am sure they are not overworked. Many of the small farmers hire boys, and sometimes carters, by the year, and board them; but the practice has been given up by the better class of farmers.

There is a school at Overbury, and a dame's school at Teddington; there are also schools at Beckford and Great Washbourn, both of them at about two miles distant from here. The people desire education, but the opportunities of sending their children are not sufficient; they think that they sometimes get harm by sending them so far. I should like to see education general, but I think it would be straining the matter too far to require attendance up to 13, even part time. The boys are wanted as much in winter as in summer. I should like to see education made compulsory up to a certain age. They should not go to work before the age of 10, and after that they should attend a night school. I have had a night school in my own house for both girls and boys. I find that they take great interest in it and make great progress, whether they have received a good rudimentary education or not. I think that where there are infant schools the master should shorten the hours of attendance for the infants for, say, three days a week, and then have an evening class. I think it would be desirable to require a certificate of proficiency as a condition of employment. The law which makes it illegal to give the charge of a cart to a boy under 13 has been several times enforced about here. I think it is a very bad law, because many boys under that age might well be trusted. The great evil here is the drunkenness; the public-houses are far too numerous.

Cottages are sufficient in number, but most of them very poor things; the rent is from 3*l.* to 5*l.*, with gardens. Farmers usually have a few cottages, which they rent with their farms; I have six with mine. There are very few small occupiers, but most of the men have allotments. At Bredon the rector lets some allotments of one acre or more; the men who occupy those large amounts don't go to regular farm work.

Peopleton.

138. *R. Varden, Esq.*—Exclusive of roads and fences, Mr. Varden's gardens at Seaford, near Pershore, occupy 100 acres, and are planted entirely with apple, pear, and plum trees, and with gooseberry and currant bushes, no vegetables, but three or four acres of rhubarb, being grown. Apples, pears, and plums are picked, partly by men and partly by women, from the ground or from steps. The heavy baskets are carried by the men. Gooseberries and currants are picked almost entirely by women and children, no men and very few boys being employed. The work is done by measure, very seldom by the day, and the employer or his bailiff scarcely know who is at work, as all who come at the busy time are admitted unless they are known to have previously broken the regulations.

The picking is a species of ready money business, a metal token being given for each basket of fruit as it is weighed, and these tokens are exchangeable for money by the bailiff daily, or when the pickers wish. No accounts are necessary; some are paid daily, some weekly, and some at the end of the work. The tokens are of different sizes and colours, to represent the different sized baskets and kinds of fruit. In most cases the pickers come at 8 and leave at 6, but this they do as they please, except on the Friday, when no fresh picking is commenced after 1 o'clock, that

all baskets may be filled and sent off; for if the fruit stood over till the next week it would spoil. There are huts on the ground to shelter the pickers in wet weather, and an ample supply of tea is given them once or twice a day.

The pickers work together on the same or adjoining pieces of plantation, each family or party, usually consisting of a woman and two or three children, taking its row in rotation, no selection of rows being allowed. When the fruit is sent off in large baskets they are kept at the end of the fruit rows, near the path, and the fruit is brought to them in smaller baskets; the large baskets weigh, when full, 70 or 80 pounds, and are carried by men if the pickers wish, but as two women carry them the short distance to the scales easily they often do it themselves, only young girls and old women getting the men to do it. The pickers comprise a large proportion of the women and children of the county three or three and a half miles round, and some come from the town of Pershore three and a half miles distant; the women of our own parish are preferred when only a few are wanted, as is the case at the commencement of the picking. They mostly work in families, or little parties of their own arranging. A family of about four persons earns about 5*s.* a day. The advantage to them is not so much in better wages to the mother, but in the children's labour, which affords larger collective earnings not otherwise attainable. The family may make about 5*l.* in the season, and the money is mostly spent in clothing. The work is very much liked by them, all other occupations being put aside for it. The gloving women think it a most beneficial change for them, especially when their eyes or health have suffered from their close in-door application. In the busiest time seven or seven and a half tons of currants are picked in a day, in addition to gooseberries, but this amount of work is of very short duration; at that time it takes 300 women and children to pick, independent of the men to collect and pack the baskets, &c. Men do not like currant picking, they are too clumsy for it, and it is too tedious for them; they would not earn so much in a day as a woman or girl, viz., 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, and a sufficient number of men to pick could not be collected except from the towns at high wages and travelling and lodging expenses, and they would be most likely loose, disreputable ones, not amenable to order.

If an Act to regulate female and infant labour in agriculture were passed, a period should at least in the first instance be exempted from its operation for fruit purposes. This need only be six weeks, but for the entire range of farm work it ought to be from the beginning of haymaking to the end of hop-picking; say 1st June to 30th September. The regulation of winter labour might be practicable, but this summer work could scarcely be regulated. Fruit growing and market gardening are increasing in the valley of the Avon, from whence Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Scotland are largely supplied. In my case any regulation as to age or certificates of children would be most difficult to enforce, and unless of a very mild character would compel me to discontinue bush fruit growing.

Out of the 300 persons who came to pick about one-half would be under and one-half more than 15. When it is known that the currants are ripe and are to be picked, women come from all parts of their own accord, and commence work without any special directions from me. One of my regulations is that no child shall be employed under the age of 10, because younger children are apt to smash the fruit, and thus occasion me considerable loss; but practically the rule cannot be enforced, because I have no means of checking the statements of the parents as to the ages of their children, nor do I in fact know who the children are who are at work in the gardens. Each woman brings her own picking basket, but the children usually make use of their mother's basket, two baskets to a party being sufficient.

The whole picking lasts about 10 weeks, but the very busy time only lasts about three weeks. Women and children are not employed in fruit garden cultivation except for the picking. I think that there are about 3,000 acres of market-garden land in Worcestershire.

Most of the other gardeners about here grow vegetables besides fruits; few of them grow more than 10 acres of currants; I grow 50 acres at least; it is the currants which cause the great rush of work. I employ more children than any of the other garden cultivators, because children are particularly well able to pick currants. The amount of female labour employed by others may be equal in proportion to what I employ, but theirs is distributed over a longer period of time.

PERSHORE.

139. Meeting at Pershore, February 24th, 1869.

John Whitaker, Esq., J.P., landowner and occupier, Pershore and Broughton.

G. Whitaker, Esq., J.P., landowner and occupier, Pershore and Broughton.

H. Hudson, Esq., J.P., landowner and occupier, Wick, Pershore.

Mr. Abell, occupier of 400 to 500 acres, Netherton.

James Cosnett, occupier of 20 acres of garden, Pershore.

Andrew Dufty, occupier of 50 acres, garden allotment and grass, Pershore.

Mr. Edward Humphries, owner and occupier, 250 acres, farm, and garden.

Timothy Blizard, owner and occupier, 30 acres, garden.

H. Williams, occupier, Pershore, 422 acres, farm.

Thomas Greames, Pershore, owner and occupier, 240 acres, garden and farm.

Richard Varden, Peopleton, owner and occupier of 242 acres, 160 acres of which is fruit garden.

The parish of Pershore contains very little grass, about 600 acres are devoted entirely to market-garden cultivation, besides a considerable quantity of fruit plantations which are scattered about the pasture land, and a considerable amount which are devoted to cabbages, potatoes, green peas, &c., which are grown as a farm crop. The fruit principally grown consists of apples and pears (principally for cider and perry), plums, with an undergrowth of gooseberries and currants.

Women are first employed in April and May in weeding, tying up onions, radishes, &c., thinning the garden crops. Then in picking green peas, then gooseberries and currants, raspberries, vegetables, and plums; plums they pick from the ground or by steps (the men do the ladder work); then picking up apples and pears and potatoes. That constitutes the whole of the garden work. The farm work they do consists of cleaning swedes and turnips and weeding the corn crops, and hay and harvest work, and working on the threshing machine. The town women are almost all employed in the gardens, and the country women in farm work. There was a good deal of gloving done here; that trade is rather slack now, but the glovers usually come out to work when there is much to be done, as in fruit picking. Probably about one woman and two boys are employed to every 100 acres in farm work about here. Young girls go out with their mothers from about the age of 12; they work for two or three years and then go to service. Women work from 8 to 5 or 6; they have half an hour for lunch at 10 and one hour for dinner at 1. Their wages vary from 8*d.* to 1*s.* in farm work.

The practice of giving cider is universal. In garden work they don't usually have less than 1*s.* a day, sometimes with cider. Hoeing and weeding, pea and fruit picking is usually done by the piece; when at piecework a woman working alone would probably earn 1*s* 3*d.* a day. There is no work either in the gardens or on the farms which does them any harm physically or morally. Gloving leads to far more immorality, in consequence of the women having nothing to do but gossip.

Worcestershire.

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A. i.

Probably not above one woman per 100 acres is employed all the year round, but a far greater number are employed at the busy times. No women come from a distance to work here in the busy time. A considerable number of women are also employed in pealing osiers for basket making. Without these women it would be impossible to carry on the cultivation of the fruit, peas, &c. as is now done in this district.

Children are not employed in the *general* occupations in which women are employed, but they are in the *special* occupations in which women are employed, which last from May until October or November. They are not employed in large numbers until June.

In fruit picking whole families come out, some employed in picking and some in minding the younger children while the mother is picking.

Boys are employed in driving teams from about the age of 10 upwards, but there is usually one boy under that age employed on every farm who is engaged sometimes in bird or pig tending, or doing any similar job. They get about 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week at first. Boys would probably never make efficient labourers unless they devoted a portion of their time to agriculture from the age of 9 upwards. It would be very inconvenient to farmers if they could not employ them for some portion of the year from that age, but it is impossible to say for how long or for which period of the year the boys could be spared. Boys usually work from 6 to 6 in summer, but in winter they could be spared from the time it is dark. The teams usually go out from 6.30 or 7 until nearly 3; in some cases the horses are brought home to bait for about one and a half hours in the middle of the day. Here the principal meal is taken, usually after the men return home at night, and the distance they live from the schools would often prevent them attending night schools.

There is plenty of school accommodation in this neighbourhood.

Men are more useful generally if they can read and write, although it does not make any difference as regards their utility in the actual work of the farms.

Men's wages here are 10*s.*, or 11*s.* (close to the town); gardeners have 12*s.*; all have drink, and are paid wet or dry; the value of cider would be about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, except in hay and harvest when they have five quarts, which would bring it up to about 2*s.* per week on an average through the year.

Cottage rent is about 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* in the country, and higher in the town if they have gardens. In the country they all have gardens and generally an allotment besides, for which they pay extra 8*s.* for one-tenth of an acre, which includes rates and taxes.

Education has been advancing rapidly lately, and the schools are well filled.

The farmers generally are desirous that all the labourers should have a good elementary education, but they object to having any time fixed upon for compulsory attendance. The labourers also are very anxious to obtain an education for their children.

The gentlemen present think that the beerhouses are the cause of great evil in this district.

Rock.

Paper addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by the *Rev. A. James.*

140. District of Mother Church. Acreage, about 5,000; population, about 1,000.

194 inhabited houses.

39 farmhouses, whose occupiers do not use the school.

87 cottages, where there are no children of an age for school.

5 farmhouses, whose occupiers use the school.

35 cottages, from which children are now attending school.

28 cottages, where there are children of an age to attend school, yet from which they do not attend.

Average attendances of children having attended more than 200 times. Numbers on such average attendances, and of those presented for examination to Her Majesty's inspector; numbers also of passes:—

——	Average Attendances.	Number presented.	Passed.		
			R.	W.	A.
1864 - -	38	30	29	30	29
1865 - -	43	37	37	34	30
1866 - -	48	40	34	35	13
1867 - -	31	24	21	23	9
1868 - -	36	31	31	27	25
1869 - -	37	36	36	35	34

Rock is a wide agricultural parish; the farmhouses and cottages are scattered, there is no village. There is no resident landowner or tenant farmer, who has received a better education than what may be got at a commercial academy. The land, with the exception of that belonging to three non-resident gentlemen, is in the hands either of farmers tilling their own farms, or of proprietors possessing from 100 acres downwards. There is no lay encouragement whatever shown to education. Indeed, not only do the farmers not appreciate the value of it, but as a rule they are of opinion with respect to labourer's children that the more schooling the children get, the worse servants they get themselves. And in a measure they are right, for the more intelligent children who profit by their schooling seek employment, when old enough, elsewhere than among the farmers, where there is more money to be made, and there are greater openings for advancing themselves; for the farmers, always averse to parting with hard cash, will not advance the rate of wages, even to secure more intelligent hands, and so get the refuse of the labourer's children in their employ.

I myself think that it would work well, and prove a practicable scheme, if a restriction were placed in point of age on agricultural labour. I would allow no child to work for wages under 10 years old, and would insist on the attendance at school, between November and May, of children between 10 and 12 or 13, unless where any child had satisfied Her Majesty's inspector, in whatever standard might be fixed on as most suitable. And I think an education rate will be necessary. The landowners, with many notable exceptions, appear to have no conception of the necessity which lies on them of contributing to the expenses of primary education among the poor in the parishes where their property lies. In the 5,000 acres of this parish, in my care, there are only four subscribers to the school, each contributing 1*l.* And yet our endowment is under 15*l.* for school purposes. When funds are not raised by voluntary contributions, and there is no adequate endowment sufficient to provide suitable educational buildings, staff, and appliances in any district, the districts to be defined in some way, then I should like to see it in the power and the duty of some extraneous authority, whether board of guardians or otherwise, to provide necessary school accommodation and appliances, and that the expense thereof should be charged by way of rate on the proprietors in the district.

A. James.

Rock, June 1, 1869.

Stanford-on-Teme.

141. *W. H. Cooke, Esq.*, The Green.—The cider here costs the farmers about 5*d.* a gallon, but in the spring it would sell for 6*d.* or 7*d.* Where farmers give plenty of task work the labourers might get 12*s.* a week on an average throughout the year, but some farmers don't give much task work. Men who work

on the roads have 1*s.* 10*d.* a day and no drink. When I employ a man by the day I give him 2*s.* Cider is given at task work as well as day work; but the practice of allowing food varies with different farmers. I don't think that as a general rule labourers have more than 10*s.* a week on an average throughout the year. They don't come when it is wet, and a proportionate deduction is made from their wages unless some work can be found for them indoors. Either food or extra money is given them when they work overtime. It is always the custom in this parish for the farmers to haul the coals for the labourers, and also to supply them with faggots at a reduced price. Potato ground is sometimes allowed.

[Mr. Young, a tenant under Mr. Cooke, was present when the above observations about the earnings were being made and stated them to be correct.—F. H. N.] There are very few parishes in this county in which there are no public-houses. The women and children who live in the farmers' cottages are paid as much as those who do not. Several women are employed at gloving at Shelsley; a few are employed in trimming turnips in winter for about six weeks at about 7*s.* an acre. Very few men come from a distance to pick hops. There is not much apparent immorality among hop-pickers; but what there is is probably caused by the persons who come out from the towns, &c. to visit the hop-gardens on Sundays. I have often noticed that the hop-picking as well as all out-of-door work is decidedly beneficial. I have practised as a medical man, and have often recommended field work, and have found persons get benefit from it. Young boys under the age of 12 get 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day. An hour is allowed the women for their dinners, but they often have 1½ hours.

I certainly think that an Act should be passed to secure education to all, and that a rate should be imposed to provide school accommodation where the voluntary system fails.

I have an infant school kept by a labourer's wife, to whom I pay 5*s.* a week. The education is given free, and the attendance is very regular.

[I visited the infant school above referred to and found in it a girl of 6 who could read well, equal to about Standard III., and another, aged 3, who could read easy words of two syllables well. The woman, who had had charge of the school for 14 years, told me that she thought children could advantageously begin to attend school at the age of 2; that the children usually remained at the infant school until the age of 6 or 7, when they went to the endowed school at Shelsley, and many of them were placed in the first class there.—F. H. N.]

Upton Snodsbury.

142. At a meeting of the East Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture, held at Upton Snodsbury, on Wednesday, May 12, it was stated,—

That the labour of boys under 10 years of age was not required by farmers.

That young girls were not employed in agriculture.

That the education in the neighbourhood was defective, but was improving.

The gentlemen present were divided in opinion as to whether legislative interference was necessary for the purpose of improving the education.

It was thought that the beer-house system and the gloving trade were the principal causes of whatever immorality prevailed in the district.

The cottage accommodation was said to be defective, but was improving.

Witley.

143. *Mr. W. Morris*, occupier (lived for 40 years at Holt, and came here last Christmas).

Mr. J. Twinberrow, occupier.

Men's wages here are 10*s.* or 11*s.*, and on an average more than three quarts of cider a day, which would sell for 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, although it does not cost the farmer that. A good average workman does not get less than 2*s.* a day and his cider throughout the year. Supper is given when they work overtime, and usually dinner is given when they are drawing hay or corn. Potato ground is very often given, and the coals are drawn from the pit for them; they cost 9*s.* a ton at the pit.

From May until October a considerable number of women are employed in hop-tying, hay and harvest, hop and fruit picking; but in winter there is nothing for them to do but topping and tailing turnips. Women's wages are 7*d.* or 8*d.* and a quart of cider a day. Not many girls go to farm work except in hop-picking; round Holt some of them are employed in gloving, but that trade does not extend as far as this place. Not many strangers are employed in hop-picking about here, but when they are employed they come from the black country. No special accommodation is provided for hop-pickers on the farms; such accommodation is greatly wanted. We don't think that much immorality prevails, but they steal the fruit a great deal.

Boys are not required for regular work until they are 12; but they are useful for bird-scaring, which lasts about six weeks, and hop and fruit picking under that age. They get 6*d.* a day for bird-scaring and fruit-picking.

We think it would be desirable to have some Act to insure a certain amount of education for lads up to the age of 12.

144. The *Rev. D. Melville*, Witley.—I can better comply with the wish for information on the points contained in your circular of questions in one continuous answer, than I could by distinct replies to the several queries. Whilst there is a good deal going on in my neighbourhood bearing on the main point of your inquiry, both as to its industrial, moral, and educational conditions, it is not so precise and systematic as to fall easily under the definite details that inquiry follows. I will take each of your three general heads of inquiry in order.

1. There are three special forms of industry left in Worcestershire and Herefordshire which partake, more or less, of private gang work with their consequent evils,—

1. Bark pealing.
2. Fruit gathering.
3. Hop-picking.

The first and last have the most organized character, the second less so, being, of course, more uncertain.

The first is a private gang transaction generally. A district is to have a fall of oak. The wood forester or bailiff lets some middleman contract for the bark stripping, who hires a gang for the job. Women largely engage in it; the party is generally made out of the inhabitants of the locality. The work is rough and hard, and all the disarrangements to home and school incident to the mother's and elder child's absence, and the degradation and moral injury consequent on women and men mixing in a rough outdoor handwork, find their full realization.

Hop-picking is very like it, except that it partakes more of a saturnalia. To the wantonness in speech and act, which seems ever a coincident of occasional outdoor work shared in common by the sexes, there is in hop-picking always a holiday as well as a work element, which intensifies the bad characteristics of such pursuits. This is aggravated by many hands coming to this work from a distance, and the circumstances which attend the operation itself. In this neighbourhood the nailors of Staffordshire swarm to the hop-gardens. To them it is like a trip to the seaside is to the upper classes, just as the denizens of the lower haunts of London pour down into Kent for the same purpose. The farmers do not, perhaps cannot, make adequate provision for housing this accidental supply of labour. Barns and outhouses are converted into temporary and very promiscuous sleeping rooms. The hop-crib is the scene of romp and ribaldry, and though a few local families may pursue their work decently and quietly, generally a parish catches the fever, and everything is upset for the three or four

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weeks during which the work of picking lasts. The whole family ordinarily goes into the hop-garden. It is task work, that is, paid by result not by time, and little fingers can pick something, and fingers too small to pick are too small to be left at home, and the home is left too early to send them to school.

Every kind of ill finds a very strong forcing-house in the hop-gardens, amongst which I should place as not the least the callousness to those ills begotten or indurated thereby in the mind of the employer.

For these temporary private gang-works it is easier to trace the evil than suggest the remedy. From bark pealing young women should be excluded. Children might come under some general enactment regulating their work and school conditions. Hops are a very exceptional growth. They are very valuable and very tender. Heat, wet, wind affect them very quickly and very seriously. Whole gardens wither or bruise into comparative worthlessness under scorching sun or tempest. To pick them as fast as the kiln will dry them is essential. Quality is everything with them, and quality may be lost in a day or two. Still better arrangements could be made. Farmers could show more care for order and decency. Except where the parties are of one family, and the parents can guarantee control, the sexes should be obliged to be kept asunder in the sleeping arrangements. Even then the field intercourse will be prejudicial enough. I would, if possible, have no unmarried females there older than 14.

Of organized field labour besides there is little or none. The wives of labourers do not at all generally work on the farms, nor do the children. Bird tending claims a few at odd seasons, and some wives go into the fields. Where this is the case the school and home of course suffer. Farmers certainly should be restricted from employing mothers of families on *Saturday*, and should pay wages on Friday. Many a Sunday is no day of rest, much less comfort or Divine Service, from the household work which Saturday in the fields and pay late at night make necessary.

In referring to the topics raised in the Sections III. and IV. of your inquiries, I will follow the same plan of reply. The facts to which those inquiries apply are not organized enough to admit of such systematic detail. Besides this, every district has of course its own peculiar circumstances, in harmony or at variance with ordinary elsewhere experience. Cider, for instance, in our neighbourhood is a very potent element. A cider producing county disarranges many data, and I doubt if any common measure could be struck between such an one and one totally different, say Northumberland. Think of a very cheap thin beverage, provoking the thirst it seems to allay, produced for almost nothing in a prolific year by the employers of agricultural labour themselves, not thoroughly stupifying or intoxicating till gallons on gallons are consumed, but working effects, mental and physical, of which its own washy and cheerless characteristics are typical, and anyone can see at once what an instrument of degradation it must be, whether you look to the craving desire of him who consumes, or the cheap means of influence through low gratification with him who supplies the beverage. If one of the great difficulties in solving the educational, social, and economic problems of agricultural labour consists in the hopeless circle within which the conditions of those problems return upon themselves, a cider-consuming district presents that difficulty in most formidable proportions.

An improvement is to be looked for through the more elevated sense and quickened intelligence of employer and employed. That is, strength is to be acquired through the better appetite of those who nauseate food. Where cider is the local beverage, the chance of remedying this deadlock through the operation of natural laws seems well nigh desperate. A sort of impotent fuddle of mind and character is the normal state of habitual cider drinkers.

Consequently it must be, I fear, for remedy in such districts as it is in the analogous state of a failing appetite with a necessity for increased consumption of food, if greater strength is to be attained. In such cases, the natural desire failing, it has to be artificially stimulated; a tonic has to be given. So with regard to the mind and character agricultural: the law must supply from without what is wanting of motive from within, if progress is to be made.

Your inquiries point to economic, domestic, and educational circumstances wherein that progress is to be desired. Of these the educational must lead the way, for in the present standard of intelligence and moral sentiment, it is hopeless to expect wages to be understood or home decencies and opportunities to be rightly regarded. And the farmers generally can see as far as this, and therefore, coupled with an instinctive hatred of parting with actual *money*, as distinct from money's worth, which is a farmer's clearest, closest hatred, mental improvement finds with them no advocacy. I say all this on experience. You cannot rouse the ordinary agricultural mind to enter upon the wages question on right and reasonable grounds, and they will huddle together in indecent discomfort still, letting off to lodgers the extra accommodation you provide if they possibly can.

In the educational arrangements it is extremely hard to setttle the conflict between the industrial and educational claims. What is best for one is just worst for the other.

What would be best for both, could it be, so far as the mental and physical energies are concerned, would be daily mixture of either. I know how each gives then a zest to the other experimentally. I have long been concerned with a reformatory. Our school work, taken as a relief from field labour for two or three hours daily, shows results quite comparable to the whole ordinary school day of our parish schools. But then farmers and their work will not admit of this half-day or intermittent operations.

The same objection would, I think, be fatal to alternate school days. The remaining plan of winter school and summer work alone remains, and should be continued to as advanced a period of life as possible; for the mental machine will run back a good deal by the summer's disuse.

Night schools in summer are, unfortunately, almost impossible; else, if they were not, and they could be systematized with the winter day school, the great hindrance to agricultural night schools might be alleviated, namely, the impossibility to classify the scholars. As it is, whatever the inequalities of school teaching, night schools involve almost individual instruction; one boy wants advanced teaching, another, perhaps older, wants to learn his letters.

Worcester.

145. *Mr. Maund*, bailiff to Mr. Smith, Lower Wick. —Mr. Smith farms about 400 acres at Lower Wick and about the same amount at South Littleton. He is the largest hopgrower in Worcestershire, and grows above 80 acres. He does not grow fruit.

He employs women for stocking turnips, cutting hop roots, stripping the bark off poles and dipping them in creosote, couching, hop-tying, hay and harvest, hop-picking, then stripping the bines off the poles.

About six or seven are employed all the year round; but at hop-tying we have about 20, and at hop-picking about 500 women with their children.

The hop-tying, picking, cutting the roots, and shaving poles is contract work, the remainder is day work. They get 8*d*. a day, with one quart of cider, when at day work, and 1*s*. at haymaking.

Hop-tying is done for 8*s*. an acre (four poles to the stock) or for 1*s*. a day when done by the day.

I don't think that any of these employments are injurious to their health; they say themselves that they are not as well when they don't come to work as when they do. None of the work is done by young girls.

We sometimes have boys as young as 10; their parents bring them here and want us to take them, but

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a little boy is hardly any use. We have four now regularly at work, the youngest is 13. We don't think they are of any use until they are 11. We may have a little boy for a week or so younger than that for tending birds, but I don't like them even for that; there is no certainty about them; it is cheaper to employ rather a bigger boy. We give them about 3*s.* a week at first. A great many hop-pickers come from Worcester and the black country, in fact, from all parts. Those that come from Worcester go back there to sleep at night [distance under two miles], the remainder sleep on the premises. The sexes are separated.

We have no employment for boys except as carter boys.

Our labourers live about one mile from here. There are no cottages just round here. We generally have a plentiful supply of labour. There are a quantity of people out of work now; I have had four apply for work this morning.

We never give less than 12*s.* a week to an able-bodied man, besides two quarts of cider in winter and a gallon in summer.

In my opinion the educated men are far preferable to others as farm labourers. There are parties about in the country who don't want men to learn anything, but I like them to be able to use their heads.

I think all parents should be obliged to send their children to school; there are many children running about here who never go to school.

Our carter boys are employed from 6 to 6 now (February).

Cottage rent from 2*s.* to 3*s.* When near Worcester they have no gardens.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from Mr. H. Manton, Alvechurch; Mr. H. Crane, Astley; Mr. Winnall, Berrow; the Rev. J. Goodwin, Mr. J. Tomson, and Mr. Russon, Bromsgrove; Mr. J. Birch, Churchill; Mr. J. Moore, Clifton-on-Teme; Rev. R. Holmes and Mr. Pensam, Eldersfield; the Rev. H. G. Pepys, Hallow; H. F. Vernon, Esq., Hanbury; Rev. T. Baker, Hartlebury; Mr. J. Walker, Knightwick; Mr. H. Lakin, Malvern; Mr. Duncan, Pensax; Dr. S. W. Smith, Pershore; Rev. M. Hill, Shelsley Beauchamp.

APPENDIX B.—EVIDENCE RELATING TO EDUCATION.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Herefordshire.
B.

Ashperton.

1. *Mr. Moss*, schoolmaster.—The average of the boys in the first class here is 11 years 10 months, and of the girls 10 years and 11 months. The employments which interfere chiefly with the education are now [April] bark stripping, and they also occasionally go away for scaring. The summer holidays last eight weeks for harvest and hopping; but it is difficult to obtain a good attendance on the re-opening of the school after the holidays, because the children have got out of the habit of coming to school; and also because a good many stay away for fruit picking. I have known 20 kept away for that purpose. It is very desirable that some sort of industrial education should be given; but there is not time for it in many cases. Some of the children don't come to school until they are 7, and leave at 10, and have barely time to learn to read and write.

Bishop's Frome.

2. *Mr. T. Farmer*, schoolmaster.—I have been here eight years. There is a small dame's school, and a small chapel school in this parish besides this. As a general rule, the sons of labourers remain at school up to the age of 11 or 12; the attendance is very irregular after the age of 8 or 9. The fee here is 1*s.* per quarter for three quarters of the year, and 6*d.* for the quarter when the hopping takes place; deductions are made when more than one child of a family attends school. The principal causes of the irregularity are (for boys) pitching hop poles, driving plough, and haymaking; and (for girls) tying hops. The plough driving is chiefly done by boys, who lodge in farmers' houses; but sometimes as many as 12 are absent from the school at once for that purpose.

The fruit picking does not make much difference in the attendance at school. There are a few families in the parish who never attend school; but I think that all those who do attend could usually pass the fourth standard before they leave. We are constantly changing some of our pupils at the school in consequence of the system of yearly hiring. Servants are engaged at Michaelmas, and the change takes place the following February, when the men who have changed their master leave the parish with their families.

I have had a night school here for four or five years; seven or eight have attended, most of them men who have known something; boys have never attended. The only children who are insufficiently educated in this parish are those who are kept at home by careless parents.

The average age of the first class is 12.

Clodock.

3. *Mr. John Farr*, schoolmaster, Longtown.—This school is not under Government. There are 52 on the books; the attendance is usually very regular; it is worst during May and June, when the older (but not the younger) boys go out to work. The average age of the first class is about 12. I don't think there are any children about here who are growing up without education. Boys who have been out to service, and come home for a short time, sometimes put themselves to school here at their own expense. The fee here varies from 3*d.* to 6*d.* a week; the higher fee is charged where additional subjects are taught, but the labourers' sons only pay 3*d.* a week, no matter what they learn. There has never been a night school here.

Leominster.

Leominster,
4. Sir, May 13, 1869.

In answer to your letter of the 11th inst., I beg to inform you that the system of putting out young children from the union workhouse here has been practised for many years past, and is found more beneficial to the health and training of the children than education in the workhouse. The plan is as follows:—

When the guardians have the sole care of an intelligent child, the usual age for sending them out is from 7 to 10 years; they look round the district and find a respectable better-class labourer or small yeoman, who is willing to bring up the child for a fixed weekly sum.

We find that the children thus treated gain in health and strength, and become far more self-reliant than those brought up in the union, and from seeing in the houses of their foster parents the use and arrangement of domestic articles, become far better servants in a much shorter period than the union-bred children, who, in nine cases out of ten, know nothing of domestic habits, and have to commence their education in these matters after leaving the house.

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As you are aware, our union is very small, and the number of children to be put out very limited, perhaps three in a year; but being a purely agricultural district, and the number so small, our board has hitherto had no difficulty in finding places to send the children to, and find that the demand for their services when fit to fill situations is greater than the supply; indeed, commonly the clergyman's wife takes a kindly interest in the poor little creatures, and provides a place as child nurse or kitchen boy for them when old enough.

The usual amount of pay with the children is 2*s.* 6*d.* per week where the foster parents find the child in clothing, or 2*s.* weekly where the guardians provide the clothing. In case of illness the child is attended and supplied with medicine by the union surgeon.

The guardians make it a special condition that the children be allowed to attend the parish school and church, and arrange that they shall at any time they please have the child produced before them, that they may see that it is duly cared for. This last condition is not, however, much needed, as the children are never sent out of the poor law district, and the relieving officers in their weekly rounds see that the children are properly cared for.

I fear that the guardians, in adopting this course, have been contravening the regulations of the Poor Law Board, as they have never sought permission to pursue the plan, but having found it to act so well, they have braved the consequences in the hope that if discovered the upper board would wink at their neglect and disobedience of orders.

I shall be glad to give you any more particular information if in my power.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
EDWIN GREGG.

Fredk. H. Norman, Esq.,
2, Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W.

PIPE-CUM-LYDE.

5. *Mrs. Vaughan*, schoolmistress.—I have been here 28 years. There are about 23 children on my list, and usually 18 or 20 in attendance. The fee for those who live in the parish is 1*d.* per week. I think they usually remain at school up to the age of 12. Only the bigger children are irregular; they usually stay away from carelessness, want of clothes, or to assist their parents. They don't work in the fields except during harvest and hopping. They can usually read the second or third standard before they leave.

TREVILLE.

6. *Mrs. Lewis*, schoolmistress.—This is a mixed school. There are seven children in the school to-day. I consider 15 a good attendance, although I have had as many as 30. They have gone away now to pick up bark. [There are 500 acres of wood in the township of Treville; a great deal of this is oak, and woman and children are employed in picking up and stacking the bark during the months of April and May. The man who had purchased the wood belonging to the Rev. A. Clive told me that children under 12 years of age were of no use for this purpose.]

The attendance is very irregular from the age of 7 upwards; the girls are more regular than the boys. The time when they are most irregular is during spring, when they go away to mind sheep and cattle, and for the bark harvest; during summer, when their mothers go to work, and during autumn for fruit picking. They don't often attend school after the age of 10.

7. [The Rev. Archer Clive was good enough to show me round the township of Treville. He has built some good new model cottages. There are also about six very bad ones formerly belonging to squatters on the waste, but which Mr. Clive has now purchased, and lets for about 1*s.* per week. These cottages usually contained one bedroom, and occasionally a second bedroom in the roof. I went into one, which consisted of a small sitting-room in which I could not stand upright; a bedroom opening out of this without any flooring, and a small second bedroom in the roof over the sitting-room, without a ceiling and with two beds in it. The occupiers of this cottage had made about a hogshead of cider from the apples in their own gardens, but said they could not afford to make more. The women told me that they cannot usually get continuous employment for their children before they are 12 years old, but that there is a good deal of intermittent work to be done before that age, beginning, as the schoolmistress stated, at about the age of 7.—F. H. N.]

WITHINGTON.

8. *Miss Stride*, schoolmistress.—I have been here three months. It is a mixed school. There are 85 on the books, and between 50 and 60 in ordinary attendance. They are nearly all agricultural children. They come at the age of 4. The girls remain up to the age of 13 or 14, and the boys up to the age of 11. The attendance is pretty regular. The fee for children under 6 is 1*d.* a week, and for those older 2*d.* The chief causes of irregularity on the part of the children are scaring, trimming turnips, nursing, and picking fruit. Girls are not absent as much as boys. The boys who remain at school up to the age of 10 cannot read and write with sufficient ease to retain their instruction. There is a dissenters' school in this parish besides this. The boys who have left the school since I have been here cannot do simple addition and subtraction, and out of 16 who attended the night school last winter only two could have passed the third standard in reading. Some boys go from this parish to school at Lugwardine [the next parish where there was a school under a master].

WOOLHOPE.

9. *Ann Watkins*, schoolmistress.—I have been schoolmistress here for 23 years. It is a mixed school. There were 20 girls and 33 boys on the list at the last diocesan inspection, of whom 49 were present. The fee is 1*d.* if they do not learn writing, and 2*d.* if they do. I have never known a case where the parents of a child have refused to have the child taught writing on account of the additional fee to be paid. The boys and girls remain up to about the same age, which is usually 10 or 11, and occasionally 12 or 13. There are no tradesmen or farmer's sons. Yesterday out of 49 on the books 23 were absent all day, and three more were absent in the morning. The irregularity is greatest in the summer, when the parents are most employed; I think that the children are more often kept at home to assist their parents than to earn wages themselves; they can generally read about a third or fourth standard book when they leave. We don't profess to admit children under 5 years of age; they cannot attend under that age, and interrupt the older children. There are a great many who never come to school at all, either from indifference or want of clothes; and there is no school for them to attend here except this.

Evidence of a character similar to the above has also been received from Mr. Peacock, of Bosbury; Mr. Fisher, of Bridstow; and Mr. Sanders, of Hope-under-Dinmore.

SURREY.

Carshalton.

10. *Mr. Joseph Bickford.*—I was schoolmaster here for 16 years; I gave up three years ago. I think that on an average the children of the agricultural poor do not remain after 10 years of age. A great many went away for from two to three months in the spring for bird-minding and weeding after the age of 8. There was an infant school to which they went first, and they came to my school at the age of 7. Those who left at the age of 10 could generally have passed in the third or fourth standard. I had a night school for many years; the scholars varied from the age of 10 to 20. Those who had attended my day school could generally read and write, though they had not kept up nearly all they knew when they left the day school; others generally could not read or write. When they went to work at the age of 10 they usually went with the horses. When a boy first goes to work he loses all interest in his school, and becomes idle and negligent. I think that if they had attended regularly up to the age of 10 they might have learned to read and write with ease and fluency. I think that there is so much apathy and indifference among the parents that the children never will be educated until there is an Act of Parliament to compel the parents to send the children. I would prohibit labour in the field altogether up to the age of 10, and enforce half-time between the ages of 10 and 13. If reading and writing is sufficiently well taught in the first instance to be performed without effort it is not likely to be forgotten. I don't think the night school is of any use except to those who live near. I think that the half-time might be worked in this neighbourhood without any serious inconvenience to the farmers. I don't think that attendance at evening school could be enforced with the same advantages as attendance as day school. I think that there are some few now growing up in this parish without any education, owing to the indifference of the parents. Education is decidedly advancing in this place; but I think children are employed as young as they used to be.

Cranleigh.

11. *Mr. Mousley*, schoolmaster.—I have been here for three years. There are about 105 children in ordinary attendance. We take infants, but children usually come to school about the age of 5. Labourers' sons begin to leave school at the age of 9, and few stay after 11; they go out to work occasionally as young as 8, and are then absent in spring for looking after sheep and during hay time. They generally leave about April and come back in October; a great many of the labourers' sons leave in the summer in that way. Many children come two some even three miles to school; many little hamlets are scattered about in distant parts of the parish, and there is no provision for the education of the children who live there except our school. Only a small proportion of the children who live in the distant cottages come to our school; those who do come often come at the age of 7 or 8, and don't know their letters. Those who attend regular can pass the fourth, fifth, or sometimes the sixth standard when they leave; but those who are irregular can often only pass the first. We have a night school, but it is only attended by those who live in the immediate neighbourhood. We don't admit them until they are 12. Those who have left school for two or three years have usually forgotten about half what they knew when they left. I was in Derbyshire before I came here, and I think the education is better here than there. I think that the want of education is mainly due to the indifference of the employers; I have heard parents, who send their children when young to work, say that they do so because they might otherwise offend the farmers on whom their husbands depend for labour. I think that no farmer should be allowed to employ children under the age of 12 or 13 without sending them to school. Our night school is not successful; our present system of night schools is bad, because boys of that age are shy of being examined. The average attendance at night school was 14 last year. I think it would be a good step to take simply to limit the age at which children should be employed in field labour.

Farnham.

12. *Mr. Dewdney*, schoolmaster, Farnham.—I have been here 12 years. There are about 85 boys in general attendance at the school; they are chiefly the sons of labourers. There are about 120 on our books. The sons of labourers never attend school beyond the age of $11\frac{1}{2}$, and the average age is $10\frac{1}{2}$. Nobody comes to our school who cannot read words of one syllable. The children of the poorest parents leave for hop-tying and harvest. They are absent about three months a year, besides their holidays. Our school holidays are at the hop-picking time. The best of the labourers' sons usually leave school when in the second class, though a few get into the first class. Those in the second class can read up to the sixth standard; they have a general knowledge of geography; they can write from dictation and understand the first four rules of arithmetic (simple and in money). I think the majority of the boys leave before they reach the first class. I think that the great mass of the parents could spare their children up to the age of 11. The great curse of our school is the irregular attendance. If they attended regularly between the ages of 6 and 10 they would be able to read, write, and know a little arithmetic. They are often away for two or three days at a time. I don't think that a boy should be allowed to remain at school unless he attends regularly.

Godstone.

13. *Mr. P. Hardy*, schoolmaster.—We have three-quarters of an acre of land attached to the school, which is divided into 30 gardens of 4 poles each. I give the gardens to any of the boys I like; I make them, as far as possible, a reward for working well in the school. I don't give one to any boy below the first and second class, unless he be a big and hard working boy. The boys supply their own tools now (although we supplied them before the introduction of the Revised Code). Boys who have gardens are obliged to keep a debtor and creditor account of their income and expenditure connected with the gardens; and on leaving they are paid by their successors at a valuation for the crop growing in the garden. Our rules require that six kinds of vegetables at least shall be planted annually in each garden. The boys are allowed to work in their gardens on Tuesdays and Fridays in the afternoon, and after school hours are over; but not during the dinner hour. There are various rules for the purpose of providing that the borders and paths shall be kept neat and tidy. The produce of the gardens goes to the boys' families. The gardens have existed during the last 12 years. The children of labourers usually remain at school until they get into the first class. At present there are 39 in the first class, all over 10, and of these 18 are the sons of labourers; 24 pauper children are sent to school here by the guardians; the guardians pay 3*d.* a week for each. I have to supply the guardians each quarter with a register of the attendance of these children at school. As a general rule all the children of the labourers remain at school until they are 11 years old. They go away a little for hop-tying, scaring, bean-dropping, and swede-trimming. Very few go away for so long together as to interfere seriously with their education. They come here at 6 from the infant school. When they leave they can read the fifth or sixth standard, write a letter, and understand a tradesman's bill. There is ample school accommodation in this parish, but a want of it gene-

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rally in the surrounding parishes. I don't think the parents are indifferent as to education. The farmers do not employ the children to such an extent as to interfere with their education.

HATCHFORD.

14. The *Rev. J. P. Norris*, perpetual curate of Hatchford, and canon of Bristol.—I have been incumbent of Hatchford three years. Before I came here I was an inspector of schools for fourteen years in Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Shropshire, for one year in Kent, and occasionally employed in Wiltshire, Sussex, and Surrey. I also had a rural parish in Oxfordshire for one year. The result of my experience is that the education which the children of agricultural labourers are now receiving is wholly insufficient to redeem the next generation from the present quasi-pauper position of the class to which they belong. I think it desirable that all children for at least five or six years of their childhood should be brought under the civilizing influences of a good school; the actual instruction received is of secondary importance; but as the moral and intellectual results are generally coincident, and the latter only can be measured by examination, I am content that the school work should be tested by such a standard as that of the Revised Code. Adopting this test, therefore, I should say that children of the agricultural labourers should remain at school until they can pass in the fourth standard; in other words, a child should read with sufficient facility to make it a pleasure in after life, should be able to work easy money sums, and write and spell decently on paper. At present there can be no doubt that more than half the children never reach this standard. The cause of this is the irregularity of attendance and early withdrawal of the children from school, due to the indifference of the parents. I am acquainted with 400 or 500 parishes, and I think that speaking generally it may be said that half of those parishes are provided with sufficiently good schools, both as to buildings and teaching power; in the remainder of the parishes money would be forthcoming to raise the means of education to a satisfactory condition if there were any real desire for education on the part of the poor. An Act of Parliament which provides only for school accommodation misses the real difficulty of the question, which is, how to get the children into the school when built. This must be done either by (1) direct compulsion, (2) indirect compulsion, or (3) increased voluntary effort.

Direct compulsion is out of the question. None who are well acquainted with the inside of a labourer's cottage can suppose it practicable. No police would be adequate to enforce it, or if it were, it would not be tolerated. Whether a child of 9 or 10 years old goes to school is a question of ways and means to the cottager.

As to any application of the principle of the Acts which now regulate labour in all manufactures, I do not hope much from it, except as re-inforcing voluntary effort. What I mean by " re-inforcing volun- " tary effort " is this, that if those who are now persuading the cottagers to send their children more regularly to school were able to say " Your " child, if you neglect it, will a few years hence find " it difficult to get into hired service of any kind," his hand would be greatly strengthened. If, therefore, it could be made penal to hire the labour of children under 14 or 15 years of age, either for farm work or domestic service, without a certificate under the hand of a competent teacher (countersigned possibly by the inspector) that the child had passed the fourth standard of the Revised Code, the most cogent argument would be put into the mouth of those who are now endeavouring to promote a more regular school attendance. As to *half-time*, except upon model estates entirely under the hands of one powerful landlord, I have no hope of its ever being successfully applied to agricultural labour. I have repeatedly reported to the Education Department the results of the half-time experiments made on Lord Egerton's and Mr. W. Tollemache's estates in Cheshire, and by the late Lord Hatherton and Mr. Tollet in Staffordshire, and the result is what I have stated. The system of *half day* work is obviously impossible. Teams cannot be left in the field by their drivers; besides which the boys come from the field so wet and dirty that a change of dress would be necessary. *Alternate day* work presents equal difficulties; directions are given over night where the farm boy has to work the next morning, and could not well be given a day in advance; even if this difficulty were got over the supply of boys in the rural districts is seldom sufficient to furnish two relays. Besides which, a half-time scheme of any kind implies inspection, and an adequate inspection of field work is impossible. The provisions of the Print Works Acts are of such very little educational value that I should not think it worth while to attempt to apply them to agricultural labour. The occasional influx in bad weather of a troop of disorderly farm boys for a week or two at a time would only embarrass the school without much benefitting the boys. School attendance to be of any real value must be so evenly distributed as to preclude any lengthened absences.

I think that the only feasible plan is what I have indicated above. The law might require Her Majesty's inspectors at their annual visits to give all children who had passed in the fourth standard a certificate to that effect; in the case of schools not under inspection the certificate might be given by the teacher and countersigned by the magistrate. If it be thought that difficulty would arise from imposing this responsibility upon a local man, then the children in uninspected schools might be required to attend central collective examinations to be held by Her Majesty's inspectors for the purpose. (Soon it may be hoped inspection will be obligatory on all schools). The children being thus accredited to the labour market, I would make it penal for anyone to hire their labour under the age of 14 or 15, except in harvest time, without the production of the certificate. I should hope that if this plan were adopted the employers of labour would come to set so high a value upon these certificates that there would seldom be any wish on their part to break the law. Where it was broken a penalty should be recoverable at petty sessions on the prosecution of any informer, such as the clergyman or schoolmaster of the parish. The fine should go to the school funds. If it went into the pocket of the informer, I should be afraid of vexatious informations. I abstain from recommending any further interference by law, such as absolute prohibition under a certain age, because any such enactment would be a dead letter without inspection, and inspection I take to be an impossibility in the case of agricultural labour. I am aware that the scheme would not touch the case of unpaid labour for parents or relatives except indirectly; indirectly it would discourage any such engrossment of a child's time in this kind of work as would interfere with the obtaining of the school certificate. Adverting to the inspector's examination, a child who failed in one examination need not wait the whole 12 months for his labour certificate before trying again, but might be allowed to attend another examination at another place after a few months more preparation. I think that the certificates would be in most cases obtained at the age of 10 or 11, if the school attendance had been up to that time reasonably regular. I don't think that the plan would interfere to any serious degree with the resources of the cottagers. It is notorious that the children even of tender age do contribute very materially to the family purse, even if it be only by releasing the parent from the necessity of minding the house. It will be seen that the scheme which I have sketched leaves it open to the parent to utilize the child's labour as much as he can consistently with winning the certificate. Compared with any compulsory system there may seem but a slight gain; but any one who remembers how surely any interference with the occupation of children cuts

into the very vitals of the poor man's home, will, I think, be indisposed to press further the restrictions. I know it is said by some that really good schools are sure to attract and retain pupils; I can only say that in rural districts I have not found this to be the case. During the last 20 years the standard of instruction has been steadily advancing, and the standard of age and regularity has been either standing still or sinking. The few who are retained to a later age by the goodness of the instruction will be found on enquiry to belong to the class above that of the labourer.

I don't think that night schools can be depended on as a substitute for efficient day schools; at the best they are a mere supplement, enabling youths whose early schooling has been neglected to make up for it in some measure; but not more than one in three or four of those who need it will be found willing to avail themselves of such opportunities, and to require their attendance by law would be out of the question. Night schools at best must be left to philanthropic efforts and can never be relied on as any integral portion of national education. I have seen the system of annexing an industrial department to national schools (*e.g.* gardens, laundries, &c.) tried with excellent effect, but always under exceptional circumstances,—I mean as the hobby of some zealous squire or parson. To make this general is hopeless, however ideally desirable.

In workhouse schools the desirableness of such industrial training is obvious, and the difficulties far less, all the children being boarded and lodged on the premises. In respect of pauper children it is much to be hoped that our legislators may see their way to render two excellent acts obligatory on guardians instead of permissive, as at present; the one is the establishment of schools separate from the workhouse for pauper children, either for single unions or for districts; and the other is the universal enforcement of Mr. Denison's Act for the schooling of out-door paupers. Not only should the guardians be allowed to pay for it, but it should be made a condition *sine quâ non* of out of door relief. If the State relieves the parent it surely has a right to provide that the child does not grow up without education and therefore a pauper.

All that I have to say or recommend on this subject may be found in a *5s.* book, entitled "The "Education of the People," published by Laurie, Edinburgh.

Ockham.

15. *Miss Lushington*, Ockham Park.—There is an industrial school here for the sons of farmers, shopkeepers, &c. Labourers' sons don't attend, but we have had the sons of gardeners and gamekeepers. It contains about 60 boys and 40 girls. Those who board pay (boys) 20*l.*, and (girls) 18*l.* a year; weekly boarders *5s.* a week, and day scholars 1*s.* a week. They receive an ordinary education in English and mathematics. The only extras are music and French; about 50 per cent. learn one or other of these. There is an entrance fee of 2*l.* 2*s.*, paid by boarders only. We have 7½ acres of garden, which is managed by the boys under a gardener. The girls assist in the kitchen and laundry and house work, besides needlework. They all (boys and girls) have 5½ hours' lessons and 1½ hours' work a day. The ages are from 7 to 16, and each scholar has to undertake each branch of the work in turn for a week at a time. Many of the parents object to send their children unless they are excused doing housework, but this concession is never allowed. They generally leave us at about the age of 14 or 15. The girls become shop girls, telegraph girls, milliners, and teachers; some go out to service, and usually obtain places in gentlemen's families; boys are usually apprenticed to some trade; or some gets clerks' places. I don't think that the boys make more progress in their bookwork on account of the physical labours they perform than they otherwise would do. I have noticed that those who are lame, &c. and unable to work, get on faster at bookwork than others, but the out-of-door work has a very good effect upon their physique and character. English is taught regularly to all, and a few of the first learn Latin grammar. We have seven cows, and grow roots for them; the boys have to manage the cows, under a man's care and help. All the produce of the garden is consumed by the establishment. Formerly we charged 18*l.* instead of 20*l.* for boarders, and the school was self-supporting, but in consequence of the rise in the price of provisions we have had to raise the charge from 18*l.* to 20*l.*, and we hope by these means to make the establishment again self-supporting. Last year we lost 60*l.* Besides the common garden all the boys have nursery gardens and girls flower gardens of their own, the produce of which is often exhibited, and gains prizes. Before the Revised Code was introduced the parish day school, attended by labourers' sons, was worked with this school, and the two worked well together. The labourers paid 2*d.* a week for each child. I don't think that the children stayed at our school longer than at others; the parents objected to the system because they thought that the whole day should be devoted to "schooling," *i.e.*, bookwork. Since the introduction of the Revised Code the combination of the two schools has been forbidden, and there is now no industrial work done by the children who attend the parish school. In the industrial school there is a head and two assistant masters, one of whom superintends the out-of-door work, and one mistress and one pupil-teacher, besides a woman and servants, who looks after the whole domestic establishment; all the washing, baking, &c. is done on the premises. I said I thought the industrial school did not excite any desirable emulation or love of learning in the day school, but I have heard school teachers say the behaviour and conduct of the day scholars was superior to most day schools; this may be attributed to the general influences about them. The school has been in operation about 20 years. The great merit of the school is, I think, the education it gives the scholars in general usefulness. The amount of instruction they receive is not equal to that given in a first-rate middle-class school, but the system of giving each a different duty to perform every week has the effect of giving each an interest in the welfare of the establishment as well as an acquaintance with the ordinary duties of household work, and of the garden.

Reigate.

16. Letter from Mr. W. Beale, Secretary to the Surrey Association for Church of England Schoolmasters, dated Reigate National School, 25th November 1868.

Sir,

The following replies to the four questions that you left with me on Friday 4th September last, embody the opinions expressed by the members of the Surrey Association of Church of England Schoolmasters:—

1. The children of agricultural labourers usually leave school about 10 years of age, many before that age; the average given from the Dorking district is 9 years. A child of average ability at an average school has usually at the time of leaving advanced in reading, writing, and arithmetic as far as the fourth standard of the "New Code." Very few will have passed out of Standard IV.

2. An agricultural labourer's child, of average ability, who had attended school regularly from the age at which he could profitably receive instruction, would be expected at the age of 10 years to be equal to the requirements of Standard IV. Some think that girls might be expected to be a standard lower.

3. The universal opinion is that the evening school barely suffices to maintain the pupil's education at the point which it reached in the day school, and that scholars having left the day school at the average age and with the average attainments mentioned above can very seldom reach Standard VI. by their subsequent attendance at the night school.

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4. The chief difficulties encountered in carrying on night schools are those arising from—

1. A repugnance on the part of the boy to return to school after having once left it. Dislike to the necessary discipline of the school.

2. The indifference of employers to the education of the labouring classes.

3. The distance of the school from the homes of many of the lads.

4. Irregular attendance, attributable to—

a. Weather, dark nights, and wet.

b. Bodily fatigue.

5. The lateness of the ordinary hours of instruction.

The following remedies are suggested for the purpose of rendering evening schools more useful than they are at present:—

1. That teachers should be obtained who are not engaged in the day school; that these teachers should move in a station of life as much above that of the scholar as possible; such teachers will of course be voluntary.

2. That night schools be made as interesting as possible, not merely amusing; that the clergyman should avail himself of the opportunity which the night school affords to impress religious truth.

3. That prizes should be offered for conduct, attendance, and progress; that a supper should be given at the end of the session, occasionally at least.

4. That employers should be compelled to assist in providing for instruction in night schools.

5. That larger grants should be given by Government, and that these grants should go towards increasing the teacher's remuneration (where the teachers are not voluntary), at present inadequate.

One suggests that instead of attempting the (as he considers) impracticable task of improving night schools, it would be better to take measures for prolonging attendance at the day schools—

a. By making it illegal to employ children under 12 who are not possessed of the rudiments of knowledge.

b. By compelling all children to attend day school until 12 years of age.

Your obedient servant,

William Beale.

F. H. Norman, Esq.

[Mr. W. Beale was also good enough to supply the following information founded upon his own experience]:—

17. I have been schoolmaster here seven years, and was two years at Wonersh before that; I think that most of the labourers' children who are now growing up could pass in the third standard. I form that opinion from my experience at a night school here; in purely agricultural districts the standard would be lower. There are two causes of this deficiency of education: 1st, the children leave school too young; they leave altogether at the age of 10, and intermittently before that age; 2ndly, the field labour renders them intellectually dull. The amount of education the labourers' children now receive is not sufficient to be of any practical use to them, and is easily forgotten. If they could pass in the fifth standard at the age of 10, they would not forget what they had learnt. A boy might pass in the fifth standard at the age of 10 if he attended school regularly. If he afterwards attended half-time, *i.e.*, 200 attendances for two years, he ought to pass in the sixth standard. When boys leave school at the age of 10 they can usually pass in the third standard. I think it very important that children should attend an infant school; they should remain there until the age of 7, at which age they should have passed the first standard.

The chief difficulties in carrying on a night school are the irregular attendance and the maintenance of discipline.

Worplesdon.

18. *Miss Stapley*, schoolmistress.—I have been here one and a half years. I lived at Farnham before I came here. There are about 50 children in ordinary attendance here. They begin to come to school at the age of 3, and usually attend up to the age of 11 or 12. The girls stay later than the boys, and do not leave to go to work; the boys go away for a few weeks in the summer to tend sheep and cows, before they leave finally, but do not go away for long enough at a time to interfere with their school work until they are 9 or 10; at that age they are absent during the whole summer. They are irregular in their attendance; they will stay at home for any little excuse, and will not return to school when their work is over. There is a lending library, the books are provided by the Pure Literature Society, 11, Buckingham Street, Adelphi, where they can be purchased by subscribers at half-price. There are 70 subscribers to our library. They pay 1*d.* per month apiece. They are entitled to one book at a time, which they may not keep more than one month, and must change once a fortnight. Girls and young women read more than boys.

19. *Lady Bovill*, Worplesdon Lodge.—A night school was established in this parish six years ago; there had been none previously. It was held twice a week during five months in the year, for one and a half hours each evening. When it was first established we had 17 pupils, and at the end of the first year between 40 and 50. The teachers were my daughters, my governess, myself, and the schoolmistress (there is no schoolmaster here). The two curates attended on alternate nights. The night school was carried on regularly every winter until last year, when I ceased to reside here regularly. The last year we had 75 scholars on our books, and about 55 in regular attendance. The scholars ranged from the age of 12, upwards; many were grown up men. They were classed according to their proficiency, without reference to their age; the men did not object to being classed with the boys. No feelings of jealousy were exhibited on this account. They came to the school of their own free will, without any pressure being put upon them. They paid 1*d.* a week each, and 1*d.* for every copybook. They learned reading, writing, and arithmetic, and those who could read fluently were placed in a class together, and read some book of history or geography. The scholars made considerable progress; some who could not write at all when they came learnt to write tolerably well before leaving. They all seemed very anxious to learn, and some came considerable distances, as much as four miles. I have been told by the chief constable of the county that there has been far less crime in this parish since the night school was established than there was before. At the end of the first year the scholars subscribed to present me with a testimonial, in return for the interest which I had taken in the school.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Warwickshire.

Coventry.

Extract from a letter from Mr. M. G. Fretton, 88, Little Park Street, Coventry, Secretary to the Warwickshire Church Teachers' Association, dated 30th April 1869.

20. I have submitted your queries at two meetings, and have drawn the opinions that the age of children leaving school in this district (agriculture) is under 10 on the average, and that the progress they usually make is between the third and fourth standard; the opinion is that they ought at that age to reach the fourth standard on the average. Our members think that under very favourable circumstances the deficiency in the amount of education usually possessed

by a child leaving school at an early age might be adequately supplied, but that the difficulties in the way of the successful operations of night schools are such that it is only in favourable districts that they may hope to succeed. Distance, lateness of the hour, indifference, difficulty of maintaining discipline, and inability of a lad to continue the business of education after a hard day's work in the field, are all suggested as the chief difficulties in the way. As financial matters are concerned, they are generally found to be failures about here.

EXHALL.

21. *Mr. Duck*, schoolmaster.—I have been master here for four years. It is a mixed school, with an endowment of 22*l.* a year. The children pay 2*d.* if they belong to the parish, and the remainder 3*d.* each. The great bulk of those who come are miners' and weavers' children. At present there are only four agricultural boys in the school, aged 13, 12, 9, 8. [It happened at this time that the labourers in the parish had but few sons.—F. H. N.] I know of hardly any who might come to school and do not. There is no indifference on the part of the parents. The agricultural children usually remain up to the age of 11. When they leave they could usually pass the fourth standard. The mining boys stay longer than the agricultural, but are not sharper. There are about 80 on the books, and about 50 in average attendance here. There is a dame's school in the parish; besides this there are about 20 cottages on the outskirts of the parish (one mile from Bedworth, and two miles from here), the children who live there attend this school in summer, but not in winter, because the roads are bad.

HARBURY.

22. *Mr. John Shenston*, schoolmaster.—I have been here four years next Christmas. This is a mixed school; there are 50 boys and 70 girls on the books, and 88 altogether in average attendance. There is also an infant school in the parish. The great bulk of the scholars are the sons of labourers. Seven of the boys who are here to-day are the sons of tradesmen. They nearly all belong to this parish. I think that the sons of agricultural labourers leave school between the ages of 9 and 10. Both girls and boys can get occupation at bean-dropping and potato-planting from about the age of 8. Those employments occupy them for about two months each year. Most of those who have been over 10 years of age when they left could have passed the fourth standard. There is a night school here; no boy is admitted to it under 12 years of age. I think that if children could pass the fifth standard they would know the three R's sufficiently for ordinary purposes. I think that most agricultural children could pass the fourth standard by the age of 10 if they attended regularly. The attendance is more irregular at spring and autumn than at other times of the year. There are to-day [December 16th] 12 boys over 10 years of age in the school; four of them are the sons of labourers, the remainder are sons of tradesmen and small farmers.

KERESLEY.

23. *Mr. J. T. Jones*, certificated schoolmaster.—At the last inspection at this school there were 74 boys and 97 girls present. The average attendance throughout the year was 131; and 84 (being all over 6) presented themselves for individual examination. The children of one farmers' family attend school, but the remainder of the children are all agricultural. They usually leave altogether at about the age of 11, boys and girls at the same age. Formerly the girls went away to do trimming work, but since that work has failed we have had a much more constant attendance. We take them as young as they will come, because if we don't take the younger children the older ones are kept away to take care of them. About a quarter of the children here come two miles to school. The children who live farthest from the school are always the most regular in their attendance. The population of the parish is 792. At the next inspection I shall have at least 35 to present to the fourth, fifth, and sixth standard.

There is a good deal of irregularity during the bean-dropping (February) and acorn-picking (September) time. The girls go for bean-dropping, and not for acorn-picking. At other times the attendance is regular.

Last year the school was open 445 times, and each child attended on an average 348 times.

Inducements are held out to encourage regular attendance by means of a clothing club, the allowance to which is increased if the attendance is good; and also by entertainments periodically given to the children.

The parents consult their own convenience as to the attendance of the children. There is a very small proportion who care about the progress made by the children. I visit the parents, and know their feelings. Sometimes when I have set home lessons I have been told by the parents that the books shall be burnt and slates broken.

When the bead work was so flourishing we had a night school for girls, but that is now broken up.

LEA MARSTON.

24. *The Rev. L. Tuttiett*, vicar of Lea Marston, diocesan inspector of schools.—I inspect 22 schools in the north of Warwickshire. Of them I consider that 15 are excellent; in the whole archdeaconry not quite half are returned as excellent. I know scarcely any district within 15 miles of this place where there is not a school to which children might go. In many cases the school is bad owing to the bad attendance of the children, and this is often owing to some want of attractiveness on the part of the school or the master. Few parents are indifferent about a good school. When I go into other parishes from whence children come to our school I hear expressions of gratitude from many on account of the good education their children have received here in Mr. Adderley's school. The only parish I am acquainted with in this neighbourhood which is without any school is Curdworth, where there are 600 inhabitants, chiefly agricultural labourers, and a great number of public houses. Many of the children from that parish walk three miles to our schools, some four. There can be no doubt that the education is in many cases interfered with by the early labour of the children, even in this district where the condition of the labourers is particularly favourable. I think that the best mode of meeting these difficulties would be by requiring a certificate of proficiency as a condition of employment.

To this I know two objections are commonly raised.

I. First it is said, *such a scheme could not be carried out.* I do not in the least understand why.

(*a.*) Let a certain standard of proficiency be chosen, say the fourth standard of the Revised Code for boys under 12, and the third standard for boys under 13. I mean that no boy be allowed to receive wages for labour under 12 years of age who has not received a certificate of having passed the fourth standard, and no boy under 13 who has not passed the third standard. From boys over 14 no certificate need be required.

(*b.*) As to the means of obtaining this certificate, existing machinery might be used as far as it goes.

In schools under Privy Council inspection the master might be empowered at once to grant it to all who have passed in the required standards at the last examination. In special cases, as where the boy had not completed his year when the inspector came, the managers of the school might be required to countersign it.

In schools under diocesan inspectors, not under the Privy Council, the inspector might certify that proficiency had been attained equal to that required by

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the Government standards. At each annual examination he might put a mark against the names of boys over 12 and 13 qualified for certificates. In special events the master might apply to him. For schools neither under Government nor under diocesan inspection, I think there ought to be appointed a staff of "*extraordinary inspectors*," who should be empowered to visit all public schools for the education of children, and to sign the necessary certificates of proficiency. Such inspectors need not cost much. They might be chosen out of the diocesan inspectors, with the approval of the bishops, or even out of the certificated teachers. There are comparatively few schools under no inspection, and many well qualified men would accept such an office for a comparatively small payment.

II. Secondly, it is objected that the employers of labour are unfavourable to such a scheme, and would reject it as a tyranny. My own experience, which is not inconsiderable, inclines me to a different opinion. Old prejudices are fast dying out. The farmers are learning more and more to value well educated labourers. A good school, even if it does not supply them with labour, is felt to be a blessing to the parish, and I believe they would many of them be thankful if no boys were allowed to offer themselves for employment without a certificate of proficiency.

There can be no doubt that the great need in our rural districts is of industrial training schools for girls. It would be a great blessing if such schools could be established in certain central places, and supported by liberal Government grants. If young servants could get certificates of proficiency of knowledge of their work from such accredited industrial schools, they would in time come to be much valued by masters and mistresses. No girl should be allowed to earn wages as a servant under 13 years of age, and then not without a certificate of proficiency. This might be according to a lower standard than that for boys, say the third standard of the Revised Code. Many farmers here would welcome such a law.

Extract from a letter from the Rev. L. Tuttiett, dated Lea Marston, February 13th, 1869.

25. "You ask how our farmers get their work done, seeing that so many of our well-educated boys are drawn away to other parts? They certainly find great difficulties; more Irish are employed here than in any other place I know, and in most of the farms boys from other parishes are employed, a sad hindrance to my work in the village, for many of these poor lads are extremely ignorant, and yet they will not come to night school or Sunday school. Our flowers are transplanted to other places, and we get their weeds instead."

26. *Mr. S. Neale*, schoolmaster, Lea Marston.—I have been here three years. At the school we receive all the boys from Curdworth and Minworth (where there are no schools), and a few (12) from other parishes where there are indifferent schools. They come here in preference to going to the schools in those parishes, because they find that they can get a better education here than there. They come here from the age of 6. There is an infant school for boys and girls to which they go before coming here. About half the boys in this school are the sons of labourers; the remainder are the sons of tradesmen, farmers, and artizans. There are 52 on the books and 43 in regular attendance. The labourers' sons are absent for about six weeks in the year, principally in the spring and autumn, for bird-tending and potato and acorn picking. That sort of employment begins about the age of 8 or 9; but they don't leave finally until about the age of 11 or 12. The majority of them get into the second class before they leave, but some into the first. The second class work in the fourth standard. The fourth standard enables boys to read and write with sufficient ease to retain it; but there is sure to be a falling off in ciphering and spelling. Some come three miles to school here. They are the most regular. There are now seven in the first class; only one is a labourer's son. There are 13 in the second class, of whom six are labourers' sons. There are none growing up in the parish without the power of reading and writing. Farmers pay 6*d.* for one son, and 4*d.* for every other; tradesmen and artizans 4*d.* and 3*d.*; labourers 2*d.* and 1*d.*

Formerly Mr. Adderley used to give money prizes for the most regular attendants; that payment has been discontinued this year, but the attendance is not the less regular.

Since I have been here 64 boys have left the school, 18 of whom have gone to agricultural work; of the remainder seven were the sons of labourers, and would probably have gone to field work but for the good education which they received here. I think that in the majority of cases the education is sufficient; the only difficulty I have to put up with is the six weeks' absence each year.

Rowington.

27. *Mr. Johnson*, certificated schoolmaster.—Boys remain at school here up to the age of 9 or 10; the sons of agricultural labourers leave on an average at 8 or 9. I don't think I shall present more than two of the labourers' sons above the third standard this year. They can usually pass the third standard when they leave. That only enables them to read and write mechanically; it would require a great effort on their part to keep up what they have learnt. I doubt whether the fourth standard would enable them to read and write with pleasure; but it might be otherwise if they received encouragement to practise at home. The cause of the irregularity here is the scattered character of the parishes; when the weather is fine the attendance is good, but it is otherwise when it is wet. The children don't attend regularly for three weeks after the harvest holidays are over.

Saltley.

28. The *Rev. Canon Gover*, Principal of the Worcester, Lichfield, and Hereford Training College.—In reference to education in town and country the most striking difference is that in the towns education exceeds in quality, in the country in quantity, relatively to the population.

In the large town the schools in receipt of State aid are as a rule under superior teachers and are mainly filled by the children of the better class of artizans. These parents can afford to keep them at school till they have obtained a fair education.

Below these the children of the unskilled labourer and drinking or shiftless workman are left to grow up almost or altogether destitute of instruction.

But in the country, generally speaking, there are schools and the children of all, down to the field labourer, attend them. Here and there, indeed, are spots where there is no school nor any within reach, and these places are dark enough; such spots are few and far between, but where they exist the matter ought to be dealt with promptly.

Whilst in the towns there are scarcely any public schools, unless State-aided schools, I have known of whole rural deaneries in the country where there is scarce a school under inspection, and yet not a parish without school accommodation sufficient for the population.

To measure the deficiency of provision for education by the number of unassisted parishes would be wholly delusive.

But, notwithstanding a few notable exceptions, the quality of education given and the standard reached in the country falls much below that in town schools.

Nor can night schools be depended on to make good the deficiences of the day schools, for they are least likely to be found where the day schools are inefficient; they are not likely to reach any considerable per-centage of the population; and at the best, amongst those who have been scholars in both, they do not appear to sustain the standard already reached in the day school. Their staffs are useful as guerilla

bands or an irregular light cavalry in the campaign against ignorance.

Much has been accomplished. What is wanted to make good our shortcomings is, in addition to (I.) schools for destitute parishes throughout the country, (II.) provision for improving the class of teachers, (III.) for bringing all endowments under the systematic supervision of the State, (IV.) for encouraging a more general and better education, and (V.) for securing the longer attendance of the children.

I. First, then, to secure provision where school accommodation is at present deficient.

Powers should be taken whereby, after reasonable time and notice given, adequate schools should be built in neglected districts, the whole cost of the erection to be defrayed from local rates. Such schools when built should be under a county or union board, and, so far as fees and Government grants did not suffice, should be supported in like manner from the rates, unless some approved voluntary agency undertook to maintain them.

But it is imperative that greater encouragement should be given by the State for the voluntary *erection* of schools. For their sustentation the expense falls pretty evenly on three parties, the parents, the voluntary subscribers, and the Government. But in their erection, where there are only two parties to furnish the means, the Government, instead of being more, become less liberal; instead of advancing the half the Government, under the old code, gave but one-third, whilst by a most unwise penuriousness they have reduced their aid, under the Revised Code, to one-fifth, throwing very unreasonably and unjustly four-fifths of the cost of erection upon voluntary efforts. Hence, as can be proved from the Minutes of Council, whereas before 1863 the annual increase of school accommodation was not only supplying the increase of population of school age, but overtaking past neglect at the rate of 10,000 children per annum, the effect of this unpolitic parsimony has been so to check school building that the annual increase of school accommodation is falling behind the annual increase of the population of school age by considerably more than 10,000 per annum.

An amendment of the rate of aid for building from Government grants is the first necessity in order that education may more completely cover the face of the land. There is so much value to the State in the education of those who become voluntary agents by the very agency itself, that it is unwise of the State to discourage by overburdening it; let it prove itself real and then let the State avail itself of its help to the uttermost. It were mere folly to try to supplant it and substitute for it the technical and lifeless working of a central or official organization.

II. The second point is the improvement of the class of teachers. Whether in town or country a good teacher attracts scholars and fills his school. The system of the Committee of Council has fallen short on account of its over-rigidity. With its strict requirement of certificated teachers it has failed after many years to penetrate to any extent the smaller parishes. After sending out my masters for 16 years, I can scarcely look round on any of them engaged in schools with an attendance below 50, unless where the salary is provided by an exceptional liberality on the part of the patron. It is true that to force it, certificates in the last few years have been granted almost wholesale to untrained teachers; but to confuse educated and uneducated thus together is only to disparage the certificate itself and discourage the higher class of teachers from entering or remaining in the profession, whilst the idea of the certificate examination bars a great number of country schools from placing themselves under inspection.

There is wanted the clear recognition that a distinct standard should exist for the teachers in a remote village from that for the master of the eager and intelligent scholars in our Birmingham or black country schools.

For any school, then, with an area below 800 square feet (class room included) let it be open to appoint a registered teacher. This should be either an ex-pupil teacher, or any person above 21 years of age, proposed by the managers, who should pass in some paper of the pupil-teacher's examination, not lower than that of the third year, at the district examination under the local inspector. He should also teach a class or conduct a school in the presence of the inspector or his assistant. And re-examination in this or the paper of a later year should be required on each subsequent change of school.

Having passed the paper of the fifth year, registered teachers should be allowed to rise to the rank of certificated by examination or good service. Their schools might be visited by the inspector's assistant.

III. Next, there should be systematic supervision by the State of all the smaller endowed schools.

The contemptuous indifference of the Minute on endowment wants reforming. As it now stands it discourages good and shelters bad schools. In two of similar and moderate endowments, by the same provision, the good school is made to pay for its excellence by the forfeiture of part of its grant; the bad school is screened from loss.

The remedy is simple. Render all endowed schools subject to inspection, at least to the extent of the endowment. Require that for each 30 shillings of endowment (the average cost of education) a child eligible by attendance should pass in a standard, that is, let the State see that the endowment fulfils its purposes. As soon as the whole endowment is thus accounted for let the Government grant begin to run on the next scholar. Where there is not a child successful for each 50 shillings of endowment, let the surplus income of the endowment be made forfeitable by the Committee of Council for the benefit of the neighbouring parishes or the relief of the exchequer.

IV. In order to make the schools more general for all the population the observance of a good conscience clause, providing that no child should be required to attend any service or religious lesson to which the parents object, should be the basis on which all grants should proceed, and all, except recent and specific endowments, be administered.

To encourage a better education, no grant should be made by the Committee of Council on Education on children under 5 years of age. It is not the duty of the State to assist in providing nurseries, or in relieving mothers of their duties. Moreover, to give such aid introduces a sham into the comparison of our education with that of foreign countries. Prussia takes no count of education under 6 (in some districts 7 or even 8) years of age in returning 1 in $6\frac{1}{4}$ of her population as under education. Of our return of 1 in $7\frac{1}{2}$ a great proportion (namely one-fifth) is due to infants under 6 or even 5 years of age.

But what would thus be saved in the Government expenditure should be devoted to giving higher grants for those who pass in the third or fourth standards. At present the temptation to managers and teachers is to present the children in as low standards as possible, so as to secure the longest succession of yearly grants. The increased grant on the above standards would be the payment of a premium for every child who had been brought up to the level of the ordinary education which the children of the labourer and artizan ought at least to attain in order that there may be some hope of their retaining their knowledge for after life.

The names of all children who have passed in the standards above the first (or second) ought to be made known to the managers.

V. We come, then, fifthly, to the measures for securing a better attendance of the children.

1. All children to whom the State stands in *loco parentis* by reason of the burden of maintenance should be required to be at school.

(*a.*) Evelyn Denison's Act should be compulsory; all children of paupers should be under education as a condition of relief, and the fees defrayed from the rates.

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(*b.*) Every illegitimate child, *nullius filius*, should be compelled to be under education; the fees as above to be defrayed by the parish, whether made recoverable or not from the putative father.

2. Where the neglect of the parent to educate his child is of public cognizance, the State should intervene.

The Certified Industrial Schools Act might be made to extend to children of school age wandering during school hours without being under charge of some one of labour age. The beneficial effect of this, however, would be mainly found in towns, where it would sweep the streets clear of truancy and neglect.

3. Where the State has a right to determine the conditions, since it gives validity to contracts for labour, education should be made a pre-requisite of ability to enter into contract.

(*a.*) It should be illegal to employ children under the age of *nine;* or, unless they had passed in the *second* standard, under the age of *ten;* for this purpose a half-time labour certificate should be requisite.

(*b.*) All children between the ages of *nine* and *twelve* should be required to show a school attendance of 100 days during the year and to have passed in the *third* standard at the latter age, as a condition of receiving a full labour certificate. If otherwise the labour certificate should not be issued till the age of *thirteen.*

(*c.*) All employers of children not in boroughs should be required under penalty to make a return of all children in their employ, *e.g.*, in the form for assessed taxes.

(*d.*) Labour certificates for half or full time should be issued by the inspector after examination by him or his assistant half yearly.

Mem.—In the above ages and standards the lowest number is taken which ought to be accepted; after a time it ought also to be practicable to raise the standards, and it may be the age, by one throughout.

These are compulsory measures strictly within the comprehension of the law of a State, at the foundation of whose institutions lies regard for individual freedom.

SOLIHULL.

29. *Mr. David Bond*, schoolmaster. — I have been here 15 years next Christmas. This is an endowed school under Government inspection. The children pay 1½*d.* if children of labourers, and 3*d.* if children of tradesmen, &c. This is a purely agricultural district. I think that there are rather more children of tradesmen and artizans than of agricultural labourers in the school. There are 78 boys on the books and about 56 in average attendance. I think that the sons of agricultural labourers very seldom remain at school after the age of 11. At the present time there are 22 boys in the first and second classes, and of these two only are the children of agricultural labourers, and they are in the second class. I should say that they begin to leave between the ages of 9 and 10. Up to that age they attend regularly except at seasons of hay, bean-dropping, and scaring; but they are not away a great deal. Every now and then a boy stays away for some time, but the greater number are not absent much. We have a rule that a boy's name should be taken off the list if he is absent constantly. I very seldom allow them to be absent more than a fortnight at a time. There is another school at Shirley, in this parish, for boys and girls; that is a separate ecclesiastical district. There are a number of scattered cottages in this parish; there are none out of reach of a school. This was a free school until two years ago; since a payment has been imposed I think that the attendance has improved. The only cases in which the education of the children in this parish is insufficient are due to the indifference of parents; they are few in number. I don't think there is any necessity for a change in the law in order to improve the education in this district.

SNITTERFIELD.

30. *Mr. I. E. Baker*, schoolmaster.—The sons of agricultural labourers usually leave this school about the age of 10; few remain until the age of 11; from the age of 7 or 8 I think they only attend about half the times the school is open. When they leave finally they have not generally attained facility in reading, writing, and arithmetic. I don't think they should leave until the age of 11; if they attend regularly up to that age I think they might learn the three R.'s with sufficient facility to retain their knowledge. There are boys in this school from Bearley (two and a half miles), Wolverton, and Norton Lindsey; there are no schools at those places. The attendance at school is about as numerous in summer as in winter; but a greater number of the older boys attend in winter, and of the younger ones in summer.

TYSOE.

31. *Mr. Dodge*, schoolmaster.—Last year the first, second, and third classes in this school contained 46 boys between the ages of 8 and 12. The school was open 426 times; all those boys except 9 attended over 200 times; on an average each of the 46 attended 210 times. There are 256 boys and girls on the books of this school, and of them only 125 attended 200 times, and were therefore presentable for examination. The younger children are less regular than the elder on account of the bad roads and the distances they have to come to school. The sons of labourers usually leave school finally at the age of 10, and can then pass the third standard. A very small proportion of those who have attended the day school ever come back to the night school, so that the majority never get beyond the third standard.

Evidence substantially similar to that printed above has also been received from: Mr. Booth, schoolmaster, Coleshill; Mr. Bullivant, schoolmaster, Eatington; Mr. J. Teague, schoolmaster, Fillongley; Mr. J. Rogers, schoolmaster, Radford Semele; Mr. Somergale, schoolmaster, Shustoke; Mr. G. Preston, Master of the Corporation School, Sutton Coldfield; Mr. J. Shaddock, Superintendent of the Warwickshire Reformatory, Weston.

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AMESBURY.

32. *Mr. E. W. Flower*, schoolmaster.—I have been here for 16 years. When I first came the attendance at the day school varied from 24 to 42, it is now between 70 and 80 (boys and girls). The population has also increased, but not in the same ratio. There is also an infant school, at which there are 50 or 60 children; that school was in existence before I came here, but the attendance has increased as much there as in the day school. Other schools have been amalgamated with this, but there are still two other schools in the parish, but I cannot say whether the attendance has on the whole increased at those schools. Labourers' sons scarcely ever reach the first class; and many leave before reaching the second. I have now only one labourer's son in the school above the third standard. That is about the usual state of things. They generally leave while in the third standard, between the ages of 7 and 9. My night school has been in operation 10 years; all come to it after leaving the day school. Out of 47 who attended the night school last year 19 were under the age of 12. The age at which boys leave the day school has fallen. I have no hesitation in saying that on the whole the education has improved. The night school is open from October to March four nights a week; last year

out of 26 presented for examination, 25 passed in reading and writing, and 24 in arithmetic. On the whole my experience as to night schools is, that boys who attend regularly can keep up, and some of them can slightly improve, the education they acquired at the day school. When I first opened my night school 16 came to it, and of these only six could write their names; even now some come to my night school from another school, where writing is not taught, without any knowledge of writing or arithmetic. There is a great want of education among labourers here, which can only be supplied by longer attendance at day school. This want is apparent when they come to night school. I am quite sure from what I know of the state of education here, that some measure of compulsion is necessary. [Mr. Flower was good enough to supply me with the ages at which 40 boys, taken at hap-hazard, had left the school. From these it appeared that the average age at which boys left was 8 years and 10 months.—F. H. N.]

Bishopston.

33. *Mr. Knight*, schoolmaster.—I think the boys remain at school here until the age of 9 or 10; the girls until the age of 11 or 12. The attendance is tolerably regular until they leave finally to go to work. A few go away before that age at certain times of the year, but as a general rule I have no cause of complaint on account of the irregularity of attendance. The greatest number attend from October to March. When the children leave they can usually read, write, and cipher decently. There is a night school from October to March four nights a week for two hours each night; about 18 usually attend; they pay 4*d.* a week, and think that too much. Everything is found. I know of no house in this parish more than one and a quarter miles from the school, and I think that all the children attend.

Broad Chalk.

34. *Mr. S. Bottomley*, schoolmaster.—I have been here three years. There are 45 boys in the school; they come at the age of 3. The sons of labourers pay 1*d.* From about the age of 7 they go out to work in the summer months, from the end of May until Michaelmas. Most of them leave at the age of 8 or 9, when they have usually passed the third standard. I don't take them at the night school until the age of 12, and when they come back at that age they cannot pass the first standard; if industrious they can regain two standards by attending the night school during one winter, but many don't take pains. All who attend the day school as a rule come to the night school when they are old enough, and they can generally just keep up what they have learnt at the day school. Girls leave school about the age of 12 or 13. There are a good many who don't go to school at all.

Calne.

35. *Mr. James Brooks*, schoolmaster, Bowood School.—There are 32 boys at the school. The education is free, and each boy has a suit of clothes provided for him every year. There is a garden, and also a carpenter's shop attached to the school. I superintend the management of the garden. The boys take it in turn to work in the garden; two are employed there every day for the whole day. A carpenter attends to give lessons twice a week for two hours in the afternoon, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Six boys have lessons in carpentering, and three of them attend on each of those days. These boys never work in the garden, but attend school in the mornings of the days the afternoons of which are devoted to the carpenter's shop. The garden boys never go into the carpenter's shop. A child who is absent from school for three days without excuse is expelled. Those who come here are almost all the sons of labourers, whether in the employment of Lord Lansdowne or not. There are 40 girls in the school, two of whom are employed in household work in the master's house every day. The children remain at school here longer than they do in parish schools generally. I don't think that the garden work prevents the boys getting on as much as they would otherwise do in school work. The boys are not paid for working in the garden, but the four oldest have each a plot of ground, the produce of which belongs to them. Out of 38 now in the school there are 18 over the age of 10, and their average age is 9 years and 4 months.

36. *Miss Baker*, matron of the Calne Institution for the Training of Servants, established 1849.—All the girls who come here are nominated by Lady Herbert or Lady Lansdowne. They come about the age of 15. The establishment will hold 16. They usually remain about one year, but the length of time varies according to the progress they make. Those who belong to Calne pay 6*l.* a year, the remainder 7*l.* 7*s.* They receive from 7*l.* to 16*l.* as wages when they first go into service. When they first come here they do general work, and may, after that, select whatever department they prefer. One evening a week is devoted to lessons, and the clergyman gives one lesson in religious instruction per week. They have to provide their own clothing while they are here, but when they leave the ladies who place them here usually provide them with an outfit.

Christian Malford.

37. *Mr. B. South*, schoolmaster.—I have been here four and a half years. The population of this parish used to be about 1,000; it is now between 700 and 800. There were two woollen factories here; they have been given up. There is no employment in this neighbourhood other than agricultural. This is a mixed school. There are 185 on the books. Last year there were 194 on the books and 109 in average attendance. We have about 12 of all classes who come to school here from other parishes. There are also about 25 boys who belong to the farmer class, besides the shopkeepers. The payment for labourers is 1*d.* a week. I don't think that the sons of labourers remain at school beyond the age of 10. Irregularity is the great evil. The third standard is always full, and the numbers dwindle in the upper standards. There has been a school here for many years. There are some boys in the parish who are unable to read, either from never having been to school or from having attended irregularly. I think that if they attended regularly they might pass the fourth standard before they were 10. I don't think they would acquire a taste for reading, &c. as an amusement if they could only pass the fourth standard; the fifth standard, if not the sixth, would be necessary for the purpose. If they passed the fourth standard at the age of 10 they might, by attending night school, as night schools are now carried on, attain the fifth or even the sixth standards, but it would be hard work. Most of the sharp boys who have been educated at this school leave the parish for railways, &c. We charge all extra-parochial children 4*d.* a week each, in order not to injure the schools in the neighbouring parishes.

Corsley.

38. *Mr. J. C. Turner*, schoolmaster.—I have been here one and a half years. The boys usually leave school to go to field work about the age of 9. They are absent a good deal after they are 8, for scaring birds, pig-keeping, working in their parents' gardens, and picking up acorns. The last two occupations are not done for the farmers. They can about pass the third standard when they leave finally. I was assistant master at the night school at Warminster for seven or eight years. That night school was kept open three nights a week from about October to April. The result of my experience is that the instruction precisely obtained can be kept up but cannot, as a rule, be improved by such attendance at night school. A portion of what has been learnt is often forgotten during the summer months, and never is regained at the night school. There are 46 girls and 29 boys on

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the books of the day school here. I had 34 at my night school, aged from 9 upwards. About one-third could read fairly. I don't think the remainder could have passed Standard II.

DOWNTON.

39. *Mr. G. Pearse*, schoolmaster, Redlynch.—The population of this district is about 1,100. Last year there were, on an average, 76 at school. Most of the boys leave school at the age of 9 or 10; there is one boy in the school now aged 13, but he is a cripple. The attendance is very irregular. The principal occupations for children are picking acorns and potatoes, and making heather brooms. This work is done for the parents, and not for the farmers. The land which is held with the cottages gives no special employment for children. As a general rule the boys can pass the third standard when they leave. None of the children have to come above one and a half miles to the school. The girls stay at school later than the boys; they go away occasionally for the same work as the boys (except the broom-making), but they don't work so much. I don't think we could teach any but the sharp boys the three R.'s, unless they stayed until after the age of 10. They come to night school directly they leave the day. I think they certainly keep up, and add a little to, what they have learnt before at the day school.

40. *Mr. T. Read*, of the British school.—I have been here 28 years. I have 110 boys on the books, 80 of whom are the sons of labourers. The average attendance at the school is 84. Labourers' children pay 1*d.* a week. They come at the age of 6, and leave between 9 and 10, when they can usually pass in the fourth standard. As a rule, they lose a great deal of what they know unless they attend a night school. I don't take them at night school under 13. Last winter 30 attended; they all passed, but not in the standards they would have passed in when they left the day school. They generally attend the school pretty regularly until they leave it finally. I think that if they could pass in the fifth standard they might retain what they know; the fourth would be sufficient if they would only apply themselves afterwards, which they will not do at the age of 8 or 9, but will do at the age of 12 or 14. Field work is the chief obstacle to education.

GREAT BEDWYN.

41. *Rev. G. D. Hodgson*, rural dean, Great Bedwyn.—The population of this parish is over 1,050. The boys leave school about the age of 9. They come to our night school at the age of 11 or 12, and as a general rule they are put into the first standard when they come. I think they make considerable progress, certainly great progress, considering the amount of attendance they give. We have many more infants at school in summer than in winter. As a general rule the boys attend the night school up to the age of 17 or 18, and can then pass the third or fourth standard. We had a reading room here five or six years ago; it gradually died out because the members took in penny papers, and did not care to come to it. I inspect the schools in about 20 parishes in this neighbourhood. I know of no reading rooms about here. Most of those who can, from their age and circumstances, attend the night school, do attend it. I think that the fourth standard would represent a sufficient amount of instruction to meet the ordinary requirements of an agricultural labourer. This might be passed by the age of 10 if boys would only attend regularly.

LONGBRIDGE DEVERILL.

42. The *Rev. Prebendary Morrice.*—On an average boys remain at school in this parish until the age of 9, but as a general rule labourers' sons in this district do not remain as late as that. They have usually passed the second or third standard when they leave. My experience is, that those who attend the night school can retain or slightly improve the education they have previously received at the day school. In order that children may be generally educated up to the fourth standard it is necessary that they should not be withdrawn from school as young as they now are. In order that we may secure a regular attendance at night school, we make the scholars pay quarterly in advance; before we did that they used always to be slack during the last three months of the night school season. They now pay in advance 1*s.* for the first three months, and 6*d.* for the second three months. Every boy who misses only three hours = two attendances, during the whole season receives back 1*s.*, and every boy who misses six hours = four attendances, received back 6*d.* Last year out of 58 upon our books, 21 received back 1*s.* and 16 got back 6*d.*; besides this every boy gets 4*d.* for every subject in which he passes the Government examination. We always have two clergymen, the assistant master, and five or six boys of from 16 to 20 to assist in teaching at the night school. I give these boys a small gratuity of from 12*s.* to 15*s.* at the end of the season. We have also a night school for the girls who work in the factory. It is carried on on the same evenings as the boys' school, and also on Saturday afternoons, but the girls go home at a different hour from the boys. In the year 1867 23 boys joined the night school, of ages varying from 10 to 17, all of whom were placed in Standard I. the first time they were examined. We try to push them on as much as we can. In the deanery of Wylie there are 29 schools in 22 parishes containing 1,189 boys, of whom 994 are under 10 years of age. I think we have in attendance at the night school full half of those in the parish who are of an age to, and so situated that they can attend the night school.

SALISBURY.

43. ANSWERS supplied by the Salisbury Church Schoolmasters', &c. Association to questions proposed by F. H. Norman, Esq.

1. At what age do the children of agricultural labourers usually leave school, and what progress has a child of average ability at an average school usually made in reading, writing, and arithmetic when he leaves?

Answer.—Boys not exceeding 9 years and to have passed Standard III.

Girls between 10 and 11 and to have passed Standard IV.

2. What progress would you expect a child of average ability, who attended school regularly, to have made in reading, writing, and arithmetic when he arrives at the age of 10 years? Assuming the school attendance to have commenced as soon as in your opinion it could advantageously have commenced?

Answer.—To have passed Standard IV.

3. Do you think that a child leaving school at 8 or 9, and being able to pass Standard III., could, by subsequent attendance at night schools, as at present carried on, be made to pass Standard IV.?

Answer.—No.

4. What are the chief difficulties you encounter in carrying on night schools? And can you suggest any practical remedies for rendering them more useful than they at present are?

Answer.—*Difficulties.*—(1.) In securing suitable teachers. (2.) In securing the attendance of scholars.

Remedies suggested.—More liberal grants should be given on more easy terms. (1.) There should be no restriction as to the employment of certificated teachers. (2.) All children should be eligible for the grant who have left the day school, and continue to attend the night schools, irrespective of age.

Swindon.

44. *Mrs. Goddard*, The Lawn.—The Wiltshire Society for Befriending Orphan Pauper Girls was founded in 1862. It was thought by the ladies who founded this society that orphan girls who were left without friends to be brought up from an early age in the workhouse were there liable to be exposed to influences which were likely to have a most injurious effect upon their future character, and upon their ability to provide for themselves honestly when they grew up. It was to obviate these evils that this society was founded, and the mode of its operations is as follows:—Leave is obtained from the guardians to remove those orphan girls to whom it is proposed to offer the advantages of the society from the workhouse. The management of each girl so withdrawn from the workhouse is assigned to the superintendence of one of the members of the society, and this member selects some labourer's family with whom each girl resides. The guardians allow 2*s.* 6*d.* a week for the maintenance of the child, and 10*s.* 6*d.* a quarter for her clothing, and the child herself receives this money at the end of each week from the parish officer, and takes it over to the family with whom she lives. Regular school attendance, both on week days and Sundays, is enforced, and in the event of misbehaviour on the part of the child, she is liable to be reprimanded by the relieving officer, or the guardians, or even to be sent back to the workhouse. The school fees for the child are usually paid by the members under whose charge the child is. At the age of 14, when, as a general rule, children leave the workhouse to provide for themselves, situations are, if possible, secured for these girls. Occasionally they are taken into gentlemen's houses for a short time for the purpose of enabling them to learn their future duties as domestic servants, after which they are sent forth to provide for themselves as servants free from all control. Since the establishment of this society in the Highworth and Swindon Union, about 23 girls have been thus under the supervision of the society, of whom eight have turned out fairly well, 10 are still too young for service, two have turned out badly, and the remaining three cannot be said to be going on quite satisfactorily. It is considered that the system has the effect of enabling the girls who are supported by it to acquire some experience of real life, which they would inevitably fail to acquire while shut up within the four walls of the workhouse. The society was established in 1862 by Mrs. Goddard, of the Lawn, and Mrs. David Archer, of Swindon. Since then its operations have become considerably more extended, there being now 20 members in it; and it is generally thought to have been attended with very beneficial results.

Warminster.

45. *Mr. Grosse*, schoolmaster at the Wilts Reformatory.—I have been here about seven weeks. There are 51 boys here, aged 10 to 20. For educational purposes they are divided into four classes; the first class receives on an average about 10 hours' instruction a week, and the three others about 15 hours. That is the rule in summer; in winter a longer time is devoted to the school. I was a National schoolmaster for three years before I came here, and I think that the boys here get on faster than the boys who attended all day at the National school. There are only four boys here who cannot read and write, although all know their letters. If tried by the standards they could pass the fifth, fourth, and second, except the four boys I have mentioned; they have one and a half hours to themselves every day; a half-holiday once a month, besides singing, &c. on wet days. They have also Scripture instruction on Sunday, and books supplied to them to read occasionally. The field work certainly does not dull the intellect when many work together, as here.

White Parish.

46. *Mr. W. H. Williams*, schoolmaster, White Parish.—I have been here eight years. I find that the attendance at school has become less regular lately than it was formerly. My first class contains 14 boys, about eight of whom are the sons of labourers. Since the school re-opened on the 28th September scarcely any of the first class have attended; this afternoon [October 28th] only three of the first class have been at school. All who have passed the first three standards are placed in the first class. As a general rule, the sons of labourers do not remain at school until they get into the first class. There are a few families who never send their children. They pay 1*d.* per week. Some come two miles to school; they are the most regular. The girls are just as irregular as the boys, but don't leave finally quite as young. Night schools are of no use for the purpose of improving the education. I see no means of improving it except by giving assistance to those who remain long at school in the form of substantial prizes, or by making the attendance compulsory.

Wilton.

47. *Mrs. Cope*, schoolmistress, Netherhampton.—I have been here 11 years. All the children who attend this school are the children of agricultural parents. I admit them at the age of 3; they usually come at that age, and pay 1*d.* a week. The girls stay until the age of 11. The boys leave between the ages of 8 and 9; they leave more often at 8 than at 9. They come back to the night school (where they are admitted as soon as they leave the day) and to the Sunday school. From the age of 7 upwards some of them go away to weed, during the months of May, June, and July; during three months they usually work with their fathers, who take piecework from the farmer, and employs them in preference to paying a stranger; usually all the boys over 7 get occasional jobs of that kind. When they leave at the age of 8 they can usually pass in the third standard, but after being absent for five or six months we have to begin again at the first; and sometimes they stay away altogether for a year or two, before coming back to the night school. The night school is divided into two divisions, according to the capacity of the scholars; the first division would pass in Standard IV., and the second in Standard I. Almost all who attend the night school remain until they are placed in the first division. Some come one and a half miles to the night school. As a general rule, no boys in the school could read a newspaper. This is an endowed school, and clothes worth at least 10*s.* are given away to every scholar each year; they would probably remain here longer than elsewhere. Girls go to work in the field; they do the same work as women; they sometimes go out at the age of 11 or 12; there are only two girls over 11 now in the school out of 20. There are 25 boys; none of them could write a letter when they leave. All the children in the neighbourhood do attend school; during the summer months many children are taken away to take dinners and teas to their fathers, and to mind children They are not employed by the farmers until they go to plough, when they finally leave school.

Evidence of a character similar to the above has also been received from Ellen Chandley, schoolmistress, Bramshaw; Mr. Tyler, schoolmaster, Castle Combe; and Mr. Albert Lawes, schoolmaster, Dowhead St. Andrew.

Worcestershire.

Mr. Norman.

B. i.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Alvechurch.

48. *Mr. Mathie*, certificated schoolmaster.—Has been here five years. About half the boys in this school are the sons of agricultural labourers. The remainder are chiefly nailers' children; one or two are needle workers. I think that on an average the agricultural children remain at school up the age of 11, very few to 12. They go out occasionally for bean dropping and potato dropping for two or three months a year, from the age of 7 or 8. Perhaps about one-third of the boys may go out for those purposes for a short time every spring; that interferes very considerably with their school work, but we don't put them back into a different class when they return; their parents would probably take them away if we did. The agricultural boys don't remain as long as nailers, and the nailers do not go out to occasional work in the way the agricultural boys do. I think that the bulk of the agricultural boys could pass the fourth standard by the time they leave. Last year the school was open 438 times, and each child attended on an average 294 times.

Bengworth.

49. *Marianne Webb*, schoolmistress.—I have charge of all the children who are working in or below the first standard. I have been here two and a half years. I had 92 (of whom about 25 were over 6) on my register last year, and the average attendance was 57. 61 left during the year, but of those 20 came into the upper school; the remaining 41 will probably return occasionally for a short time.

The number who attended 200 times were (under 6) 32, (over 6) 22.

The irregularity in the case of the small children is greatest during winter, on account of the wet weather; this excuse is made, although the children have to come only from the adjoining street; and in the case of the elder children, the irregularity is greatest in the spring and summer, and is caused by the gardener. They begin to go out to the garden work at 6, and some have gone under that age; they go away for two or three months together, without coming back at all. The girls attend worse than the boys, but I don't know whether they stay away to work or to mind the children.

50. *Mr. Webb*, schoolmaster, Bengworth.—Been here two years and nine months. The number of children who attended over 200 times was 72. I think that the gardening work has the effect of reducing the attendance about 20 per cent. The boys leave finally about the age of 10; a few of the tradesmen's children stay until the age of 12. The majority of the whole school never get above the third class before they leave; and in the third class they are working in the third standard. I have made a sort of rough census of the parish, and think that there would be about 10 per cent. more on the books if it were not for the gardening. The age at which all the boys, except the tradesmen, leave is about the same; all the children work in the gardens, whether their parents are gardeners or not. The period of greatest irregularity here is April (when they plant vegetables and mind birds), and August, September, and October, when they pick fruit and potatoes. The girls stay longer than the boys, and are not quite so irregular.

Berrow.

51. *Mr. Plowman*, uncertificated schoolmaster.—I have been here 15 years. The boys pay 1*s.* a quarter, paid in advance. The remainder of the expense of the school is borne by Mr. Ricardo. We don't allow any irregularity here; boys are dismissed if they don't attend regularly. The parents have a sufficient desire for education to induce them to send their children regularly rather than not at all. We admit of no excuse for absence except illness and bad weather. The sons of agricultural labourers remain up to the age of 10 or 11, and a few up to 12; they are usually in the second class when they leave and could pass the fourth standard. We take boys from the age of 6 upwards, but only if they can read easy words of two syllables. Many more boys apply to come here than we have room for; I keep a list of the applicants, and admit them in succession as vacancies occur; I give them a lesson either in geography, writing, or arithmetic to do at home every day. I could not adopt the system of expulsion for irregularity until I had been here eight or nine years. At first we encouraged regularity by giving prizes to those who attended best; a statement of the attendance of each boy was sent home periodically to the boy's parents. I know of no school, except another which is supported by Mr. Ricardo in Gloucestershire, where boys are expelled if they don't attend regularly. Last year the lowest number on the register was 58, and the lowest number in average attendance for any one quarter was 50.

Droitwich.

52. The *Rev. W. Lea*, St. Peter's, Secretary to the Worcester Diocesan Board of Education.—The reports of the diocesan inspectors connected with this society relate to the whole of Worcestershire, except the portion which is in the diocese of Hereford, and to the deaneries of Warwick, of the Kinetons and Alcester, in Warwickshire. The district where the school accommodation is worst, with respect both to the number and efficiency of the schools, are the deaneries of Feckenham, Pershore, Bredon, Evesham, and Upton. The whole of the central part of Worcestershire is well supplied with schools. It is impossible to have a good school in every small parish. The system of providing a good district school conveniently situated for the accommodation of thickly populated rural parishes has answered well where it has been tried. The school at Cutnall Green has been in operation for five years; there are now 87 children on the books, and 60 in avarage attendance, of whom about 20 are working in or above the fourth standard. That school supplies acommodation for the following parishes:—

	Population.
Elmley - - -	350
Elmbridge - - -	390
Hampton - - -	185
Rushock - - -	159
	1,084

The proper system on which to carry out this plan is to have dames' schools for infants in each parish, and then to send the elder children to the central school, where there should be a certificated master, at the age of 7 or 8. It is no hardship for a child of that age to walk two or three miles to school. Certificated mistresses are not necessary for these infant schools. The proficiency attained by the children in the rural schools of this district may be inferred from the following figures:—

	No. on Books.	Equal to Standard IV.
In the deanery of Bredon there are -	621	41
„ „ Evesham (from which only seven returns were sent)	403	28
„ „ Feckenham -	403	18
„ „ Pershore -	467	36
„ „ Upton -	1,154	36

Our diocesan examinations are carried on by a test about equal to the Government standard. I have no means of ascertaining what proportion of children remain at school until they have passed the fourth standard. Children stay longer at school where the schools are good.

The following figures give the average age of the first class in the parishes referred to :—

DEANERY OF WICH.

Schools in which Certificated Masters are employed.

	Average age of First Class. Years.	Months.
Stoke Prior	12	0
Salwarpe	12	9
Crowle	12	6
Cutnall Green	11	7

Schools under Uncertificated Teachers.

Upton Warren	9
Hadsor	10

PERSHORE DEANERY.

Certificated.

	Years.	Months.
Pershore—Boys	11	6
„ Girls	12	0

Uncertificated.

Comberton (Great)	9	6
„ (Little)	10	6
Elmley	9	9

This is shown more clearly from the report of Upton Deanery, in which Upton is the only town.

UPTON DEANERY.

Under Certificated Teachers.

	Years.
Bushley	11
Castle Morton	11
Staunton	12
Upton—Boys	11
„ Girls	10½

Uncertificated.

Berrow	9
Birtsmorton	9
Chaceley	9
Eldersfield	10½
Hanley	10
Longdon	9
Pendock, 1	9
„ 2	8
Welland	9

In the city of Worcester there was only one school under an uncertificated teacher last year; the average age of the first class was 9 years and 6 months. The other Worcester schools vary from 10 to 11 years and 2 months. This school has been, since January 1, under a certificated teacher.

The condition of the country districts, with respect to the number of children growing up without education is not nearly so bad as that of the towns, but even in country districts some legislation is necessary for the purpose of improving the education. The best plan would be to require a child to pass the fourth standard before going to work, but if a partial attendance in winter can be secured the third standard might be sufficient in the first instance. If the fourth standard were considered unattainable I see nothing but to allow boys to go to work in summer when they have passed the third, and compel attendance in winter till the fourth is passed; but this would be much more cumbrous and difficult. I think the fourth standard would be best. This would lead to an increased demand for certificated teachers. I have reports before me of 24 country schools, in which not *one* child reaches the fourth standard in arithmetic. The boys in my school can pass the fourth standard before the age of 10; but this proficiency could not be attained except where there is an infant school. I think it useless to pass a law requiring less than the fourth standard. Nothing less than that would be really useful. I have not much faith in night schools; they are attended by two classes, one who have neglected schools, and the other who have attended well and want to improve themselves. It is impossible to teach these two classes together, and a boy who had been at work all day would be too tired to learn much at night.

I should be very glad to see the Government grants extended to small *country* schools, with uncertificated teachers, provided the payments were made for *the same results as* in schools where the certificated teachers were employed; but uncertificated teachers even then should not be allowed capitation grants, or pupil teachers. I think this would lead to more certificated teachers being employed than any other plan.

EVESHAM.

Paper supplied by *Mr. G. S. Barker*, schoolmaster, Evesham.

I. THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION IN THIS LOCALITY.

53. I have been in charge of this school for five years, and from my observation and experience during that time, I am of opinion that there is a deplorable amount of ignorance amongst the children of the labouring classes in this neighbourhood. I remember being very much struck with this ignorance when I first came here; and having had the superintendence of the night school for several winters, I have become very strongly impressed with the conviction that our present educational appliances are quite inadequate to cope with the appalling ignorance and moral destitution so prevalent in this locality. In the night school the instruction of nearly two-thirds did not rise above the bare requirements of the first standard; none were presented above the third standard; whilst one-third of the whole had to be presented in the same standard in which they were examined in the preceding year.

II. THE CHIEF CAUSES OF THIS DEFECTIVE STATE OF EDUCATION.

1. *The early age at which children leave school for work.*—Year by year our registers point out the sad fact that the average age of the highest class becomes lower. So early do most children leave, that a very few weeks suffices to efface the instruction which has been imparted to them during the year or two they have spent at school; and when they turn up again, in the Sunday or night school, it is truly pitiable to see the condition to which they have degraded. I have analysed the list of those who left the day school in one year, and find, that with an average of 62, no less than 36 boys left for work who had not passed the fourth standard, and of this number only seven had passed the third standard.

2. *The irregular attendance of those who are nominally scholars.*—Not only does the cause of primary education suffer from the early removal of children, but also from the constant interruptions by which their attendance is broken whilst nominally at school. This irregularity is the result of two causes :—

(1.) *The employment of children in the gardens.*—During the winter months, *i.e.*, from about the middle of September to about the middle of February, our attendance is nearly double what it is during the rest of the year. In the spring, earlier or late according to the mildness or severity of the season, children ranging through all the standards, *i.e.*, from 6 years of age and upwards, are sent into the gardens "bird-"minding," and, with perhaps the exception of a few weeks' schooling during bad weather, are kept there at the various operations of raddish-tying, pea-picking, potato-gathering, &c., until the end of autumn, when they return to school in a most lamentable state, utterly demoralized by contact with their elders in age and wickedness, all ideas of discipline scattered to the winds, and the instruction, which had cost so much pains and labour to impart during the winter months, absolutely lost.

The following extracts, selected from the school log book, will put this more forcibly :—

"1867, May 21. C. G. returned after six weeks' absence; F. W. after 14 weeks' absence; T. W. after 18 weeks' absence."

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"Sept. 5. G. C. away again, in Standard II.; he only came back last week after 12 weeks' absence."

"Sept. 16. M. H. returned after nine weeks' absence; he only returned in May after eight weeks' previous absence. J. R. returned after 23 week's absence."

"1868, Aug. 17. E. S. returned after an absence of seven weeks; he was a very backward boy in Standard IV."

"Aug. 25. W. P. has returned after 10 weeks' absence."

Sept. 28. T. B., in the third standard, has returned after an absence of 22 weeks. He had nearly made the 200 attendances before he went out to work, and was pretty well up in the work of his standard; now he can do nothing, and it is a hopeless task to prepare him for the examination."

"Sept. 29. J. D., in the second standard, has come back to-day; he has been absent for 13 weeks."

"1869, Jan. 26. There are several boys in the second standard, and who have only just come out of the infant school, out bird-minding."

"April 19. C. B. came back to day after 12 weeks' absence."

"April 19. E. H. came back to-day after 11 weeks' absence."

"April 19. F. B. came back to-day after eight weeks' absence."

"April 26. C. J. came back after 16 week's continuous absence, excepting a few attendances during a fortnight of that time. E. G. came back after 16 weeks' continuous absence. W. B. came back after 10 weeks' continuous absence."

These are but specimens of many such like entries.

Again, in the year alluded to above, in the day school there were only 66 who had attended 200 times and upwards, whilst 91 had been in attendance less than 200 times, and the average number of attendances made by each child during that year was only 172. But the school was open 432 times; hence the children here, on an average, do not attend school much more than about *one-third* of their time. Nor is it any better in the night school, where, out of 66 names on the books, only 26 attended for 24 nights, thus leaving 40 who had not come up to the very moderate minimum of attendances required by the Government. In the girls' school, in the same year, there were 67 who had attended 200 times, and 120 who had fallen short of that number. In the infants' school there were 72 who had made 200 attendances, whilst 68 had made less. In the adjoining parish of Bengeworth, in the mixed school there, 124 had attended 200 times, but 177 had attended less than 200.

(2.) *The carelessness and caprice of parents.*—This is another fruitful source of bad attendance, and occasions a different kind of irregularity, viz., uncertain, desultory attendance, as contrasted with the prolonged and fixed absence of those out at work. It is astonishing, and would seem almost incredible to those unacquainted with the matter, how small a thing suffices with so many parents to keep their children away from school. Perhaps the teacher has been too strict, or not strict enough; he may have set them too many lessons, or none at all; there may be a show, a fair, a funeral, or a meet of the hounds; it may be a wet day, or threatening for one; anything, no matter how trifling or absurd, will do as an excuse for not going to school. In fact, such children as these go or stay away almost as they please, here one day, and away the next two; thus their attendance is frittered away. How, then, can we make any abiding impression on them? How can we teach them anything? As fast as we pour in at school, it leaks away out of school. Thus they become a continual source of irritation and annoyance to the teacher in his endeavours to keep them on a par with those who are rarely absent, and leave school with a mere smattering of instruction, which, after a few months, is utterly lost. Nor should I omit to mention here the pernicious influence which the drunken habits of many parents exercise upon the attendance of their children. Week after week we have scholars absent for no other reason than that their parents, having spent their wages in drunkenness, have no means of furnishing the necessary school fees, and this, in the case of some earning from 20*s.* to 30*s.* per week. Many more would be absent for this reason, were it not that private benevolence furnishes the means for that education which the drink-caused poverty of their parents would otherwise prevent them from obtaining.

III. The Remedy suggested.

I have no hope of amendment but in some form of compulsory attendance, *direct* compulsion in the case of those neither at work nor at school, and *indirect* in dealing with those who are out at work. There are many forms of indirect compulsion, but the most efficient, in my estimation, would be not to allow any child to be sent out to work under 10 years of age, and not then unless the parents can produce a certificate from a properly qualified officer of the child's ability to pass the fourth standard. This plan would have the double advantage of giving the instruction of the schoolroom a direct money value in the estimation of the parents, whilst it would effectually secure the co-operation of their employers by making a certain amount of instruction the passport to employment.

Geo. S. Barker,
National School, Evesham.

Great Witley.

54. *Miss Greatwood*, certificated schoolmistress.—About half the children who attend the school are the children of labourers, the remainder are the sons of tradesmen and of Lord Dudley's servants. As a general rule the children of agricultural labourers remain at school until they reach the second class; they would then be working in the third standard. They leave at about the age of 10. The school fees range from 1*d.* to 6*d.* a week, according to the condition of the parents. The attendance is very irregular, chiefly in spring and autumn. The girls are more regular than the boys, and don't leave at so young an age.

Martley.

55. *Michael Coleman*, certificated master of the boys' school.—I have been here three years. The labourers' sons remain at school until the age of 10 or 11, and some up to 12. They are absent chiefly in March and April for tenting birds and helping their parents in their gardens; and in May for cowslip picking (but the girls are more employed at that than the boys). From June to August some of the bigger boys are kept away to do odd jobs on the farm. In September and October they are employed in hop and fruit picking. The school is fullest from November to March inclusive. The irregularity of attendance usually commences when boys are about 9 years old.

Hagley.

56. *Mr. W. Stephens*, schoolmaster.—I have been master here for 24 years. This is a mixed school. There are 56 boys on the books and 18 girls. Last week the average in attendance was 47 boys and 17 girls. About a quarter of the boys come from other parishes, but only one of the girls. Nearly half belong to the agricultural labouring class. The poorest class pay 3*d.* a week; the artizans and small tradesmen pay 4*d.* each; small farmers, 5*s.* a quarter, and large farmers 7*s.* 6*d.* No deduction is made if more than one in a family attends. Many of the poorest are helped by the gentry. The school is inspected by Government, but is not quite self-supporting. Before the introduction of the Revised Code we allowed the scholars over 12 years old to be absent on any alternate days or weeks, or during the busy times of the year, according to their convenience, but such absences were not to exceed half the time the school was open.

That plan worked very well. Lord Lyttelton used to give them a capitation prize (worth 3*s.* to 2*s.*, but not given in money). We have had to give up that plan on account of the introduction of the Revised Code. There are 10 small allotment gardens attached to the school, 100 square yards each. They are given to 10 of the boys as a reward for good conduct. They cultivate them out of school hours. Lord Lyttelton finds manure and lends tools. The land is rent-free, and the boys have the produce of the gardens themselves. On an average they make 6*s.* or 7*s.* a year profits. There is also a carpenter's shop. A carpenter comes to give instruction on two afternoons in the week. About 16 of the elder boys take that up. They are divided into sets of four each, and each set has one lesson per fortnight. The rector pays the carpenter and provides tools. There are a few (perhaps six) children who don't come to school at all. That is owing to the indifference of the parents. Some come to school three miles; they are quite as regular as those who live nearer. Labourers' sons, as a general rule, stay up to the age of 11 or 12. They go away a little before that, usually to plant potatoes in the spring, but not for long enough time to interfere much with their school work. The old half-time system enabled us to keep the boys longer than we have been able to do since. The school was open last year 464 times, and on an average each boy attended 438. There is an infant school here; they come here from that school at the age of 7. I think that a boy could read, write, and cipher a little with ease by the age of 10 if he attended school regularly. Eight boys passed the fourth standard last year; they were aged from 11 to 13. But we are in the habit of keeping them back in order that they may be sure of passing a standard every year. A good many of the labourers' sons are diverted from farm work in consequence of the good education they receive here; but there is nothing in the system of agricultural labour in the neighbourhood which interferes with the education of boys. I think it is very desirable that some system of the Factory Acts should be applied to agricultural children. I should prefer the plan which requires a certificate of proficiency, and should be glad to be able to put the screw on sometimes.

I have had a night school here for many years. I find that those who have had a good education at day school make considerable progress at the night; but those who have not learnt much before cannot get on well at the night school.

Littleton.

57. *Miss E. J. Wilson*, schoolmistress.—The attendance here is very irregular, both among boys and girls; the girls are as irregular as the boys, but the boys leave finally before the girls. They sometimes go away for a year or two, and then come back. The irregularity commences from about the age of 8. The children go away scarcely at all for currant and gooseberry picking, but are employed a little for pea and apple picking, planting and sorting potatoes, and frequently on their parents' allotments.

I think that all the children who attend regularly up to the age of 10 can be taught to read and write well. Very few of those now growing up cannot write, but there are many who read imperfectly. They could certainly learn the first four rules of arithmetic simply and in money by the age of 10, if they attended regularly. There are scarcely any so dull that they could not do this. It is desirable that they should begin to attend school at the age of 4.

Madresfield.

58. *Thomas Gowland*, schoolmaster.—I have been here nearly a year and a half. All the boys here are the sons of agricultural labourers, except one, whose father is a sawyer. The average age of the first class is 12. Only one of the first class has left the school since I have been here, and two or three of the second class.

The attendance is regular. That may be in part due to the fact that Mr. Munn [the clergyman] has a clothing club for the school children, of which they lose the advantage if their attendance is irregular.

The school is most empty just after the holidays.

Worcestershire.

Mr. Norman.

B. i.

Worcester.

59. St. Martin's School, Worcester,
23rd June 1869.

Dear Sir,

I beg to forward you a report embodying the opinions of members of the Worcestershire Church School Teacher's Association on the subject of agricultural education in Worcestershire. This subject was discussed at a meeting held in St. Martin's School, Worcester, on Saturday, May 29th 1869.

I beg to remain, dear sir,
Your obedient servant,
F. H. Norman, Esq., John Pember.

Agricultural Education in Worcestershire.

Age at which children of labourers leave school.

The children of agricultural labourers in Worcestershire leave school on an average about the age of 10.

Amount of proficiency usually acquired by such children.

At the time of leaving scarcely any in aided schools have passed the fourth standard of the Revised Code, or, if in unaided schools, are able to do so. The majority are about equal to passing in the second standard. The amount of knowledge they possess is practically valueless. It is not sufficient to induce in them a desire for more knowledge, and the result is that such children relapse into almost total ignorance. As a proof that the majority of scholars leave at an early age, possessing but limited knowledge, the Rev. W. Lea, Diocesan inspector, stated at the meeting that in the archdeaconry of Worcester there were (only lately) 26 schools in which not a single child had reached the fourth standard, and there were a great many country schools in which not above two or three children were equal to passing in it.

Obstacles to Education.

1. Want of schools.

A want of schools is not an obstacle of much importance. With very few exceptions, perhaps seven or eight, every parish in Worcestershire has a school of some sort.

Although the number of schools is nearly sufficient yet they are often disadvantageously placed. In some cases two inefficient schools have been built near together, and where obviously one efficient school would be more serviceable and more economical.

2. Inefficient instruction.

An obstacle of more importance is the number of inefficient schools. These are generally unaided schools of which there are about 80 or 90 in the archdeaconry. The diocesan inspector says that of this number only about 10 are equal to an average school taught by a certificated teacher.

3. Poverty of parents.

The poverty of parents is another obstacle. The wages of labourers in this county is about 10*s.* per week, yet out of this small wage many poor parents are regular in their payments; in other cases kind friends assist. Many, however, with families are obliged out of sheer necessity to withdraw their children from school at an early age for the sake of their earnings.

4. Indifference of parents.

Some parents, uneducated themselves, care little for the education of their children. In what are called "open" parishes, where cottages may be had by anyone, this indifference is greatest.

5. Pressure of employers.

The obstacle perhaps of the greatest importance is that of the pressure of employers. Employers find it their interest to employ children to whom they give only a small remuneration. In many cases farmers will not employ labourers unless they can also have the services of the men's children.

Remedies suggested.

Compulsory attendance not practicable.

A compulsory law requiring parents to send their children to school regularly till a certain age would remove some of these obstacles, but it would be very oppressive in the case of under-paid labourers with large families and would raise a most formidable opposition amongst farmers and others. Under present

Worcestershire.

Mr. Norman.

B. i.

Indirect compulsory measures recommended.

circumstances it would probably be best to introduce indirect compulsory measures. Some of these, viz., the half-day system, the alternate day system, and the Printworks Act, have already been in operation in manufacturing districts. The half-day system would be inconvenient where the school is at a long distance from the field or farm where the child is at work. School and work on alternate days would be preferable, but this method would be inconvenient in busy seasons of the year and would be unnecessary in slack times. The principle of the Print-works Act might be applied with more advantage. Under this Act instruction must be given for 150 hours every six months. Such a system with its long breaks between one period of school instruction and another would, however, be valueless in the case of ignorant children. The requirements of the Act would be satisfied if six weeks instruction were given at the beginning of the year and six weeks at the end. During this long break an ignorant child would loose the knowledge he had acquired. Additional measures are therefore needed.

No remedy can be suggested which will meet every difficulty, but the best seems to be the combination of a proficiency and age test.

No child, under any circumstances, should be allowed to work under the age of 10, and not even at that age unless it could pass the fourth standard of the Revised Code. A child who can only pass in Standard II. or III. will soon loose the power of reading if withdrawn from school. Its thirst for knowledge will not be sufficient to lead it to try to read books for information, and the knowledge of only the simple rules of arithmetic will soon pass away from their unattractive nature. After passing the fourth standard a child will be very likely to read any book that comes within its reach, and the power of solving questions in money rules will not readily pass away.

Between the ages of 10 and 13 a child should not be allowed to work unless it can produce a certificate of having passed Standard IV. It should not be allowed to work full time but be required to attend school for so many hours in the week or in the year. The former plan would protect the child from being overtasked, the latter would probably be most convenient to the farmers, since there are certain periods of the year when child labour can well be spared.

After the age of 13 both dull children and proficient ones should be allowed to work full time. It would be an advantage to them, however, if instruction could still be provided for them in properly taught night schools. If pressure were put upon young people to attend them, and if at the same time larger money grants were given for their support, night schools would be far more numerous and flourishing than at present.

This plan does not directly interfere with a parents liberty in keeping his children at home if he likes, but it appeals to his self-interest; it makes him feel that the sooner he can get his child sufficiently instructed the sooner he may reap the benefit of the child's wages; it protects the child from having its strength tried too early; is a barrier against the pressure of employers, and ensures a certain amount of knowledge which can easily be improved under favourable circumstances and under unfavourable circumstances will not readily be lost.

APPENDIX. C.—MEDICAL EVIDENCE.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Herefordshire.

C.

1. *Mr. Lingen*, surgeon, Hereford.—I am now consulting surgeon to the Hereford infirmary, and for nearly 30 years was surgeon to that institution. I do not think that in these districts women are injured by the agricultural labour they ordinarily perform. Some years ago women occasionally met with serious accidents when employed with thrashing machines, then generally fixed in barns, but those accidents are not as frequent as they used to be, and women rarely assist with such outdoor machines as are now in use. I consider that boys ought not to be put to field work before they are 11 years old, and I don't think it is common here to send them out under that age. A considerable number of boys also have met with grave accidents in various parts of the county which are brought to this infirmary. In many cases their hands have been mutilated by machinery, such as thrashing machines and straw or "turnip cutters." Horse accidents are not of great frequency, and accidents caused by boys being sent with fire-arms to scare birds are of rare occurrence.

I consider good average cider a wholesome drink, which I believe is attested by the known longevity of our labouring men, most of whom drink largely of cider, and not a few of them drink to excess. It is said by long continued usage to cause rheumatism, but I am not of that opinion; there is a good deal of rheumatism among agricultural labourers, especially in this county (perhaps in excess of some others), but to an extent far less than formerly, when this district was very thickly wooded, and being for the most part a clay soil was then very damp.

Much wood has, during the last 50 years, been cut down; this country too has been surface drained to a very great extent, and rheumatism has diminished in consequence. Cider it is true, or rather lead in cider, is often the cause of grave attacks of colic and its consequences; this results from lead taken up by the cider, either when the mill has been repaired with metallic lead, or when old casks have been extensively repaired with sedge and white lead, or when lead pipes instead of zinc have been used to convey cider to the taps in public houses, especially when the cider is suffered to remain long in the pipes. Lead is taken up more readily by cider than by other beverages on account of any excess of acid it may contain. Lead in cider affects different people in very different degrees, for instance, six men will drink from the same faulty cask in similar quantities, and two or three only may suffer, and suffer severely. Not a summer or autumn but cases of this kind occur, which, though rarely fatal, produce after consequences of a paralytic kind, affecting chiefly the wrists and hands, which are long in recovering.

The cottage accommodation in this neighbourhood, with few exceptions, is utterly inadequate to provide for the health, decency, and morals, of the inmates; the cottages are wanting not only in space and ventilation, but the apartments are too few for the family, and the partitions are inadequate. Deficient drainage is not so serious an evil in the country as in the towns; there is reckless neglect in this particular, and many instances have come under my notice of fevers having been initiated and diffused by badly drained premises with accumulation of refuse and filth about the cottages. The farmhouses too are often unavoidably unhealthy in consequence of the close proximity to the farmyards, where large quantities of decayed and decaying organic matters are ceaselessly evolving emanations insiduously but surely injurious to the family. I consider this a widespread and very powerful evil, and that it accounts for the remarkable fact, well known to the Registrar-General, that the well-fed families of farmers exhibit a low standard of health. As to the occupations of women, mostly married women, in this county in hop-tying,

hop-picking, and apple and potato picking, I believe these to be almost indispensable services,* and none of them are injurious to health, though the herding and crowding of one class,—namely of hop-pickers of both sexes brought together from remote districts, in barns and outhouses,—cannot fail to become a serious source of mischief, moral and hygienic, and one worthy the attention of those in authority, who should enforce arrangements for such accommodation by night as should effectually lessen the evils of overcrowding. A few farmers I know will not employ women on Saturdays, in order that they may on that day do their own marketing and clean up their houses, &c. for Sundays.

2. Extract from a Letter from Mr. Linden. Herefordshire. Mr. Norman. C. i.

"Dear Sir,

"There is very strong reason for believing that cider is to a certain extent protective against calculus in the bladder.

"The cases of stone that have occurred in this infirmary since its erection are very few indeed, half a dozen at the most, and two of those in children who did not drink cider. I think I gave you my opinion of cider, that if a man must habitually get drunk, it had better be with cider. Norfolk is the county for stone."

SURREY.

Surrey.

Carsharlton.

3. *Mr. W. E. Creasy.*—I have been medical officer to the Epsom union for 14 years. There are no peculiar complaints among the poor in this district. About one-sixth of the women work in the fields; they work all the year; about half of them are Irish who have settled here. They are chiefly employed in weeding and picking stones and potatoes; they do no hard work, and none which is injurious to their health. This is not a purely agricultural district; many men are employed in gardens and stables, and many work in the physic gardens. That is all light work; those boys who go to work go at about the age of 12. Cottages are totally insufficient in number, and the ventilation and drainage are very bad. There was no nuisance inspector until about three months ago. The drinking water is poisoned by soaking cesspools in every direction; we are now going through an epidemic of fever and diarrhœa caused by bad water; we have magnificent springs in every direction, but they are poisoned, and we have to get our water supply from the next parish (Sutton); more than 100 families have drunk water at the mill-head, and have all had diarrhœa. The late medical man said that fever was never known here, but then the population was smaller than at present, and all the new houses are drained by cesspools which allow the contents to escape. We want a compulsory system of drainage. Cottage rent is about 4*s.* a week; agricultural labourers' wages 15*s.*; gardeners, 1*s.* 1*d.*, and for those who work in the medical gardens about 18*s.* The chief evil existing here is the habit of drinking and smoking, which prevails among the young.

Farnham.

4. *Mr. E. Y. Knowles,* surgeon.—I have practised here for 30 years. The hop-picking is decidedly a healthy occupation both for women and children. There are different opinions as to the effect of the drying upon the men employed in the kilns; many who suffer from rheumatism select that occupation. I think that the warmth and sulphur have a good effect upon them; overcrowding and want of accommodation in the sheds in which they live are the only causes which have a bad effect upon the health of the pickers; fevers sometimes break out here in consequence, or the pickers catch fevers here, which do not show themselves until after they have returned home at the conclusion of the picking. The gipsies are pretty healthy, but the tramps who only occasionally camp out get ill. This year the pickers are suffering from diarrhœa more than from any other complaint. Formerly the growers were more particular about the accommodation they provided for their pickers. There were two spare rooms at the tops of the cottages; the men slept in one, and the women in the other; the women were locked in at night. Formerly the class of persons who came out hop-picking were more respectable than those who now come; the respectable people will not now come out because the accommodation is insufficient, and they are unwilling to associate with the low class of persons who now come out. Many of the sheds in which the pickers sleep are used for common farm purposes, such as storing guano, during the year; they may be thrown open for a few weeks before the pickers arrive, but are often imperfectly purified. Another source of evil is the want of a sufficient supply of clean straw; the straw should be changed every fortnight; but a sufficient supply cannot be obtained, and if the season only lasts about three weeks it is thought unnecessary to change the straw. There is no washing accommodation; many don't wash during all the time they are here. About 5,000 strangers come into the town and neighbourhood at the season. The principal danger arises from the propagation of disease owing to overcrowding; but the evil results I should expect from this are lessened by the healthiness of the employment. There is no privy accommodation, but no harm arises from the want of it. The pickers live chiefly on tea, herrings, and potatoes; they do not drink much except in wet weather when they have nothing else to do. Wet weather increases the unhealthiness of the employment greatly, because the pickers have no changes of clothes, and have no means of drying their clothes when they get wet, besides which the damp rots the straw of which the beds are composed. The infants who come with their mothers do not suffer if the weather is fine.

Guildford.

5. *Mr. R. Eager,* surgeon.—I have practised here above 40 years, and have been medical officer to the workhouse above 20 years. I am one of the medical officers at the hospital, which was established above two years ago. My family have farmed their own land in the neighbourhood of Guildford for several generations. The boys are not at all unhealthy. The diseases which occur most frequently among the agricultural poor are, (1), strumous diseases of the bones and glands; these are indigenous, and out of door employment is beneficial for them. (2), rheumatism, which however does not attack young children, and when occurring late in life is not attributable to early labour. (3), consumption is very frequent, but is not at all confined to the agricultural population. The accidents, which most frequently occur are caused by machinery, which has been gradually much increased for farm purposes during the last 20 years, and many accidents to farm labourers are caused by men sitting upon the shafts of carts and waggons when in motion, and then jumping off, are run over, and crushed by the wheels of these vehicles.

Many of the cottages are very old and the windows and doors don't fit, but the newly built ones are good and substantially built. Those built by the labourers themselves on the waste are usually very bad. They

* I have used the word "indispensable," for the men are not only not to be spared at the time for such purposes, but are far less fitted for them. I refer especially to tying and picking hops.

Surrey.
Mr. Norman.
C. i.

all have good gardens; the ventilation is usually good, but the drainage is always infamous; there are usually no facilities for getting rid of the refuse of the house; it is generally thrown into a ditch close to the cottage where it stagnates. Numerous cases of fever have come to my knowledge, which I attribute entirely to imperfect drainage. I don't think the cottages are much overcrowded; I have not met with cases of illness which I can attribute to that cause. The old cottages are usually commodious.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has been received from Mr. C. R. Thompson, of Westerham, and Dr. Kough, of Bagshot, and Mr. A. Napper, Cranleigh.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Warwickshire.

Knowle.

6. *Mr. J. H. Kimbell*, surgeon.—I have practised at Knowle for 27 years, and have been parish officer for 20 years. Women go out to work very little; only about six in my parish go out. Neither women or children suffer from the out-of-door work. Boys very seldom meet with accidents, although it is a wonder that they don't, when one observes how young they are when they go out in charge of horses and carts. The only evil is the cottages. The supply is quite insufficient; almost all the illegitimacy is due to crowded cottages. The drainage, &c. is abominable; I know about a dozen cottages at Balsal where the people don't use the privies. We have outbreaks of fever which we can trace entirely to nuisances. If they have good cottages they take in lodgers and reduce them to the condition of the worst unless they are strictly supervised. The number of public houses is also a great evil; they sell unwholesome and adulterated beer.

Warwick.

7. *Mr. T. W. Bullock.*—I have been medical officer to the Warwick district of the Union of Warwick during the last six years. My district comprises seven agricultural parishes. I have not observed that the women who work in the fields suffer or are subject to any diseases which can be attributed to the field work. I have several times observed that the children suffer when their mothers go out to work. I have known at least eight cases in which children left at home have been burnt or scalded; three or four of these have resulted in death. I have occasionally known an opiate in the shape of Godfrey's Cordial or Daffy's Elixir given by the mother to the children to keep them quiet. I think boys go out to work at too early an age; they don't get sufficient education; and their health suffers. I have noticed occasionally that boys who are sent to work early frequently are laid up with rheumatism, which in the case of young boys has a greater tendency to affect the heart, and produce an incurable disease, than in the case of older children. I think that boys should not go out to work before the age of 11 or 12. I have had to attend cases where boys have met with accidents from horses and machinery, but these cases are not very frequent.

I don't think that the cottage accommodation is insufficient. About two years ago some cases of fever and diphtheria arose from bad drainage at Wasperton, Barford, Beausale, and Rowington, but the guardians have taken the matter up, and the drainage has been improved.

WILTSHIRE.

Wiltshire.

Amesbury.

8. *Mr. C. Pyle*, surgeon.—I have practised here 33 years. I find that the young women who work in the fields suffer from erysipelas in the legs; they now wear gaiters, which are not, however, a sufficient protection. The disease does not attack strong men, and usually only girls between the ages of 15 and 20. The general health in this neighbourhood is good, the most frequent diseases are inflammatory rheumatism, phthisis, and bronchitis (more particularly among children). I think that the development of boys is retarded by field work, but this is partly caused by wearing bad boots. The girls who are left at home to take care of the children are often awry from carrying too heavy children; but this evil is now being remedied by perambulators. I don't find that the children suffer much by their mothers going to work.

The morals are very lax and are worse among field workers than among any other class. The field workers are certainly the lowest class. I do not find that a great number of accidents are caused by the use of machinery. The old cottages are very bad. The ventilation is obtained by the door only; the windows often don't open, and the accommodation is generally insufficient. I knew of one instance were 14 persons slept in one room. All the new cottages built upon the downs are *perfect*.

Salisbury.

9. *Mr. W. M. Coates*, surgeon.—I have practised here upwards of 30 years; and for 20 years I have been connected with the infirmary, which is the principal hospital in the county, and which receives patients from all parts of this and the adjoining counties. My impression is that field work is not physically injurious to either women or girls; I see no harm in girls going to work at the age of 15 or 16; but morally and mentally the field work is very injurious to females; they associate with men and with women of loose conversation and become demoralized. Judging from my experience in the infirmary, I have no reason to believe that the early labour is the cause of physical injury to boys. I have examined all the military and naval recruits who have been enlisted in this district during the last 25 years; I examined more than 200 last year; those who are enlisted from among the agricultural class here are particularly fine men; in fact, I am told that some of the finest men who are enlisted in the army are taken from the agricultural classes in this neighbourhood. I do not think that the early work in the fields prevents the frame being fully developed. The most frequent diseases in this neighbourhood are rheumatism, consumption, and struma; and I have certainly noticed that, since the abolition of the Corn Laws, the scrofulous diseases have considerably diminished in consequence of the people being better fed. We have many accidents arising from the use of machinery for agricultural purposes, and some of the most serious arise from the care of horses being entrusted to small boys. The accidents from the old horse machines were more frequent than those caused by the steam machines; I think that was because since the use of steam greater care has been taken, and more intelligent superintendents employed. Notwithstanding my opinion that no injury to health arises from ordinary work in the fields to young people, it is my decided opinion that, considering the serious accidents to boys from their inability to control cart horses, and the demoralizing effect of want of education, and bad association, young boys and young girls should not be employed in the fields. I would limit the age in the case of boys to 15, and I think that the field labour must always be demoralizing to girls of any age. This can

only be remedied by better education and training. I think that the diseases from which the agricultural labourer suffer are chiefly caused by insufficient food and clothing, *i.e.*, by poverty.

10. *Dr. Roberts.*—I have been practising here 14 years, and have been physician to the infirmary during the whole of that time. According to my experience women are not physically injured by the labour they perform in the fields; as a class I consider that the women who work in the fields are healthier than other classes; they are not subject to any special diseases. I have no recollection of any diseases that I can attribute to field work among women; I think however that women who work in the fields have more illegitimate children than women of any other class, and that, with the exception of professional prostitutes, they are the lowest class of the population. I think that if the employment in the fields gave rise to any special class of deseases I must of necessity have known it.

I have noticed a number of cases of heart desease arising from rheumatism among the boys who go out to work at an early age; the girls are not subject to the same complaints, I suppose because they do not go out as much in all weathers as the boys. It is a rare thing for the infirmary to be without some cases of boys between the ages of from 10 to 15 who are suffering from heart diseases so caused. They are incurable. I think that the insufficient cottage accommodation does not affect the agricultural labourers to a very serious extent, because they pass so much of their time in the open air.

SWINDON.

11. *Mr. John Gay*, surgeon.—I have practised here 25 years, and am medical officer to the union. The women who work in the fields in this neighbourhood are benefited by it; they do not work hard, and there is no work in which they are engaged which is injurious to them. The work has no bad effect upon boys, unless they go to work at too early an age, and are constitutionally weak; they are not injured by working too long hours or by too hard work. Perhaps in large families the children have not sufficient sustenance, otherwise they are quite well. The cottage accommodation is generally fair, but in every parish bad specimens may be found; the evil arises from an insufficient supply of bedrooms, whereby diseases are continued and spread. The drainage and water supply are fairly good. Machines are greatly used in agriculture, and women are employed with them. The most injurious machine is the thrashing machine; that is injurious to all who have weak lungs on account of the dust. The accidents are not sufficiently numerous to furnish a real ground of complaint.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

ALVECHURCH.

12. *Mr. Gaunt*, surgeon, practised here 28 years; medical officer to the Bromsgrove and King's Norton unions.—I don't think that the work done by women in the fields in this neighbourhood is physically injurious to them. The field work has a tendency to destroy that delicacy which ought to exist among women, more especially in the case of young women at hay time. There can be no doubt that the homes of the field workers are far less comfortable than those of others. The beds are never made nor the excretions removed until the return of the women in the evening. The children suffer when left in charge of one of the elder members of the family, as is usually done here. I think that the work with the thrashing machine is the work least suitable for women.

According to my experience boys go out to work at 9 or 10 years of age; there is nothing in the work which does them harm; but they earn only 4*d.* to 6*d.* a day, and have nothing but bread to eat, which is not enough to keep them in health. The accidents which occasionally arise (such as loss of fingers from chaff-cutting machines) are usually due to the carelessness of the boys. Heart disease is not common among children in this district.

The health of the agricultural population is decidedly better than that of either the nailers or needle makers.

The ordinary agricultural wages here are 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week, sometimes with and sometimes without beer. The extra work which is done in hay time and harvest is usually done by nailers and Irish. I think that on an average the labourers' wages would amount to 12*s.* a week throughout the year including everything. The cottages here are decidedly bad. As a rule there are only two bedrooms to a cottage. They are far too much crowded; much immorality arises from this cause. As a rule there is no drainage or ventilation. About five years ago typhus fever broke out in a row of five cottages, where there was only one privy to accommodate 36 persons; the drain from this was stopped up, and impregnated the drinking water. I have often been able to trace illness to bad cottage accommodation.

UPTON-ON-SEVERN.

13. *Mr. C. Braddon*, surgeon.—I have practised here 27 years. The women go to work in the fields a good deal about here; but I don't think the work done by them is injurious to the health; the women like the work themselves. I don't think that the field workers are more immoral than others, and I have noticed over and over again to my surprise that the cottages of the field workers are more tidy and comfortable than those of the women who don't work in the field; the reason I believe to be that they are better off. They never do heavy work here.

I have seen boys employed at scaring as young as 7. I think it a bad thing for them to be employed at so early an age; I think it stunts their growth; they are frequently exposed to attacks of bronchitis; I don't think they ought to go to any field work under 10 years of age, either on physical or intellectual grounds. It is a fact that rheumatism is more frequently accompanied by heart affections when it attacks young persons than when it attacks old.

Nine-tenths of the cottages are abominable, they are overcrowded, damp, and not air-tight. They are defective in drainage, but drainage is not so necessary in the open country as in towns, because people live so much less in their houses; and in the country many cottages are rarely accumulated together.

The men here drink any quantity of cider. There is a great deal of chronic rheumatism here which I attribute to the cider; but all the men deny that. The longevity is quite as great as in places where no cider is drunk, and disease is not more rife here than elsewhere, with the exception of rheumatism. Cider is not necessarily an unwholesome drink. I have often had to order cider to invalids in preference to beer or wine, because beer and wine is either unwholesome or distasteful to persons accustomed to cider.

Evidence substantially similar to the above has also been received from H. D. Carden, Esq., of Worcester, and Dr. Davies, of Pershore.

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APPENDIX D.—EVIDENCE OF LABOURING MEN, THEIR WIVES, CHILDREN, &c.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

BRINSOP.

1. *Richard Lawrence*, labourer.—The wages of common day labourers here vary from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week, according to the ability of the man, besides drink. In harvest time they usually get 1*l.* extra. No food is given in harvest if the 1*l.* is allowed. Only a few men get mowing and hedging set them; and there are no regular privileges. Most of the farmers allow their men to plant potatoes at 1*d.* a score [*i.e.* a row of 20 yards] less than they will let their land to anybody else. A shepherd or waggoner gets 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a week more than common men. Boys are useful for minding pigs, &c. at the age of 10 or 11, but they cannot get a "place" before they are 13 or 14. Some of the women who live in the farmers' cottages and work for their landlords only receive 6*d.* a day.

DORSTONE.

2. *Mrs. Wood*, labourer's wife.—I have had 10 children. I have always been to work as much as I could. I used to take my children out from about the age of 9, when I went to pick stones, and occasionally when I went to clean roots; they carried the roots to me to clean. They are no use for other purposes when very young. They can get places from about the age of 10 to 13, but boys younger than girls; boys can go out scaring from the age of 7.

Surrey.

SURREY.

ALFOLD.

3. *Mrs. Matthews.*—My husband is a labourer; he earns 12*s.* a week. I have nine children (four boys aged 21, 13, 8, and 6). My boys went out to work, I think, before they were 9; the eldest had 1*s.* 6*d.* a week when he first went to work. He went "cleaving" [*i.e.*, splitting wood] with his uncle. Boys do not usually go to wood work as young as that, although I think they do to farm work; the money they earned would not keep them when at work. I think 9 is quite young enough for boys to go to work. Wood work is said to pay better than farm work. My boys were generally healthy, although they had colds occasionally. The rent of my cottage is 6*l.* [old, but roomy and comfortable, two rooms and scullery downstairs.—F. H. N.]

BYFLEET.

4. *William Muggleton*, gardener to Mr. Spicer.—Boys go to work in the fields about the age of 10; girls do no work until they go to service. Boys earn about 4*s.* a week at first. The rent of cottages is 3*s.* a week for a cottage with two bedrooms and one sitting-room, usually all on the ground floor. I don't think the children's earnings are of much value to their parents until they are 12 or 13, although many parents send them very young to work. I don't think women save much by working in the fields, there is so much waste at home. I had six children; none of them went to work until they were 13 or 14. I think they can learn their business as labourers well enough if they go out to work at that age.

FARLEY.

5. *Joseph Gattland.*—I am half past 6 years old. I look after the sheep; I have not been at it a week; I have done it once before; I shall go to school again as soon as the holidays are over. I earn 1*s.* a week. I come to work at 9 and go home at 6. My mother does not work in the fields.

[This boy was minding a flock of sheep in a stubble field when I saw him, August 15th.—F. H. N.]

FARNHAM.

6. *Mary Ann Hackman*, aged 16.—My father is a labourer, and has 10 children; I am the fifth. My mother goes out haymaking, hop-picking, tying, and washing, and she does other work when she is well enough, but she has bad legs now. I have one brother aged 20, and another aged 12; he earns 3*s.* a week; he has been at work 1½ years; he minds the cows; he went to school before he went to work. He used to go away from school occasionally for a week or two to mind a horse; he got 1*s.* a week for that; he usually only stayed out from 9 to 3. I went to work at turnip trimming last year; three of us went together; we got 9*d.* a day, and worked from 8 to 5. It was about November. It took half an hour to walk to work. We all go out to help hop-tying. We can all read a little. Father and mother are scholars and want to have us taught. When we are all at work it costs 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week more to provide for us than when we are not at work; I heard my mother say so. The rent of this cottage is 2*s.* All my brothers and sisters are at home.

[The cottage in which this family of father, mother, and 10 children lived was a very small one. The whole of the family slept in one room, which was divided by a wooden screen, the screen however was not carried quite across the room. There was only one window to supply light and air to the whole room on both sides of the screen. Said to be a very respectable family.—F. H. N.]

7. *James Bryant.*—I am a labourer; have a wife and 10 children; the eldest is 14. The five eldest are daughters (two of whom are out in service), and the five younger are sons. My daughters never went to work in the fields except in hop-picking. My eldest son is 7. There are some boys about here who go to work at 10, but that is young. A strong boy would be fit to go to work at 12, but I don't think he should go before. I think it stops their growth if they go to work before the age of 12. Several women work in the fields. I think they had better be at home looking after their children to keep the place tidy and clean. Four of my children go to school; they begin to go to school at about 3; we pay 2*d.* for one, 3*d.* for two, and 4*d.* for four or more. Most children go to school. I know a few who do not. I never went to school for a day myself. A boy might go out scaring or weeding a little before he is 12, but not for any other work. I live 2½ miles from here, and work from 7 to 5 summer and winter. I am absent from home from 6 to 6. I pay 5*l.* a year for my cottage and garden of 30 poles. I also have about half an acre of land with my father, for which we pay at the rate of 25*s.* a year. We grow corn and potatoes. My wife comes out hopping, and brings all the children out; it takes almost all the time of the elder children to look after the younger. A child can pick a few hops at the age of 5. My wife and family earn about 15*s.* a week for three weeks. My wife goes out tying in May for a month, and earns 10*s.* a week at that. She does not go to work in harvest Our hops are cultivated by the piece, and are not let by the acre. My wages are 15*s.* a week, and I don't do much task work. My children who have been at school can read and write; they have to go 1½ miles to school; they read to me sometimes.

8. *George Bryant*, aged 15.—I have been at work three years. I never went out to work at all before three years ago. I have been to night school during the last three winters. Very few boys go to the night school. I have one brother and three sisters. There are three bedrooms in our cottage.

[Read a little. I was told that this boy and the last were very favourable specimens in point of education. They both gave their answers well, but this boy was quite unable to read a second standard reading book fluently.—F. H. N.]

SANDERSTEAD.

9. *Mrs. Hook.*—My husband is head carter. I have three boys at work; they none of them went out to work before the age of 10; they none of them earned less than 6*d.* a day when they first went out. When they go bird-minding they start before 6 a.m., and go out on Sunday. I don't like bird-minding, the boys are so exposed to the weather. Boys are not fit to go out with the horses before the age of 13 or 14; at that age they earn about 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. Carter boys go out about 4.30 a.m. and return home at 6 p.m. When a man is constantly employed by a farmer the farmer will often find regular employment for his sons under the age of 13, otherwise boys under the age of 13 are usually only employed about six months a year. Most of the boys about here are pretty good scholars; I don't think they can learn enough by remaining at school up to the age of 10 only, *i.e.*, if they do not attend at all afterwards. It never answers for a woman to go out to work; if you earn 1*s.* you lose 1*s.* 6*d.* I used to go to work, and then had to sit up at nights to wash. I think it would be very fair to pass a law to make children attend school; when they grow up they lose many a good place for want of education. It does not pay to send children to work until they can earn 6*d.* a day.

THORPE.

10. *G. Taylor*, labourer.—Men's wages about here are 13*s.* in winter, sometimes 12*s.* They have never varied much within my recollection. Boys are as useful for farm work when they have not been educated as when they have. Carters and shepherds have 15*s.* It does not pay to keep a sow except for manure. You can have two litters of pigs a year; usually about 10 in each; the young pigs fetch 10*s.* when about seven weeks old. It would cost 2*l.* 10*s.* to keep the sow during the seven weeks the young are with her, and about 6*d.* a week at other times.

[If she has two litters a year the cost of keeping the sow would be 5*l.* during the 14 weeks the young were with her, and 19*s.* during the remaining 38 weeks of the year. Say 6*l.* for food per annum; two litters of 10 each at 10*s.* = 10*l.*, showing a profit of 4*l.* if they live and do well, but this is a great chance.—F. H. N.]

WONERSH.

11. *Mrs. Canning.*—My husband is a labourer. I have had 12 children, 10 are alive, and six of them at home. There are only two rooms in my cottage, one bedroom and one sitting-room; good garden; rent, 2*s.* a week. All my boys went to work at the age of 7 or 8; they earned 1*s.* a week at first, and then 1*s.* 6*d.* Some of them have been at school a little, but not much; the school is so far off that it is difficult for them to go regularly. Most boys go to work at the age of 10 or 11, but my family is so large that I could not keep them at home up to that age. We get our supply of fuel from turf which we cut off the common.

[This was one of several cottages all of the same character on a common. They were at a long distance, nearly two miles, from the village, and consequently neglected.—F. H. N.]

WORPLESDON.

12. *Mrs. Bullock*, labourer's wife.—I have lived here two years; I lived in Norfolk before that. I think women work in the fields as much here as in Norfolk. I went to work in March "couching," and have been at work pretty regularly since, when the weather permits. There are three rooms to my cottage, and the rent is 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. There have generally been two more women at work with me when I have been at work; I don't often go to work between October and March. I had a better cottage in Norfolk than I have here, and only paid 1*s.* a week, but the garden was not so good as my present one. There are no gangs of any kind about here. I have never seen children under 12 years of age at work here. I find I am about as well off here as in Norfolk.

WARWICKSHIRE.

ALLESLEY.

13. *John Sanders*, labourer. — When at day work I get 12*s.* a week and beer. I can get take-work in winter for six weeks or two months, but cannot earn more money in winter by take-work than by day work. In summer we can get about two months take-work. When at harvest we can earn on an average about 1*l.* a week, at hoeing 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and rather more than that at mowing. I have two children, the eldest is 10; boys do not go to work about here much before 13. I rent a cottage and 1½ acres of land of my master for 8*l.* 10*s.* a year, and another 1½ acres of another gentleman for 5*l.* It is all grass, except a small garden. I have kept a cow for the last seven years; I make and sell butter, and also keep a pig; I don't drink much milk myself. I am very well satisfied to pay the rent I do for my land. I have to be absent from my regular work for about three weeks a year to make up the hedges, spread dung, and make hay on my own land; but that work comes principally in winter when my master can spare me. My wife milks and looks after the cow. I think I am better off than I should be if I worked all my time as a farm labourer.

[Mr. Burton, this man's employer, told me that he had tried the practice of letting land to his labourers in other instances than the above, and that he fully approved of the system. He thought that it made his men more contented and satisfied as labourers, and less disposed to leave him. At the same time he thought that the object should be to enable them to keep a cow, and that it would not answer to give them much arable land.—F. H. N.]

EXHALL.

14. *Thomas Loach*, farm labourer.—I have been working for Mr. Startin for four years; I overlook the other labourers. I get 16*s.* a week with house and garden, fire and candles found, that is for myself and my wife; she looks after the diary, and has nothing extra for that. The labourers here get 12*s.* a week with or 13*s.* without beer; they get the same summer and winter. At Stratford-on-Avon, where I was brought up, labourers received 11*s.* in winter and 12*s.* in summer, and 4*l.* during the harvest months. Here they have no fixed allowance during harvest; they make what they can. I could not get a good house here under 1*s.* 9*d.* a week; firing is cheaper, but rent dearer here than at Stratford. I have heard many labourers say that they would like their children to have more education, but that they cannot afford to give it to them. I don't think any boy should go out to work until he is 15, at any rate not in winter. I left school at the age of 12. I think I should have been more useful to my master if I had remained at school up to the age of 15 or 16. Many

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of the parish schools are not good; I have heard men say that it is of no use sending their children to certain schools because they are not well taught. I think that most parents could do without their children's earnings up to the age of 11 or 12 without inconvenience.

15. *John Enser*, labourer, Exhall.—I have worked here all my life. Children should go to work at the age of 8 or 9; parents could not afford to do without their earnings after that; but farmers don't want them from the end of October until March, and they could go to school then. They are that stubborn and masterful that you could not teach them unless they were taught early. Boys under 12 earn 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. They get headstrong if they are at school too long. There are very few men here who can do all work, such as hedging, draining, thatching, &c. I never knew women go to work except during harvest. Parents are really anxious to send their children to school until they can get work for them. I don't think it would be a hardship to prevent them going to work until they can read and write.

HARBURY.

16. *Mrs. Austin.*—My husband is a labourer, he earns 12*s.* a week. I have no children. I go to work whenever I can get anything to do. I usually work for Mr. ——— at Chesterton. I can usually get regular work from April until after harvest. When I work by the day I earn 8*d.* a day; the only piece-work we do is reaping. When I go to work at Chesterton I leave home at 8, and get home at 5 in winter and 5.30 in summer. After harvest we can get work at turnipping at about 8*s.* an acre; I cannot turn an acre of turnips a week. I have not done any work now (December 16) for this month, but if this had been a good year for turnips I should have had work every day.

I have nobody but my husband to look after, and I have plenty of time to do that before and after work. It costs a good deal more in boots and in clothes at work than at home; I don't make much, but I have been used to work and like it better than staying at home. Women can earn more at harvest than at any other work. I once earned 5*s.* a day at harvest, but cannot usually do that. I went to work when I was 10 or 11 years old.

The children about here are sent out to work when they can get 4*d.* a day; it does not answer to send them out for that money; if it does them no harm it certainly does them no good to "maul about" in the wet.

KINWARTON.

17. *William Sadler*, farm labourer.—Most farmers about here employ boys with the horses. I went to work when I was 6, they now go at the age of 8 or 9. I have two sons, they both went out between 6 and 7. It does them no harm if they are used as they ought to be, that is if there parents can provide for them; it does them no harm going to plough, but sometimes they have to carry water for threshing machines which mauls them. They have to be at work from 6.30 a.m. until 6 p.m. They stop for lunch at 11, and dinner at 2.30 or 3 after they bring the horses in. They sometimes come in for dinner in the middle of the day and go out again. The weeding is done sometimes by women and sometimes by boys. Women do a smart bit of work in summer but not much in winter. Hoeing is the hardest work they do except harvest. They earn 9*d.* a day; some women who have children put them out at 3*d.* a day. When boys first go out to work they get 2½*d.* and some 3*d.* a day. I think it is worth while for a parent to send them out for 2*s.* a week but not for less. I think some parents send their children out to work to please the farmers; the farmers let the cottages on condition of the woman and children going to work for them, and press the women to come out oftener and the children younger than they otherwise would do. If there is a strong family (say four), a man could not afford to keep his children at home until 10; after boys begin to work their employment continues all the year round. More boys are wanted now than can be had. Men's wages here are 10*s.* with beer or 11*s.* without. I had sooner have two quarts of good beer a day than 1*s.* a week. During the four harvest weeks they get 1*l.* a week and beer without stint. There is a statute fair at Alcester; I don't see that it does any harm. Many are hired at the Chronicle office now, that does as well as hiring at a fair. Employers generally ask for characters now.

SHERBOURN.

18. *James Bostock*, farm labourer.—I work for Mr. Hortin. I have 13*s.* a week, and pay 3*l.* a year for my cottage and garden, and 16*s.* for my allotment. We have no beer allowed. Mr. Hortin pays 1*s.* a week more than others instead of beer. Sometimes we don't make 10*s.* extra by piecework during the whole year; we can never make 2*l.* (this was besides the 5*l.* allowed at harvest as stated by Mr. Hortin.—F. H. N.). My wife never goes out to work in the fields; she has four children to see to at home. Lads should not go to work till they are 10 or 11; I have none old enough to go. I had as soon rent a cottage under Mr. Hortin as Miss Ryland (the landowner), but farmers ain't all like master. I think all the children about here go to school. Lads who have been to school are more useful than others; they can usually get work about the age of 11, and are old enough to be trusted with horses then. The education is better now than it used to be when I went to school; we never learnt to write. We have a medical club here but no other; a man who has four or five children has no money to give to a club. I think it best for lads to board at their masters' houses; they have a good bellyfull of victuals then, and they cannot go where they like and get into mischief on a Sunday then; they will get a doing what they ought not if they are not looked after; and if they are under a master they have to go to church once or twice on a Sunday, besides prayers before they go to bed. I dont think any harm comes of statute fairs; many lads can get places at them who otherwise would not be able to get them.

STONELEIGH.

19. *John Thomas.*—I work for Mr. Simpson. I was carter to Mr. Robbins for 10 years. I have lived all my life in Stoneleigh. I was 10 years old when I began to work; few go to work as young as that about here. My two sons went out, one at 8 and one at 10. I think they ought to begin between 10 and 11. I don't think that the money earned by boys of 8 or 9 years old is sufficient to make it worth while for parents to send them out at that age. I think a boy could learn his duty as a farm labourer if he began to work at 10 years old. Boys of 10 cannot control the horses if they are any ways resolute horses. I have won five prizes at ploughing. I have seen a plough used with three horses abreast; but three horses in a line which walk on the hard land of the subsoil can draw more easily than three, two of which walk on the slippery unploughed land. Where three plough abreast it is a decided advantage that there are three instead of one horse to draw the plough out at the end of the field. Women go out to work in hay-making and harvest, but very little at other times; it is very healthy, but not really economical. They don't earn enough to make it worth their while to go out. If I had to work at a distance, say two miles from the village, I should prefer to live there than in the village. No beer is allowed here; I think we should be stronger and better workmen if it were. I take my cottage by the year, and pay rent half-yearly; I prefer that to a weekly tenancy. Some farmers in this neighbourhood take cottages with their farms; that is a good plan, but I should prefer to rent of the landlord. The farmers never use any pressure in order to induce a woman or boy to work for them. I have

a quarter of an acre of allotment. I can manage that with only a loss of two days to plant and two to get up potatoes. I think it would be a very good thing to pass a law to make all read and write; although it might be a hardship on some.

A good deal of work is done about here by the piece; I think that an ordinary labourer would earn the following wages by piecework:—

	£	s.
Turnip hoeing, 3 weeks at 16s. =	2	8
Mowing 3 „ 30s. =	4	10
Harvest 4 „ 54s. =	10	16
Cleaning turnips or wurzel, one week at 18s. - =	0	18
	18	12
41 weeks day work at 12s. =	24	12
	43	4

= about 16s. 7d. per week throughout the year.

20. *William Harris*, labourer, Stoneleigh.—Has 13s. a week; three children at home, eldest 15.

Thomas Painter, labourer, Kenilworth.—Has 13s. a week; three children at home, eldest 23.

We work for Mr. T. Harris. Painter's eldest son went to work when he was 6. Many boys go out to work before they are 10, where there is a strong family; we think 12 quite soon enough for a boy to go out; we think there is a very little profit in sending a boy out to work when they earn earn only 2s. a week or so. Painter pays 2s. 1d. per week for his cottage at Kenilworth, with a very small piece of garden; Harris pays 40s. a year for his cottage at Stoneleigh with a good garden. It is a great benefit to a man to have land at a reasonable rent. Some women go out to work here; it answers very well for women who have no children to go out to work in summer; they can do a little house work in the morning and evening, and are sometimes allowed a day a week for charring. All the boys about here go to school; a boy who has been to school is much more useful to a farmer than one who has not. There are some allotments at Kenilworth let at 2s. or 2s. 6d. a perch. A man can manage a quarter of an acre of land with his ordinary work.

We have 13s. a week in summer and 12s. in winter, and we can usually earn 18s. a week for a fortnight at mowing and 20s. a week for one month at harvest work; this is besides the beer we are allowed worth 1s. a week.

According to the above statement the annual wages may be reckoned as follows:—

	£	s.
2 weeks mowings at - 18s. =	1	16
4 „ harvest at - 20s. =	4	0
23 „ day-work at - 13s. =	14	19
12 „ „ - 12s. =	13	16
	34	11
Beer = 1s. per week =	2	12
Annual wages -	37	3

= rather more than 14s. 3d. per week.

Wolverton.

21. *Mouser*, labourer.—I am in receipt of parish relief on account of an accident I had. There is no school at Wolverton, there never was one. The children have to go to school at Snitterfield (nearly two miles). That is too far; children cannot go above half a mile to school in winter. I pay 55s. a year for my house. [The house consisted of one room downstairs and one up, there being a bed in the downstairs room which was used as the living room. The rooms were very small, and the cottage in very bad repair.—F. H. N.] I had sooner pay 8l. if I could work and had regular wages, than live here. No house should be built with less than two bedrooms; there are many here with only one. S—— with his 13 children had only one room; he has 11s. a week; most wages has sunk to 11s. now; not much piecework is done. Men get about 4l. extra for harvest.

WILTSHIRE.

Ashton Giffard.

22. *John Topp* and *William Olden*, agricultural labourers.—We have lived here all our lives. Boys don't go out to work here as young as they did formerly; they now go out to work about the age of 9. They then usually get about 1s. 6d. a week, and can usually get work all the year round; if they go on Sunday they get an extra 6d. a week. It costs about 1s. a week more to provide for a boy when he is at work than at school; but we are glad to send him out to work for whatever we can get by his labour. The money is so important to us that we are obliged to send them to work. Our regular wages here are 10s. all the year round paid wet or dry. Olden goes mowing at 2s. an acre if in the fields, or 3s. an acre in the water meadows. He can earn about 3s. 6d. a day at that, but no beer is found, and beer costs 10d. a day; that lasts about six weeks. At harvest we usually have about one week's reaping in which we earn 30s., then mowing barley and oats for about a fortnight, at which we earn as much as at grass mowing; but no beer is allowed at harvest. If strangers come (many of whom do come) they have beer allowed.

Topp does not mow, but hoes turnips; that lasts about two months, and he can make about 3s. a day at it.

Wages are paid here fortnightly on Mondays or Tuesdays. There are not one out of five men who earn as much as we do. There are many men who earn nothing more than the regular 10s. a week all the year round. But those who do not get the extra work after harvest (such as mowing barley and hoeing turnips) have the extra 12s. a week for three weeks during harvest in addition to their regular pay; but that is on condition of their coming at 5 a.m. and working until 9 or 10 p.m. The money does not average more than 10s. a week during the regular hours. Topp belongs to a club, not the county club, in the village, but Olden does not. Some women go out to work in haymaking and harvest, but not regularly at other times. We think a woman gets out of pocket more than she gets in by going out to work; they are paid 8d. a day.

Most of the labourers here live in the farmers' cottages; that is a very bad thing, because if you don't do just what the farmer wants you have to leave the cottage. They always expect the boys to work for them. They wants to know if yourv'e "got ere a boy big enough to come out, and if "you don't let un come out they don't like it."

Olden's Earnings.

	s.
6 weeks mowing grass at 21s. =	126
1 week reaping - at 30s. =	30
2 weeks mowing barley at 21s. =	42
43 weeks - - at 10s. =	430
	628 = 31l. 8s.

= about 12s. per week.

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Topp's Earnings.

		s.
8 weeks hoeing	- at 18*s.*	= 144
1 week reaping	- at 30*s.*	= 30
43 weeks -	- at 10*s.*	= 430
		604 = 30*l.* 4*s.*

= (about) 11*s.* 8*d.* per week.

BERWICK ST. JOHN.

23. *Mrs. Lush.*—I have been in the habit of going to field work for 20 years. There is no regular work for boys until they can go into the stables at about the age of 12; there is very little work for them before that age. I sometimes go out thinning mangold; when at that work eight or 10 small boys and sometimes girls are set to work together with a woman to look after them; they are paid 4*d.* a day, and they work from 8 to 5, with one hour for dinner. The children who do that are from 7 to 10 years old, and the work lasts about a fortnight; no other crop is thinned in that way. I think it is best for all women to stay at home; I shall never go to work again. Field work is bad for the health; women have enough to do at home; they cannot make the best of everything if they are absent from home all day, besides which the family has to live entirely on bread and tea because there is no time to cook vegetables. If small children are put out to be taken care of that costs 1*s.* a week for each child, besides food. If left at home with a big child sometimes they come to mischief. I think boys should not go out to work until they are 12; they are better at school up to that age, and can learn their work as labourers well if they begin at 12. Many cottages here are held by farmers; wages are paid once a month, and when they are paid the rent for the cottages is kept back by the farmers; sometimes the women who live in the farmers' houses are compelled to work for him when he is short of hands. There is no work done by children in this neighbourhood to interfere with all staying at school up to the age of 10, and many until 12.

BIDDESTON.

24. *William Woodman*, labourer.—I don't think there is much difference in the amount of schooling boys get now and used to get formerly. Very few of those who are now growing up can read. We have constant work for boys from the age of 7 or 8; parents could not afford to keep them at school up to the age of 10. It costs very little more to provide for a boy when at work than when at school; I have three sons myself. I am a carter; my wages are 11*s.* 6*d.* a week; I receive no beer, except in the summer. I pay 80*s.* a year rent for my cottage, and 13*s.* 4*d.* for an allotment of quarter of an acre; I pay my cottage rent quarterly, and think that that is the best plan. There is a school in the parish kept by a schoolmistress; not half the boys who go there learn anything; I think they would attend more regularly if there was a master; they do no good now. Everybody should be able to read and write. No young men are leaving the parish; one family went away last year. All the people here work in the fields. The wages are 10*s.*, and sometimes only 9*s.* in winter. I have no extra money allowed me in harvest. The women go to work a little in summer but not in winter. I don't see how poor people could afford to keep their children at school up to the age of 9 or 10 with their present wages. It is a bad plan for landlords to let cottages with the farms, because if you affront the farmer you are turned out at once. I have an allotment of a quarter of an acre; I can easily manage that. I grow a little corn; we don't often get one sack off 20 poles; the farmers don't object to our growing corn. Bread has cost me about 6*s.* 6*d.* a week this summer when bread was at 7*d.* or 8*d.* My family consume about 10 loaves a week.

[When I saw this man he was accompanied by a carter boy aged 6, who had been at work nearly one year; he was going to school this winter, and expected to have permanent work from next spring. W. Woodman told me that the boy could be trusted to drive carts, &c. alone, and also drive plough.—F.H.N.]

25. *Eli Howell.*—My father is a farm labourer. I went to work when I was 6; a boy who bids hard gets 3*d.* a day at first at "starving;" I have never been to school since I first began to work except on Sundays. I have two brothers younger than myself; they went to work about the age of 8 or 9; that is the usual age for boys to begin; they drive plough at that age, and can generally get work all the year round. I now earn 6*s.* a week; that does not much more than pay for my victuals; my father helps me to buy my clothes. Neither my brothers nor myself can read or write; very few of the boys about here can. My mother works in the park all the year; she receives 1*s.* a week for it; she is away from home from 8 until 5; she often has to sit up late to mend our clothes, &c.

BISHOPSTON.

26. *Thomas Halliday*, labourer.—I work for Mr. —. He farms above 1,000 acres. He employs six boys. The youngest began to drive plough at the age of about 10, and earned 2*s.* a week at first. Mr. — employs as many boys as any man. He might employ one more in summer than in winter, because more teams go out. The smallest boy goes to school again in winter if he is not wanted to work. Occasionally a boy is employed for shepherding in summer, and for scaring, but not on this farm. No dibbling is done here. Girls go out to work about the age of 12 or 13. I have three sons; one aged 21 went to work when he was 10; another aged 10 has been minding pigs one summer, but I have kept him at school this. The wages here are 10*s.* in winter, and 11*s.* in summer; we usually have 1*s.* a week less than in the surrounding parishes. Lump work is mowing, harvest, and hoeing; a man gets 3*s.* or 4*s.* an acre for hoeing, and can hoe about 4½ acres a week. Carters and shepherds get a 1*s.* a week more than other men, and no houses are allowed. Not many women go to work in winter, but almost all go in summer; the husbands could not earn enough without their wives to keep the family. Carters get 1*s.* a day extra during harvest; and the shepherd gets double money or his food allowed him during the lambing season. About 14 or 15 years ago we only had 6*s.* a week. One year we had to work on the road for only 5*s.* a week, and I had four children then. I have a small bit of bacon every day now, it costs 10*d.* or 11*d.* a pound. I buy two bushels of malt in summer to make beer; they reckon 18 gallons to the bushel, but with sugar and ginger I have made double that. I think the landlord is the best man to keep the cottages in repair; he ought to keep them in his own hands, they are cheaper rented when it is so. I have known a man have to leave his house when he offended his landlord by not letting his wife and children go to work. I rent my cottage by the year; I prefer that because a man is not liable to be turned out; but cottages here are let on various terms; if a cottage is let by the week, and there is a garden to it, a man may be turned out before the crops which he has sown come up. The women who go to work go from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; they only work in dry weather, and get 9*d.* a day. I have an allotment of a quarter of an acre for which I pay 13*s.*; a day labourer can manage that. A few of the new cottages here have three bedrooms but most only two.

BURBAGE.

27. *M. Blundy*, labourer.—Seven children (four boys), eldest aged 19.

George Ruddell, labourer.—Seven children, eldest 16 (two boys). Lived at Burbage. Our boys went to work first, some at 8 or 9, and some at the age of 12, they had 2*s.* 6*d.*; 12 is older than most boys go, but they usually go at about the age of 8 or 9, and earn 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week. I think that it would

answer to keep children at school until they are 12; it is not worth while to send them out for 2*s.* a week, but parents don't think of that, they want the ready money. Most parents send their children to school a little, but not long enough to learn to read and write; the children don't care about learning themselves until they are 11 or 12, and the parents don't take pains to force them to go to school up to that age, which they should do. I think that a boy going to work at 12 would earn as much as they do now at that age, although they begin at 9 or 10. They could get better places on account of their education. Farmers like errand boys, &c. who can read and write. They would be able to learn to plough as well if they began at 11 or 12 as if they began younger. It is not economical on part of farmers to employ young boys; the horses and ploughs are not worked nearly as well by them as they are by older boys. We think a boy might learn to plough well if properly taught although he did not begin until the age of 13 or 14. We have not known of any cases of boys being injured by overwork at a young age. We think there would be no hardship in compelling parents to send their children to school, if they could only provide for them, which would be a hardship where there were several young children.

We have cottages and 50 or 60 lug of ground; we don't want to grow corn, it does not answer; we want to grow vegetables. We both of us live in the village; we had sooner live in the village than live one mile or 1½ miles from it, close to our work; it is more convenient for the children. Blundy has always earned 2*s.* a day regularly, besides hoeing, for about 13 weeks at 7*s.* an acre; he can hoe five acres a week on an average. Any able-bodied man who works hard can earn about 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week.

[Blundy's earnings were—

		s.
39 weeks at 12*s.*	=	468
13 „ 35*s.*	=	455
		923

= 17*s.* 9*d.* per week.]

BROUGHTON GIFFARD.

28. *John Woodham*, farm labourer.—I have lived here more than 40 years. My master's farm is quite small. For about the last seven years my wages have been 11*s.* a week. I have two pints of beer allowed per day all the year; that is worth about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. I get extra work in the summer at mowing and reaping; that lasts about one month; but on a large farm lump work would last three months. I have to milk all the time I am at that work, and earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. If the farm were large I should be able to work at lump work all day for about three months, and should earn about 4*s.* 6*d.* a day. I could mow about an acre and reap about half an acre a day; on an average about 10*s.* an acre is paid for reaping. No beer is allowed when men are at lump work. No potato ground is allowed us. There is no hoeing to be done in this neighbourhood. Some men go away from here on to the downs to reap; there the harvest is 10 days earlier than it is here, but milkers cannot go away. There are generally about two odd men on a large dairy farm of 300 or 400 acres, and none but they can go away to get work elsewhere. I used to earn more money when I worked on a larger farm than I do now. All the time a man is at lump work beer costs him 10*d.* a day, besides the expense of tools; allowing for these expenses he can only make 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.

[This man's earnings were—

		s.
4 weeks piecework at 15*s.*	=	60
48 „ - at 11*s.*	=	528
Beer - at 1*s.* 6*d.*	=	78
		666 = 33*l.* 6*s.*

= (about) 12*s.* 9*d.* per week.

Said to be rather above the average as a labourers.—F. H. N.]

29. *John Marks*, farm labourer.—I have always worked at farm work, but chiefly at job work. I never worked for two years for the same man. 10*s.* a week with two pints of beer a day are the ordinary wages about here; if men work on Sunday they have 1*s.* a week extra. I could usually get six weeks work at mowing during the hay time, but only about two weeks harvest. I could mow 1½ acre a day at 4*s.* an acre, but beer costs 1*s.* 2*d.* a day; we always find our own tools, and work over hours to earn that. Very little work at draining can be got about here. I never went out of the place for work in my life. Some go away for weeks together and come back not a penny better off than they went away. In winter I could get jobs at hedging, draining, and drawing timber. I think I was about as well off as the men who stuck to regular work. Not one in 20 men could mow as much as I could.

30. *William Hurn.*—I have worked at farm work here since 1844 on a dairy farm of more than 300 acres. I have always had the superintendence of the cattle. I get 12*s.* a week, and two quarts of beer a day. I never do lump work. Besides this I get a sort of present of 26*s.* at Lady-day, and the same amount again at Michaelmas. The common labourers get 10*s.* a week, and milkers 1*s.* a week extra. In summer they have two pints of beer a day, and three in winter. On our farm there are five milkers and two odd men; some boys of 10 can milk, but that is very young. They go away from school before 9, and earn about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Most of the farmers let their labourers have potato ground, some rent free and some not. I have 20 lug at 4*d.* a lug. The farmers sometimes ploughs and manures the ground for us, and sometimes not.

[This man's earnings were—

		s.
52 weeks at 12*s.*	=	624
Extras at Lady-day and Michaelmas.	=	52
Do. beer at 1*s.* 6*d.*	=	78
		754 = 37*l.* 14*s.*

= (about) 14*s.* 4*d.* per week.]

DURNFORD.

31. *Mrs. Viney.*—I have six children, five of whom are boys. The boys generally go out to work about the age of 8; I think that is about the age they should go to work unless they are very small. They do not go to school after they have once gone to work. They earn 2*s.* a week when they first go to work. It is very desirable that all boys should be taught to read and write if they could be provided for. Women only get 6*d.* a day for working, except during hay time and harvest. It is not a good plan to let the farmers hire cottages with their farms; those who live in the farmer's cottages have to put up with a great deal, because if out of occupation you are out of your house. If the farmer wants the women to work for him they are obliged to go whether they like it or not.

GREAT BEDWYN.

32. *George Grace*, labourer.—I work for Mr. ——; I have worked for him for three or four years. I work at chaff cutting for about seven months in winter, and at hoeing, mowing, and harvesting in summer. Wages now are 9*s.*; they are usually raised to 10*s.* in summer if the price of bread rises. I can usually get about a fortnight's hay mowing, and earn 3*s.* a day at that; after that I get turnip hoeing for one month, and earn 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* at that; during harvest I earn 4*s.* 6*d.* a day reaping for one week, and 3*s.* 6*d.* a day mowing barley for three weeks. No beer or potato ground is allowed. I hire 20 lug

Wiltshire.
Mr. Norman.
D.
i.

of ground of Lord Ailesbury, for which I pay 5*s.* a year. Most of the men about here earn about the same as I do. Master pays about the same as the rest.

[This man's earnings were—

		s.
2 weeks mowing at 18*s.*	=	36
4 weeks turnip hoeing at 13*s.* 6*d.*	=	54
1 week reaping at 27*s.*	=	27
3 weeks barley mowing at 21*s.*	=	63
42 weeks at day work at 9*s.* 6*d.*	=	399
		579 = 28*l.* 19*s.*

= nearly 11*s.* 2*d.* per week.]

33. *George Williams*, aged 60, farm labourer.—I have lived in this parish all my life. Wages here have been 10*s.*, but have, I think, lately been dropped to 9*s.* [This was so.—F. H. N.] I go grubbing wood all the winter, and earn about 9*s.* a week at that. I don't go to regular work; a good many men about here do job work like myself. I can usually earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day at hoeing in summer; and get about three weeks hoeing in summer, but last year I only had one week in consequence of the failure of the turnip crop. I can earn 3*s.* a day at grass mowing for about eight or 10 days. I receive about 10*s.* an acre for reaping at harvest, and earn about 30*s.* a week for three weeks. I can only get about eight weeks job work during the summer. No beer is allowed, except just a little during the grass mowing; no potato ground is allowed. I pay 40*s.* for my house and quarter acre of garden ground. I don't earn more than 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week during the rest of the year. 10*s.* is the highest sum I have ever earned for weekly wages. I think I earn just about as much as farmers' regular men. For several years past wages have always been 10*s.* in summer, and usually only 9*s.* in winter; seven or eight years ago they were 8*s.* There are more men here than there is work for; there is not as much work as there used to be on account of the machinery. I should be better off if I had regular work, but I cannot get it. I have tea and bread and butter for breakfast, bread and bacon for dinner, and the same for supper. I don't drink beer more than once or twice a month. I don't belong to a club. I have had 10 children.

[This man's wages were—

	s.	*d.*
3 weeks hoeing at 15*s.*	= 45	0
1 week mowing at 18*s.*	= 18	0
3 weeks harvest at 30*s.*	= 90	0
45 weeks day work at 9*s.* 6*d.*	= 427	6
	580	6 = 29*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.*

= (about) 11*s.* 2*d.* per week.—F. H. N.]

HORNINGSHAM.

34. *Mrs. Butt*, labourer's wife.—I have had 13 children; eight are alive, but only three of them at home. Two of my boys went out to work at the age of 10; that is young for this neighbourhood. Another son, who is 13, has only been out for occasional jobs, and gets 2*s.* a week. Boys don't often go to work about here before they are 11 or 12. There are too many boys about; they only get 1*s.* 6*d.* when they first go out, but it is hardly worth while sending them out for that money. Parents can afford to keep their children up to the age of 10 or 11 without inconvenience. Women don't go out to work much; it does not answer for those who have families. We pay 1*s.* 3*d.* a week for our cottage; it is paid half-yearly. I don't object to paying the rent half-yearly. My boy also goes with the horses; goes out at 5 in the morning and does not get home until 7, or later. A good many times last winter he missed the night school from coming home too late. The night school is at a quarter past 7. None of the boys about here are hired by the year. The shepherd boys have to work all Sundays.

LATTON.

35. *Mrs. Ann Howes.*—I have been at all kinds of farm work; I have been at it all my life since I was 11; I have had 13 children; 11 are now alive, and four at home. It does not answer for women who have children to go to work; they cannot work at home and in the fields too. I was very strong, and could work night and day, but the hard work injured me; it affected my heart. I always liked field-work, but many women are broke down by it. I used sometimes to leave five or six children at home with one to look after them; a girl can do that. It is good for women to go to work in spring and summer, but not in winter; I always got behind in my family work when I went to work in the fields. I think it might answer for a woman who had no children to go to work in the fields, but she could do better if she remained at home and got a little needlework to do. If I had to begin again I would not go out to work except for hay and harvest. My youngest daughter, aged 15, has been out for haymaking and hoeing two summers. My boys never went to regular work until the age of 10, although they did a very few jobs before that age. All my children can read and write. I never heard of farmers putting pressure on women and children in order to induce them to come to work; women work quite as much now as they used to do. I have been in the turnip field pulling turnips with the ice covering my dress half way up.

MANNINGFORD BRUCE.

36. *Emmanuel Farr*, labourer.—I work for Mr. J. Stratton; I have eight children, five sons and three daughters. One of my sons is at work here as an agricultural labourer, and two are in London. The boys about here usually begin to work about the age of 9 or 10, or if they are small not until they are older; they usually receive 2*s.* 6*d.* a week at first. One of my sons who went to work 16 years ago received only 1*s.* 6*d.* at first. In hard times it is worth while to send a boy out to work if he can only earn 1*s.* 6*d.* Men are never hired by the year about here. If a man has a wife and four or five children he could not afford to keep his children at school up to the age of 10; if he had only two children he might. I think that every labourer about here can earn on an average an extra shilling a week at piecework besides his ordinary day wages of 10*s.* a week, and besides his extra earnings during the two harvest months. No married women go out to work here. My daughter went out to work; it is better than remaining at home idle, and I don't think that any harm comes to them from it. I think it would be a hardship to poor people to prevent their sending their children to work until they can read and write.

STRATFORD-UNDER-THE-CASTLE.

37 (a). *Mrs. Archer.*—I have two sons at work; the eldest, aged 12, went to work when he was 6½; he worked for about six months in the year for 2*s.* a week until he was 9, and has been at work continuously since then; at the age of 9 he began to get 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. If I had my time over again I would send him to work at the age at which he went. His health has always been good. My second son went to work when he was 7 or 8; he was cowkeeping from about May until November at 1*s.* 9*d.* a week; he used to go to school before he went to work, and will go again when it is over. I think that other boys go to work as early as mine did. My husband earns 10*s.* a week.

WOOTTON RIVERS.

37 (b). *Daniel Fubbens.*—I am no scholar; I don't know how to spell my name. I have worked here ever since I was a boy, pretty near 40 years. I am carter to Mr. Keevil; I get 11*s.* a week, one quart of beer a day, and 3*l.* at Michaelmas; I also get 1*s.* for every 20 sacks of corn I take out; I don't think that comes to more than 1*l.* a year; perhaps I might earn another pound by doing piecework at harvest. Some of the

farmers have sunk the wages to 9*s.* for the winter. Wages have been about 10*s.* for some time past.

[This man's wages were—

	s.
52 weeks at 11*s.*	=572
Extra at Michaelmas	= 60
Corn taken out	= 20
Piecework during harvest	= 20
Beer	= 50
	722 per year=36*l.* 2*s.*

= nearly 14*s.* a week—F. H. N.]

38. *William Lay*, farm labourer. — I have worked on this farm for more than 50 years. I receive 10*s.* a week now; I think I have been getting those wages for five or six years; master pays 1*s.* a week more than other farmers. No beer or potato ground is allowed about here. At harvest we earn about 3*s.* a day for three weeks or a month, but we have to provide ourselves with beer then, which costs from 6*d.* to 1*s.* a day. I think it is 10 years since I received 8*s.* a week, and several years since I received 9*s.* I get about 30*s.* extra at harvest, and a very little hoeing, not worth 10*s.* to me. Master has a thrashing machine; I get 2*d.* an hour when at work with that, and generally a pint of small beer, but the machine work is worth very little to me, not 10*s.* a year. I live in a lodging and pay 30*s.* a year for it (that includes washing and mending), and 1*l.* for firing.

[This man's earnings were—

	s.
52 weeks at 10*s.*	= 520
Extra for harvest	30
Extra for hoeing, threshing, &c. (say)	10
	560=28*l.*

=(about) 10*s.* 9*d.* per week.

I read the above statement over to this man's employer, who said that he thought it was about correct. He was not aware, however, that he paid 1*s.* a week more than his neighbours. He said this man was a steady common labourer.—F. H. N.]

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Alvechurch.

39. *Thomas Phillips*, labourer. — Four children, eldest 20. The wages here are 12*s.* a week; some farmers give beer and some don't. We usually get about three weeks work at harvest, when we earn about 3*s.* a day and are allowed five quarts of beer. We only have about one week's haymaking, during which we earn about 3*s.* beyond our ordinary wages. At hoeing we cannot get much above the day wages. I have two sons. Some few boys go to work here at the age of 10, but I think that as a general rule they are not much fit to go until they are 14. A man cannot make much money by sending his boys out to odd jobs. I think that the parents here can afford to maintain their children up to the age of 12. We have a piece of meat every day. My wife does a little charring.

[This man's earnings were—

	s.
One weeks' hay at 15*s.*	= 15
Three weeks' harvest at 18*s.*	= 54
48 weeks at 12*s.*	=576
	645=32*l.* 5*s.*

= about 12*s.* 5*d.* per week, exclusive of the beer allowed in harvest.—F. H. N.]

Bransford.

40. *John Salt*, farm labourer. — I have had eight children, three of them are dead. My wages now are 9*s.* a week, with two quarts of cider a day, and usually 10*s.* or 11*s.* in summer. During harvest I can usually earn 1*l.* a week, and 15*s.* a week while mowing; at other kinds of piecework I can only earn about 1*s.* a week above my regular wages. My sons began to work at the age of 8 or 9 years old; that was 9 or 10 years ago; they first got 2*s.* a week, and have had constant work since that time; they have never been to school except on Sundays, and night school since then; one of them is a good scholar and the other is not.

Another man and myself contract to cultivate eight acres of hops at 1*l.* an acre; it is three pole work. It takes us a fortnight to throw down the earth and cut the roots; another fortnight to pole the hops, a week for curfing, and, after picking, another fortnight for stripping, sharpening, and piling the poles. My wife works at smock frocks and not at gloving, but the smock frock work is going out. She cannot earn 3*s.* a week at it. I have a bit of bacon every day.

[This man's earnings were—

	s.
4 weeks' harvest at 1*l.*	= 80
2 weeks' hay at 15*s.*	= 30
7 weeks' hop work at 11*s.* 6*d.*	= 80
39 weeks at (say) 10*s.*	=390
	580
Cider, at 1*s.* 6*d.*	= 78
	658

=about 12*s.* 8*d.* per week.—F. H. N.]

Bromsgrove.

41. *William Nutting*, carter to Mr. Russon.—Wages, 12*s.* and beer, two quarts a day in winter and three in summer; has had five children; all but one now at work.

W. Barnes, cowman to Mr. Russon.—The same wages and beer as W. Nutting; three children, eldest 20.

George Dyson, shepherd to Mr. Russon.—Has had a family; only one now at home; wages and beer as above; and house rent free besides.

Boys can get continuous work here from the age of 11 or 12 upwards. They usually receive 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a day at first. They can get a few little jobs under that age; but you cannot depend upon getting those jobs for them, and it is not worth while, because it costs more in clothes than they bring in.

Master always gives 1*l.* extra in the harvest month, and dinner and supper when we are late.

Dyson's wife and daughter go to field work, but the other men's wives do not; they can get a job every day if they had a mind to it. All our children went to school, except Dyson's eldest, who was kept at home to look after the others. Dyson used to send his girls to a dame's school, but he found they did not get on much, so he has sent them to Bromsgrove school for the last three years. None of us can read and write. It would be a good thing to have a law to prevent any boys going to work until they could read and write; it would be hard where there is a large family, but what we have done others could do.

Barnes pays 1*s.* 9*d.* for his cottage in Bromsgrove, two bedrooms, but no garden. Nailers could be better off than field labourers if they chose to work, but they are their own masters and are often idle.

[When I saw the above men Nutting was ploughing with three horses in a line, without any boy to drive. Mr. Russon told me that he did not employ

Worcestershire.
Mr. Norman.
D. i.

boys as a general rule, one having been killed a short time previously on his farm by a horse.—F. H. N.]

HARTLEBURY.

42. *Mrs. Smith*, labourer's wife.—I have four sons, the eldest is 17. They can get regular work at the age of about 12, but at the potato planting boys from 8 upwards can get employment setting potatoes or pouring in the grains. That will occupy them for a fortnight or three weeks at 6*d.* or 8*d.* a day. They are also employed in scaring. I used to go work when I was younger. Fewer girls go to work than used to; they are more ladies now than they used to be. I sent my boys to school at Stourport; I paid 3*d.* a week for them; I sent them there instead of to the free school here, because at the free school they are compelled to attend regularly, and I could not have sent them out to work when I could get a job for them.

I have two sons who can read and write a little, the third never liked school, and the youngest is at school now.

[The husband of the woman was a carter in the receipt of very good wages.—F. H. N.]

MADRESFIELD.

43. *Mrs. Summers.*—My husband is cowman to Mr. Hill. He has 11*s.* a week, his cottage rent free, three quarts of cider a day, and 2*l.* at harvest. I have six children, two are out at work. I think 12 is young enough for boys to go out to work in the fields. My boys went to work at 8, because Mr. Hill wanted them; he pays them 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, but it is not worth while to send them out to work at that age. I go to work when Mr. Hill wants me for 10*d.* a day.

It is the custom for women who live in farmers' houses always to go to work for the farmers whose, houses they occupy when there is any work to be done.

[This man's earnings were—

		s.
52 weeks at 11*s.*	=	572
Cottage at (say) 1*s.* 6*d.*	=	78
Extra at harvest -	-	40
Cider at, say, 1*s.* 6*d.*	=	78
		768 = 38*l.* 8*s.*

= (about) 14*s.* 10*d.* per week.]

MARTLEY.

44. *Mrs. Grout*, labourer's wife.—I have six children, the eldest is 17. I have always lived here and have worked in the fields a great deal. The first work I get to do in spring is stone-picking and ground dressing at 8*d.* a day and one quart cider (spreading the droppings of the cattle). Then in May and June hop-tying; last year me and another took 10 acres at 4*s.* an acre, two poles to the stock; we usually only get 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* an acre. It takes all a woman's time to tie five acres; children cannot help at that. Then from June to August haymaking and harvest; children do not work at that except in gleaning. In September hopping, at which I can earn 1*s.* 2*d.* a day; I have never had above two children at work with me at that, and with them I can earn 2*s.* a day; then comes fruit-picking at 8*d.* a day and cider; and last, topping and tailing turnips at 7*s.* an acre. No children go to work under the age of 10 except at hop-picking. From about the age of 10 they can get work all the year round at 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week. I always work for Mr. Davis, who rents this cottage and underlets it to us. It answers well for women to work when they have no children, but it does not answer to me because I have to take my children out with me and therefore to provide them with good shoes; but I am tied to go out, that is part of the agreement under which we hold the house; that is the usual arrangement. I get 8*d.* a day when I work for Mr. Davis, and 1*s.* a day when I work for any body else, but then there is an understanding that Mr. Davis is to employ me in preference to any other woman when he has work to do. I don't think women get any harm from going to field work. The glovers make more and don't spend so much as the field women; but those who go to service are best off. We pay 3*l.* 10*s.* for this cottage.

[A very respectable and civil woman in an old but decent cottage, the living room of which she had just papered herself, and purposed papering the ceiling as well.—F. H. N.]

PEOPLETON.

45. *Mrs. Dolphin*, husband a carpenter.—I have a girl aged 12 and a boy aged 15. I have been employed in fruit-picking for nine years; I work for about two months each year in picking green gooseberries, currants, and ripe gooseberries; I never go to farm work. My girl came to help me from the age of 7 and my boy at the age of 11. One day with another I can earn 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. Children can pick well from about the age of 8; but they smash the currants if they try under that age. I think a child of 8 or 9 could pick half as much as a woman. No fruit is picked on Saturdays; the women can go out just when they like. It is a beautiful thing for the health; it is liked by all, and is pretty well talked about for a month before they begin. I don't go to any work except harvesting and fruit-picking. I can earn from 5*s.* to 6*s.* a day during harvest. My son went to work from about the age of 8 or 9; he has had constant work since then, that is the proper age for them to go out; it is not more expensive to provide for boys when at work than at school. My daughter has had work for the last two or three years for about one month a year at hay-making, clover and barley turning, besides the fruit-picking.

46. *Stephens*, Gardener.—If I went to farm work I should require five quarts of cider from 1st June until 1st October, an additional two quarts during haytime and harvest, and two quarts a day from the 1st October to the 1st June. The cider costs the farmers about 5*d.* a gallon. If I were to buy it in quantities of not less than 4½ gallons, it would cost me 8*d.* a gallon. I might buy fruit and have cider made at the public mill for 10*s.* a hogs-head; but it would not answer, as we have no place to keep either the fruit or the cider. I would accept 2*s.* 6*d.* but not 2*s.* a week in lieu of my drink all through the year.

[The cider required by the man was—

	Quarts.
120 days (1st January to 1st October) at 5 quarts - - - - =	600
Extra during hay and harvest, say 45 days at 2 quarts - - - =	90
190 days, 1st October to 1st June, at 2 quarts - - - - =	380
	1,070

= 267 gallons 2 quarts.

267 gallons 2 quarts at 5*d.* - = 5*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*
Ditto at 8*d.* - = 8*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.*

This man was employed in Mr. Varden's garden, where I saw him.—F. H. N.]

WHITE LADIES ASTON.

47. *Cooper*, labourer.—Wages here are 8*s.* or 9*s.* in winter and 10*s.* now (May). I would not accept an extra 2*s.* a week instead of my drink. I can usually earn about 25*s.* a week for three weeks during harvest and from 15*s.* to 18*s.* in hay time. The farmers here don't allow potato growing.

[This man's earnings were—

	s. *d.*
3 weeks harvest at 25*s.* - =	75 0
2 weeks hay at 16*s.* 6*d.* - =	33 0
47 weeks at 9*s.* 6*d.* - =	446 6
	554 0
Cider at (say) 2*s.* - =	104 0
	658 0 = 32*l.* 18*s.*

= about 12*s.* 8*d.* per week.]

APPENDIX E.—CONTAINING THE ANSWERS GIVEN TO THE QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN THE PRINTED CIRCULARS OF QUESTIONS.

I.—AS TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF PRIVATE GANGS.

The only case in which the existence of private gangs is noticed in the returns which have been sent in to me is in the return sent in by the Rev. A. H. M. Ingram, from Harvington, Worcestershire. He states that private gangs are employed in pea-picking in summer, and that four males between 13 and 18 and one over 18, and four females between 10 and 13, five between 13 and 18, and five married and two unmarried females over 18 are so employed. He states that they work for nine or 10 hours; that they have quarter of an hour for breakfast, and one hour for dinner; that the sexes work together; and that the effect upon morals is that outrages on modesty and decency in young females often occur, through the direct encouragement of some depraved woman from the corrupt society of some town in the neighbourhood; that the physical powers are not injured; and that neither the young or females are subjected to any ill-treatment; that the state of education is deficient among the young, and very deficient among the adults. He recommends that the sexes should be separated; that where females are employed there should be a licensed female superintendent; and he would define a private gang to be a group of more than eight females working in the same field with males.

2. TABLE giving the NUMBER and AGES of the WOMEN and CHILDREN EMPLOYED.

Parish.	Population.	Males.					Females.							Remarks.
		Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Single.	Total Females.	
HEREFORDSHIRE.														
Ashperton	534	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	11	1	13	
Byford-cum-Mansel-Gamage.	332	—	1	10	—	11	—	—	—	1	12	3	16	
Downton	178	—	2*a*	2*a*	6	10	2 or 3 occasionally.				3	—	3	*a* These work occasionally.
Frome Bishop	850	—	—	10	30	40	—	—	3	5	50	*b*	58	*b* A few, but generally women living with men.
Treville	140	—	3	2	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	4 widows.	—	
SURREY.														
Alfold	500	—	—	10	20	30	—	—	—	—	20	—	20	
Bramley	—	—	—	—	—	—	Female labour is not general.							
Byfleet	770	—	—	20	30	50	—	—	—	—	20*a*	2	22	*a* Almost entirely in harvest time only.
Carshalton	—	—	—	—	—	—	Women do not generally work in the fields, but some Irishwomen have settled here and they do work.							
Chobham	2090	—	—	—	—	—	It is very rare to find women employed except in haytime.							
East Horsley	228	—	4	8	8	20	—	—	—	—	10	—	10	
Frimley	2620	—	—	10	20	30	—	—	—	5	10	5	20	
Send		Very few indeed; some in haymaking.												
Shalford	—	—	—	—	Perhaps 60	60	None as a rule under 18. A few of the wives of labourers, but the number is decreasing.							
Stoke d'Abernon	—	—	—	—	—	—	I don't think any under 18. A few older occasionally.							
Titsey	167	—	—	5 or 6		--	No females.							
Thorpe	550	—	—	10	14	24	—	—	—	—	8	—	8	
Wanborough	197	—	1	10	10	21	—	1	1	4	6	2	14	
WARWICKSHIRE.														
Allesley	974	—	—	—	About 12	—	--	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Alveston	861	—	5	14	5	—	None.							
Barford	750	2 or 3	2 or 3	12	15	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Bubbenhall	346	—	—	9	—	9	—	—	—	—	8*a*	—	8	*a* Or widows.
Exhall	—	—	—	3	5	8	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	
Fillongley	1105	—	—	—	—	—	Very few women are employed in the fields.							
Kinwarton	411	—	6	10	4	20	—	—	—	—	27	3	30	
Leek Wooton	408	—	20	10	10	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Shustoke	325	About 8 or 10 boys are employed.					Girls never employed, and only 2 or 3 women, and they during harvest only.							
Tysoe	1035	—	—	9	34	43	—	—	—	—	67	4	71	
Wasperton	269	—	6	4	8	18	—	—	—	—	17	1	18	
Wellesbourne	1542	—	—	22	16	38	—	—	—	—	24	—	24	

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E. i.

TABLE giving the NUMBER and AGES of the WOMEN and CHILDREN EMPLOYED—*continued.*

Parish.	Population.	Males. Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Females. Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Single.	Total Females.	Remarks.
WILTSHIRE.														
Ashton Keynes	1070	—	1	4	20	25	—	—	—	2	3	2	7	
Broad Chalk	800	Males commence between 8 and 10.					Females commence between 13 and 18.							
Broughton Gifford	621	—	3 or 4*a*	6	10	16	—	—	—	—	12*b*		12	*a* Bird-keeping time only. *b* Haymaking only.
Clyffe Pypard	910	—	3	34	19	56	—	—	—	2	66	3	71	
Corsley	1220	—	2	8	12	22	—	—	—	—	6	4	10	
Durnford	553	—	—	4	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	
East Knoyle	1034	I have found boys aged 8 and 9 at work in this parish.					—	—	—	—	—	—		
Heytesbury	1103	—	5	19	21	45	—	—	—	—	45	7	52	
Longbridge Deverill	1197	—	12	20	30	62	—	—	—	—	18	2	20	
Netherhampton	120	1 occasionally	2	6	4	13	—	—	1	1	6	—	8	
Stratford-under-the Castle.	332	—	—	6	6	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Wooton Rivers	444	From 120 to 150 approximately.					Of these many work only at certain times.							
WORCESTERSHIRE.														
Alvechurch	1581	—	—	20	60	80	—	—	—	—	40	—	40	
Churchill	181	—	—	1 or 2	5 or 6	8 or 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Fladbury	823	The supply of boys and children exceeds the demand.					But few women are employed.							
Harvington	452	3	5	9	8	25	—	—	6	5	27	3	41	
Madresfield	271	—	—	6	14	20	—	—	—	—	7	1*a*	8	*a* Occasionally.
Martley	1140	—	—	2	1	3	—	—	—	—	4	1	5	
Norton	400	—	1	11	15	27	—	—	—	2	19	2	21	
Salwarpe	442	—	12		6	18	—	—	—	3	17	1	21	
Upton-on-Severn	2676	About 40 under 18.					Hardly any women or girls are employed in agriculture, a few find employment in the gardens.							

QUESTIONS (22 *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*) relating to the EMPLOYMENT of CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, and WOMEN in AGRICULTURE.

Name of Parish.	Name of Person making Return.	Do Women and Children Live on or near the Farms?	Usual hours of work.	Mealtimes. Breakfast or Lunch.	Mealtimes. Dinner.
HEREFORDSHIRE.					
Ashperton	Rev. J. Buckle	Yes.	8 to 6.	Quite sufficient.	
Byford	Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope	Generally.	Summer, 8 to 6. Winter, 8 to 4.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Dorstone	Rev. T. Powell	Yes.	8 to 5.30.	Nearly 2 hours.	
Downton	A. R. Boughton Knight	Yes.	Winter, 7 to 5. Summer, 6 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Frome Bishop	Rev. W. P. Hopton	Yes.	8 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Staunton-on-Wye	Rev. H. W. Phillott	Yes.	6 to 6.*	—	—
Treville	Rev. A. Clive	Near.	Women, 8 to 6. Boys, 6 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.
SURREY.					
Alfold	Rev. R. T. Sparkes	Yes.	8 to 5 (mostly).	—	1 hour.
Bramley	Rev. H. B. Power	Yes.	8 to 4.	—	1 hour.
Byfleet	Rev. N. T. Spicer	Near.	Women, 8 to 5. Boys, 6 to 6.	—	1 hour.
Carshalton	Rev. B. A. W. Cator	1 to 2 miles.	Women, 8 to 5.	—	1 hour.
Chobham	Rev. S. J. Jerram	Fairly so.	6 to 6 summer. 7 to 5 winter.	½ hour.	1 hour.
East Horsley	Mr. R. Boreman	Near.	Women, 8 to 5. Boys, 7 to 6.	1½ hours.	
Frimley	Rev. C. Stonhouse	Yes.	8 to 4.	2 hours.	
Oxted	Rev. A. Brenan	½ to 1 mile.	Summer, 10 hours. Winter, 12 hours.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Send	Hon. F. Scott	Generally.	Women, 8 to 5.	—	1 hour.
Shalford	A. Grenfell, Esq.	Yes.	7 to 5.	—	1 hour.
Stoke d'Abernon	Rev. F. P. Phillips	Generally.	9 hours.	1½ hours.	
Titsey	G. Leveson Gower, Esq.	In most cases.	7 a.m. to 6 p.m.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Thorpe	Rev. G. Drury	Within 1 mile.	Women, 8 to 5. Farm boys, 5 to 5.	—	—
Wanborough	Rev. G. Chilton	1 to 2 miles.	6.30 or 7 to 5.	—	1 hour.

* Farm boys have, after this, to attend to the horses, perhaps till 8 p.m.

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E.
i.

QUESTIONS (22, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*) relating to the EMPLOYMENT of CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, and WOMEN in AGRICULTURE—*continued*.

Name of Parish.	Name of Person making Return.	Do Women and Children live on or near the Farms?	Usual hours of work.	Mealtimes.	
				Breakfast or Lunch.	Dinner.
WARWICKSHIRE.					
Allesley	Rev. W. Bree	Yes.	6 to 6 in summer. Daylight in winter.	—	1 hour.
Alveston	Sir R. N. C. Hamilton	Yes.	8 hours.	—	1 hour.
Barford	E. Greaves, Esq.	Yes.	Summer, 6 to 5 or 6. Winter, daylight.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Bubbenhall	Rev. A. A. Fanshawe	Near.	8 to 4.	—	1 hour.
Exhall	Mr. H. B. Bomford	Yes.	Women, 8 to 5. Boys, 7 to 5.	2 hours.	
Kinwarton	Rev. R. Seymour	Yes.	Boys, 10 hours. Women 8 hours.	1 hour.	
Leek Wootton	Rev. F. L. Colvile	Yes.	6 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Rowington	Rev. P. B. Brodie	Usually 1 mile.	7 to 6.	—	1 hour.
Shustoke	R. F. Croxall, Esq.	1 mile at most.	7 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Snitterfield	Mark Phillips, Esq.	Yes.	8.15 to 5.	—	1 hour.
Solihull	Rev. P. M. Smythe	Yes.	8 to 5.	—	—
Tysoe	Rev. C. D. Francis	Yes (chiefly).	8 to 4 winter. 8 to 5 summer.	—	1 hour.
Wasperton	Rev T. L. Lane	About 1 mile.	8 to 5.	—	1 hour.
Wellesbourne	J. M. Mordaunt, Esq.	Yes.	7½ hours.	—	1 hour.
WILTSHIRE.					
Ashton Keynes	Rev. R. Bishop	Near.	Males, 6.30 to 5 or 6. Females, 7 to 5.	1 hour (winter). 1½ hours (summer).	
Broad Chalk	Dr. R. Williams	Yes mostly, rarely over 2 miles.	9 hours.	1½ to 2 hours.	
Broughton Gifford	Rev. Preb. Wilkinson	Near.	8 to 6 summer. Less in winter.	2 hours.	
Burbage	The Ven. Archdeacon Stanton.	Yes, generally not more than 3 or 4 miles.	—	—	—
Castle Combe	Rev. R. C. Christie	Near.	6 to 6 summer.	8 to 9 a.m.	1 to 2 p.m.
Chicklade	J. Locke, Esq.	Yes.	—	—	—
Christian Malford	Rev. R. V. Law	Few more than ½ mile.	7 to 6.	2 hours.	
Clyffe Pypard	H. N. Goddard, Esq.	Chiefly near.	8 to 5 in summer. 8.30 to 4 in winter.	1 to 1½ hours.	
Corsley	Rev. J. H. Waugh	Near.	8 to 10 hours.	Summer, 2 hours. Winter, 1 hour.	
Donhead St. Mary	Rev. R. W. Blackmore	Generally near.	10 hours.	2 hours.	
Downton	Rev. R. Payne	Generally near.	Women, 8 to 5.	—	Women, 1 hour.
Durnford	Edward Hinxman, Esq.	On the farm.	7.	1 hour.	
East Knoyle	Rev. R. N. Milford	Some nearly 2 miles.	In summer, 7 to 6. In winter until 5.	1 hour.	1 hour.
Great Bedwyn	Rev. D. Hodgson	Yes.	Summer, males 10 hrs., females 9 hrs. Winter, less.	1 to 2 hours.	
Heytesbury	Lord Heytesbury	—	Summer, boys 6 to 7, women 7 to 6. Winter, boys 7 to 6, women 8 to 6.	2 hours.	
Longbridge Deverill	Rev. W. D. Morrice	Various distances.	Boys, 5 to 6 or 7. Women, 8 to 4 or 5.	(Say) 1½ hours.	
Netherhampton	Rev. D. Oliver	Yes.	Winter, 7 to 5. Summer, 6 to 6.	—	1 hour.
Stratford-under-Castle	Mr. Edward Waters	Within 2 miles.	Summer, women, 8 to 6; winter, 8 to 5. Ploughboys, 6.30 or 7 to 5.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Wroughton	Rev. J. C. Waugh	Yes.	—	1 hour.	
Wootton Rivers	Rev. W. J. Brodribb	Yes.	Summer, 12 hours. Winter, 8 hours.	2 hours.	
WORCESTERSHIRE.					
Alvechurch	Ven. Archdeacon Sandford.	Yes.	Females, 8 to 5. Males, 6 to 6. (Light permitting.)	½ hour (in summer).	1 hour.
Churchill	Rev. R. P. Turner	Yes.	8 to 5.	—	
Fladbury	Rev. J. Haviland	Yes.	Women, 7 to 5. Children, 6 to 7 or 6.	Nearly 2 hours.	
Harvington	Rev. A. H. W. Ingram	Yes.	Males, winter, 9 hrs; summer, 11 hrs. Females, winter, 8 hrs.; summer, 9 hrs.	¼ hour (males.)	1 hour.
Madresfield	Rev. G. S. Munn	Yes.	Ploughboys, 5.30 or 6 to 6.30. Others, 6 to 6 or 7.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Martley	Rev. H. J. Hastings	Yes.	Summer, 7 to 6. Winter, 4.30 to 5.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Norton	C. Randell, Esq.	Yes.	Boys, summer 6 to 6; winter, 8 to 5. Women, summer, 7 to 8; winter, 8 to 4.	—	—
Rock	Rev. A. James	Within 1 mile.	Summer, 7 to 6. Winter, 9 to dusk.	2 hours.	
Salwarpe	Rev. W. W. Douglas	Yes.	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.	½ hour.	1 hour.
Upton-on-Severn	Rev. R. Lawson	Yes.	Summer, 5 to 7. Winter, 6 to 6.	½ hour.	1 hour.

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E. i.

QUESTION (*h*). Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

To this question I received 56 answers in the negative, in addition to the following:—

HEREFORDSHIRE.

STANTON-ON-WYE.

3. *Rev. H. W. Phillott.*—I think they have scarcely time enough for sleep.

SURREY.

BYFLEET.

4. The *Rev. N. J. Spicer.*—Yes, as I believe, interferes with the growth of boys, and the health of women.

STOKE D'ABERNON.

5. *Rev. F. P. Phillips.*—I think ultimately it does, telling most as they advance in life.

WANBOROUGH.

6. *Rev. G. Chilton.*—The women employed in field work look old much sooner, especially mothers of families.

WILTS.

BROAD CHALK.

7. The *Rev. Dr. R. Williams.*—In weakly cases, with poor food, perhaps, yes; but most commonly the lads harden and improve wonderfully.

EAST KNOYLE.

8. *Rev. R. N. Milford.*—I think some of the boys are dwarfed by the long distances they go to and from work.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

HARVINGTON.

9. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—Ploughboys between the age of 7 and 13 lose physical development in consequence of so much work without adequate food.

MADRESFIELD.

10. *Rev. G. S. Munn.*—Yes, in many instances, and especially when, as in this district, cider is given as a part of wages. They then early acquire the habit of drinking large quantities of cider, which is often their ruin. I should wish to call the particular attention of the Commissioners to the practice in this district of giving cider as part of wages, and the evil consequences of such practice on the whole community; and this, together with insufficient cottage accommodation, is, in my opinion, the chief cause of the low moral tone which prevails.

QUESTION (*i*). Are the young or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

To this I received 61 answers in the negative, in addition to the following:—

HEREFORDSHIRE.

FROME BISHOP.

11. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—I am of opinion that very often the boys put under waggoners are ill-used by them.

WILTSHIRE.

CLYFFE PYPARD.

12. *H. N. Goddard, Esq.*—No. They are very independent (the females) about coming to field work at all; much more so than formerly, since male labour has been higher paid.

QUESTION (*j*). Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

To this I received 54 answers in the negative, in addition to the following:—

HEREFORDSHIRE.

STANTON-ON-WYE.

13. *Rev. H. W. Phillott.*—Field labour in wet weather is injurious to females.

SURREY.

BYFLEET.

14. *Rev. N. J. Spicer.*—Field work I believe to be most injurious to females, *e.g.*, the fact of standing for so many hours consecutively.

WANBOROUGH.

15. *Rev. G. Chilton.*—Winter turnip cutting.

WILTS.

BROAD CHALK.

16. *Rev. Dr. R. Williams.*—Where the food is sufficient, and the constitution sound, the effect of field labour on both sexes appears physically good.

QUESTION (*k*). Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals, and on their proper training for domestic duties?

HEREFORDSHIRE.

ASHPERTON.

17. *Rev. J. Buckle.*—Their cottages are not as tidy as those that do not go out; and the attendance of children less regular.

BYFORD.

18. *Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope.*—The employment of the mother in field labour does not necessarily influence the tidiness of the cottage, or the attendance of her children at school. One girl is often obliged to remain at home to nurse the younger children; but by providing so that two sisters may attend school in alternate weeks, the education of the family is not hindered.

DOWNTON.

19. *A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq.*—The cleanliness of the children and of the cottages is not so well attended to when the labobrer's wife works on the farm, but I have no reason to believe that the employment of females in agriculture has any injurious effect upon their morals. When the labourer's wife works, elder children are kept from school to attend to the younger children.

FROME BISHOP.

20. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—I think there is more immorality amongst the girls who stay at home to make gloves than amongst those who are employed in agriculture.

STAUNTON-ON-WYE.

21. *Rev. H. W. Phillott.*—I think that out of door work is in general injurious to females in a moral point of view, and unfits them for domestic duties. They acquire rude and unsettled habits. The children are neglected, sometimes left without food. But this statement must not be made without exception.

TREVIL.

22. *Rev. A. Clive.*—On comparing the houses of females who have married labourers and artizans, and who have been previously domestic servants, with the houses of those who have been engaged as farm servants and in agricultural work, I find the latter generally cleaner and neater, and their own dress and personal appearance more suited to their work and station; the former are given to dirty finery in their poorest dress.

SURREY.

ALBURY.

23. *Rev. G. R. Portal.*—No one would ordinarily take a person into his house who had been employed in field work.

Byfleet.

24. *Rev. H. J. Spicer.*—Most injurious in many ways. It makes women unwomanly, neglectful of home and children, and induces coarse language and habitual going to the public house.

Carshalton.

25. *Rev. W. A. B. Cator.*—Not conducive to good morals, or to make them efficient servants.

Chiddingfold.

26. *Rev. G. Finch.*—As the gang system is not in force in this parish, and women are not employed to any great extent, I do not find that they are affected injuriously by such moderate employment.

Frimley.

27. *Rev. C. Stonhouse.*—Disinclines the young women for domestic service.

Limpsfield.

28. *Rev. S. Charlsworth.*—I would never sanction the employment of young girls, or even young women under the age of 21, in field labour, except in hay-making. I should wish that no females should be employed, but I doubt the policy of any legislative prohibition after the age of 21 years.

Lingfield.

29. *Rev. J. Thomas.*—I would prohibit female labour in the fields, except at hay and corn harvest, to tie the young hops to the poles, and hop-picking.

Stoke D'Abernon.

30. *Rev. F. P. Phillips.*—I certainly consider field labour tends to lower the tone of moral feeling in women, and to unfit them for their home duties, and also for domestic service.

Wanborough.

31. *Rev. G. Chilton.*—That they rarely, after field work, settle down to the in-door life of domestic servants, and they find great difficulty in getting places.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Allesley.

32. The *Rev. W. Bree*, and *Rev. J. L. Sutton.*—Under present circumstances it tends to lower morals and to impede training for domestic duties.

Barford.

33. *Edward Greaves, Esq., M. P.*—Domestic service in this parish and neighbourhood is readily obtained by girls as soon as they are fit to leave school. I would not allow girls under (say) 16 to be employed in field work except in harvest.

Bubbenhall.

34. *Rev. A. A. Fanshawe.*—Where young females are employed in field work, I think that the want of control under which they live entirely spoils them for domestic duties. I would prohibit females from being so employed, if they were mothers of large families of young children, unless all those children (excepting those who were themselves employed) were under a regular course of education. No unmarried female to be employed at all.

Exhall.

35. *Mr. H. B. Bomford.*—I think females are not quite so well qualified for domestic servants after working in the fields.

Harbury.

36. The *Rev. M. H. Hole.*—I think that home duties are neglected. In some cases the younger children grow up dirty where women are employed; but few work at field work who have large families.

Rowington.

37. *Rev. P. B. Brodie.*—It would be much better morally, I think, if they did not work in the fields, though it helps those in a pecuniary sense who have families, but not much, as their pay is small. It matters less for married women than for young girls, and it would be well if the latter were never employed in field labour under 14, or even at all if possible.

Solihull

38. *Rev. P. M. Smythe.*—I don't think there are any bad effects from the limited extent to which they are employed in this neighbourhood.

Tysoe.

39. *Rev. C. D. Francis.*—I think it has an injurious effect on the morals and manners of the unmarried, and therefore tends to unfit them for domestic service.

Wasperton.

40. *Rev. T. L. Lane.*—Against morals and training for domestic duties. Restriction to married females.

WILTS.

Ashton Keynes.

41. *Rev. R. Bishop.*—Agricultural labour for females without special arrangements of their employers exposes them to great temptations, and ill suits to their moral training.

Berwick St. John.

42. *Rev. C. A. Griffith.*—Of course it depends very much on the individual; but I have noted, I fear I must say in the majority of cases, a certain roughness and rudeness of manner in those who are chiefly so employed, and have been told that the language which goes on must be injurious to the young hands. Still many most respectable females do work, and seem unscathed.

Broad Chalk.

43. The *Rev. Dr. Williams.*—Field labour has a distinctly bad, and at least roughening, more commonly worsening effect upon young unmarried girls, and on account of its effect is piteously deprecated for them by the more respectable class of parents. The employment of young unmarried girls is diminishing from ordinary social causes, such as the demand for servants. It might perhaps be restricted as regards requirement of parental or other protection, but is on the whole to be rather deprecated than forbidden.

Certainly not prohibit women of 30 years old and more, or married, from employing themselves as they like; and very respectable women sometimes lend a hand in the fields. But perhaps prohibit young girls from working unprotected amongst lads and men.

Burbage.

44. The *Venerable Archdeacon Stanton.*—I think it injures their morals, makes them vulgar, coarse, and rude. It unfits them for household work and domestic duties. I would never allow girls to work in the fields except during harvest under the age of 25.

Castle Combe.

45. The *Rev. R. C. Christie.*—When females are employed together in agriculture it gives them a boldness of manner, and slovenliness in their persons and homes. I think no restriction could be recommended whilst the wages are at 9*s.* or 10*s.* per week, and that only during fine weather, and the cottage rent high, for the labourers with families could not pay their way. If the wages were 12*s.* a week, including all weathers, I would much wish to see no females employed in agricultural work, excepting at hay and corn harvest.

Chicklade.

46. *J. Locke, Esq.*—Decidedly hurtful to morals. The demand for labour during the busy times of the

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year exceeds the supply. I think restriction would be practically useless.

CHRISTIAN MALFORD.

47. The *Rev. R. V. Law.*—In this parish mothers and daughters usually work, when wanted, on the same farm as their husbands or sons or brothers, without injury to their morals.

CLYFFE PYPARD.

48. *H. N. Goddard, Esq.* — The morals of this parish are good, and I believe this will be found to be the case in the generality of agricultural parishes as compared with towns. The girls almost as a rule in this parish go out to service. I am not in favour of any restriction, except that by the falling off of the supply of male labour, wages should improve in proportion to the loss of the earnings of women. Few come out every day, washing keeping them one day at home, exclusive of wet days.

DOWNTON.

49. *Rev. R. Payne.*—I have no doubt that agricultural labour for females tends to a certain roughness and coarseness both of body and mind, and certainly as a rule those who have recourse to it are amongst the least educated and dullest of the population. But I should not be prepared to assert that the number of illegitimate children, or the amount of direct immorality, was much larger amongst those who worked in the fields than others ; but there are not any great number of young unmarried females who work in the fields, for much more frequently the unmarried support themselves by domestic service. If they do not do that, they marry very early, and when they have been used to the fields they grudge giving up the earnings when married, and the consequence is that younger children are left in the care of elder ones, who themselves ought to be at school, whilst the mother is gone to work. I hardly see my way to a restriction that would not be almost a prohibition, unless it were no unmarried female under 25, and no married woman who had a family, unless she had a daughter 13 with a certificate of education. There are a very few single women (with or without bastards) who have earned a livelihood in this manner to whom a prohibition would be a hardship, and if I hesitate to recommend total prohibition, it would be on their account, rather than for the sake of the employer.

EAST KNOYLE.

50. *Rev. R. N. Milford.*—I have observed, especially in the parish of Brightwell, of which I was seven years rector, that field work made the young girls rough and coarse, and impatient of the restraints of home life. I would not allow any married women to work in the field except at hay and corn harvest.

GREAT BEDWYN.

51. The *Rev. J. D. Hodgson.*—I do not think it is necessarily injurious to morals, but decidedly so to their proper training for home duties. [I am in favour of restriction] if the wages of men be raised in consequence, so that a family may do without the earnings of the female portion of it.

LONGBRIDGE DEVERILL.

52. *Rev. W. D. Morrice.* — No perceptible effect on morals. The women acknowledge that there is no eventual profit on field work, on account of the wear of clothes and hindrances to domestic work ; but as their husbands work on the farms they consider themselves attached to the farms in time of need.

STRATFORD-UNDER-THE-CASTLE.

53. *Mr. Edward Waters.*—I don't think that it leads to any bad results here. Where young women are employed with men, as in raking after the hay waggon, bad results do sometimes follow; but they are not so employed here.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

ALVECHURCH.

54. The *Venerable Archdeacon Sandford.*—As in this parish few, if any, but married women are employed in field work, and these are generally in company with their husbands, their character is not much exposed, but their absence affects the comfort of their homes and the welfare of their children to a very great extent. The house work often remains undone till the evening, and the infants and babies are consigned to some busy neighbour or to a small child unfit for the care of other children, and who ought to be herself at school ; if practicable it would be best to allow no females to work in the fields, except married women relieved from the care of children. The rule could be relaxed at hay and corn harvest. Any loss of money would be more than made up by the increased comfort and improved health of the family.

FLADBURY.

55. *Rev. J. Haviland.*—I lived for many years in Cambridgeshire, where I observed the employment of women in agriculture to have a very bad effect on morals, but I have not found it so here.

HARVINGTON.

56. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—The requirements of modern systems of farming withdraw mothers from the superintendence of their families. This would appear to offer a strong argument in favour of compulsory attendance of their children at school in order to make up to them for the loss of parental training and supervision. None should be employed under the age of 13 ; restrict the employment of females to a defined age ; but by no means prohibit female labour in the fields, which is healthy and brings in income to the support of the family.

MADRESFIELD.

57. *Rev. G. S. Munn.*—As a rule there are no young women regularly employed in agriculture in this parish. The greatest moral mischief takes place during the hop-picking, when most of the population, young and old, turn into the hop yards, where they meet some of the worst of the towns near.

NORTON.

58. *Charles Randell, Esq.*—I do not think it well that girls should be employed in agricultural work ; it certainly is a bad training for household service or domestic duties. Practically no restriction is required.

SALWARPE.

59. *Rev. W. W. Douglas.*—I think it better on the whole that females should not be employed in agriculture ; it is bad for young girls, and when wives and mothers are employed in field work their homes and families are neglected. There can be no doubt that as a general rule the cottages of field workers are less comfortable than those of others. I cannot say that I am (in favour of restriction), though I have said above the less they are so employed the better in my opinion.

60. In addition to the above special opinions the following gentlemen have stated that they are not prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Rev. J. Buckle, Ashperton ; Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope (except in the case of young unmarried girls) ; Rev. T. Powell, Dorstone ; A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq., Downton ; Rev. W. P. Hopton, Frome Bishop ; Rev. W. H. Phillott, Staunton-on-Wye ; Rev. A. Clive, Whitfield.

SURREY.

Rev. R. C. Portal, Albury ; The Rev. A. Brenan, Oxted ; G. Leveson-Gower, Esq., Titsey ; The Rev.

G. Drury, Thorpe; Rev. G. R. C. Chilton, Wanborough.

WARWICKSHIRE.

The Rev. W. Bree and Rev. J. L. Sutton, Allesley; Sir R. Hamilton, Alveston; Mr. H. B. Bomford, Exhall; Rev. M. H. Hole, Harbury; Rev. R. Seymour, Kinwarton; Rev. F. L. Colvil, Leek Wootton; Mark Philips, Esq., Snitterfield; Rev. P. M. Smythe, Solihull; Rev. C. D. Francis, Tysoe; J. M. Mordaunt, Esq., Wellesbourne.

WILTSHIRE.

Rev. R. Bishop, Ashton Keynes; Rev. Preb. Wilkinson, Broughton Gifford; Rev. R. V. Law, Christian Malford; Rev. J. H. Waugh, Corsley; Rev. R. W. Blackmore, Donhead St. Mary; Edward Hinxman, Esq., Durnford; Rev. W. D. Morrice, Longbridge Deverill; Mr. Edward Waters, Stratford-under-the Castle; Rev. J. C. Waugh, Wroughton.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Rev. R. P. Turner, Churchill; Rev. J. Haviland, Fladbury; Rev. H. J. Hastings, Martley; Rev. R. Lawson, Upton-on-Severn.

61. QUESTIONS *m*, *n*, *o*.—Recommendations as to the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed, the distances to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work, and the hours during which they should be allowed to work.

Place.	Name of Person making Return.	Age at which Boys should be permitted to work.
HEREFORDSHIRE.		
Dorstone	Rev. T. Powell	11 (if school attendance can be enforced).
Downton	A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq.	10.
Frome Bishop	Rev W. P. Hopton	12.
Stanton-on-Wye	Rev. H. W. Phillott	12.
SURREY.		
Bramley	Rev. H. B. Power	8.
Carshalton	Rev. W. Cator	10.
Lingfield	Rev. J. Thomas	10.
Oxted	Rev. A. Brenan	12.
Shalford	A. Grenfell, Esq.	10.
Stoke d'Abernon	Rev. F. P. Phillips	10.
Titsey	G. Leveson Gower, Esq.	13 (except in three summer months).
Thorpe	Rev. G. Drury	11 or 12.
Wanborough	Rev. G. Chilton	10.
WARWICKSHIRE.		
Allesley	Rev. W. Bree	8.
Alveston	Sir N. C. Hamilton	8, if working with parents, 10 if hired without.
Barford	Edward Graves, Esq.	10, except in seed time and harvest.
Bubbenhall	Rev. A. A. Fanshawe	12 for regular work.
Harbury	Rev. M. H. Hole	10.
Rowington	Rev. P. B. Brodie	10.
Shustoke	R. F. T. Croxall, Esq.	8.
Snitterfield	Mark Phillips, Esq.	10.
Wasperton	Rev. T. Leveson Lane	10.
Wellesbourne	J. M. Mordaunt, Esq.	10.
WILTSHIRE.		
Broad Chalk	Dr. R. Williams	10 (perhaps) with educational certificate.
Longbridge Deverill	Rev. Preb. Wilkinson	11 ditto.
Burbage	Ven. Arch. Stanton	8 or 9.
Castle Combe	Rev. R. C. Christie	11.
Christian Malford	Rev. R. V. Law	10.
Clyffe Pypard	H. N. Goddard, Esq.	12.
Corsley	Rev. J. H. Waugh	9.
Downtown	Rev. R. Payne	10 with educational certificate.
East Knoyle	Rev. R. N. Milford	10.
Great Bedwyn	Rev. J. D. Hodgson	10.
Wootton Rivers	Rev. W. J. Brodribb	10.
WORCESTERSHIRE.		
Alvechurch	Ven. Arch. Stanton	11.
Fladbury	Rev. J. Haviland	10.
Harvington	Rev. A. H. Ingram	10.
Madresfield	Rev. G. S. Munn	10 for part work, 12 for constant work.
Martley	Rev. H. J. Hastings	10.
Norton	C. Randell, Esq.	10.
Salwarpe	Rev. W. W. Douglas	12.
Upton-on-Severn	Rev. R. Lawson	10.

62. In addition to the above I have received opinions from the following gentlemen recommending that the employment of boys should remain unrestricted:—

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Rev. J. Buckle, Ashperton; Rev. A. Clive, Treville.

SURREY.

Rev. G. R. Portal, Albury, except as to education; Rev. N. J. Spicer, Byfleet, except as to education; Mr. W. W. Kibblewhite, Capel.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Rev. J. L. Colvile, Leek Wooton; Rev. P. M. Smythe, Solihull; Rev. C. D. Francis, Tysoe, except as to education.

WILTSHIRE.

Rev. R. Bishop, Ashton Keynes; Rev. R. W. Blackmore, Donhead St. Mary; Rev. J. C. Waugh, Wroughton.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Rev. R. P. Turner, Churchill.

Recommendations as to distances and hours of work.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

DOWNTON.

63. *A. R. Boughton Knight.*—I approve of the restrictions of distances suggested in reference to age. In this neighbourhood children and young persons are not usually employed in laborious work, and I do not see any necessity for restriction in their hours of work.

FROME BISHOP.

64. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—Boys who are hired by the year in farmhouses have hardly sufficient hours of rest allowed when living in the service of small farmers.

SURREY.

BYFLEET.

65. *Rev. N. J. Spicer.*—Children are not employed here on sufficiently large a scale to call for restriction, at the same time both females and children would be benefited by sharing in any legislation for other parts.

SHALFORD.

66. *Arthur Grenfell, Esq.*—I think three or four miles too far for any labourer to go to and from his work, and two miles too far for boys of 11 or 12 years of age. It is not possible to restrict the hours in hay time and harvest; if they are late a few nights they are not so continuously, and it would never do to enforce the stoppage of work at a certain time, as it might stop the operation, say, with a prospect of wet; boys employed leading the waggon team at hay time if they left at a certain time the rest would have to stop also.

STOKE D'ABERNON.

67. *Rev. F. P. Phillips.*—There is reason for restricting the hours of work, but I fear it could not be done by legislation, but must be left to general education.

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TITSEY.

67. *G. Leveson Gower, Esq.*—I think that boys should not be employed under 13 as a rule, except for the three summer months, when they may be wanted in the fields. If you must employ young children the distance should be limited, and in that case the table seems a proper one. I should in no case allow children under 13 to work more than 10 hours, including the time allowed for meals.

WANBOROUGH.

68. *Rev. G. Chilton.*—Boys of 10 and girls of 13 can easily walk more than a mile to their work.

WARWICKSHIRE.

TYSOE.

69. *Rev. C. D. Francis.*—I do not think as a rule that children suffer bodily from too long hours at agricultural work, or from being put to work too soon. I think that to make a good labourer it is necessary to go to work (part of the year) very young.

WILTSHIRE.

BROAD CHALK.

70. *Rev. Dr. Williams.*—The hours are not excessive here though the age is often tender.

CASTLE COMBE.

71. *Rev. R. C. Christie.*—No young person should be obliged to walk more than two miles for their work.

CHRISTIAN MALFORD.

72. *Rev. R. O. Law.*—I consider three miles quite far enough for any young person to go to work. The time according to custom in this parish is not excessive.

DOWNTON.

73. *Rev. R. Payne.*—I do not mean that no case ever occurred in which one would not be glad of a restriction, but they are hardly sufficiently numerous, as far as my experience goes, to call for legislative interference, and for these reasons :—

1. In the first place, as I have said, it is carter boys and shepherd boys who supply the most numerous instances of children working too young in agriculture pure, but they are more frequently than not provided by the carters and shepherds from their own families respectively, and of course the carters' and shepherds' homes are always near, and not unfrequently close to the farm.

2. I think parents would, and do shrink from exposing their children to the additional fatigue of long distances for their small wages, even supposing a child could earn 6*d.* a week more by going a long way, it would not be thought worth while.

3. I venture to give a most decided opinion, that if from the reports of other parishes legislation on the subject was shown to be required, it certainly ought to be on a stricter scale than that suggested in the paper of questions. I should be inclined to put one mile for under 12, two miles under 14, three miles above ; but I would not contemplate four miles under any circumstances. I hold it to be an intolerable burden, that any agricultural labourer, man, woman, or child, should habitually have to walk eight miles a day in addition to his work. Artizans may do it occasionally, or their better wages may enable them to keep donkey-carts, &c., but if the agricultural labourer is to receive any protection at the hands of the Legislature, he may certainly, I think, look to a limit of *three miles from his house to that of his employer*, for I would venture to observe that unless this was the rule, some difficulties might arise on larger farms. We have some more than two miles long ; the walk on the farm at least should be out of the employer's time, part of the day's work.

I have answered "No" so far as regards the physical part of the question ; morally I have the strongest opinion that the case of shepherd boys (and if the Legislature would protect men, I should say shepherds also) is one which calls for legislative interference, so far as regards Sunday labour, unless employers of labour can be induced to make improvements without it. I think it a disgrace to a Christian country that a certain number of boys should commence labour at perhaps 8 years old, and from that time till the day of their death, except when invalided, should be totally deprived of all religious education, and very nearly of all opportunity of religious worship. I believe neither shepherds nor shepherds' boys ever enter a place of worship, except sometimes of an evening in the winter months, say October, November, December. I should be afraid to say what the average attendance at public worship on the part of the shepherds or shepherds' boys was in this parish. Except in lambing time there can be no reason why the evil should not be diminished.

NETHERHAMPTON.

74. *Rev. D. Olivier.*—I think that to send a boy of even 14 to 15 three miles and back to work, or of 16 four miles, is a severe tax on his strength at that time of life. The restriction [as to hours of work] should, I think, be regulated by the age of the child or young person, but I fancy 10 hours work is enough for any boy, still less for a girl under 17.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

ALVECHURCH.

75. The *Ven. Archdeacon Sandford.*—It would be best to allow no boy to labour under the age of 11 or 12, and to take no lad under the age of 14 more than one mile from home. Allow no boys under 14, nor any female of any age, to work more than eight or nine hours. In this neighbourhood no female does work longer than this.

HARVINGTON.

76. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—Legislative interference in such a matter is not proper ; an employer out of consideration to his own interest would not fatigue his labourers by bringing them a long journey on foot. Carts for them would be provided.

NORTON.

77. *C. Randall, Esq.*—No [restriction as to hours]. They certainly are not overworked, and any restriction would apply only to some few days in harvest, when it would be very inconvenient to employers and not liked by the boys, to whom alone it would apply.

QUESTIONS 23 to 26.

III. Recommendations as to requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour.

Question 24.—The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained, are :—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15, ss. 31–9).

1. By half day at school, and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school, and whole days at work.

By the Print-works Act (10 and 11 Vict. c. 70, ss. 2, 3, 26).

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

Question 26.—You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstance of your parish and neighbourhood, or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances ; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

ASHPERTON.

78. *Rev. J. Buckle.*—I do not think any compulsion is desirable in this locality, nor if it were desirable do I see how it could be adopted.

Byford.

79. *Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope.*—Having some years ago made an experiment of the half-time system (*i.e.*, half day at school and half at work), I found it inapplicable to agricultural parishes, and the system failed. Possibly a law requiring a certificate of competence in reading and writing before children are allowed to work might be adopted. A register of all holding such certificates might be kept at the school in each parish, and a penalty inflicted on employers of labour if they infringed the law.

Dorstone.

80. *Rev. T. Powell.*—I unhesitatingly advocate an unbroken and uninterrupted school attendance from 7 to 11 years of age.

Downton.

81. *A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq.*—Although it would be very desirable that children should receive some education between the ages of 12 and 15, I think that the services of children of 12 years of age and upwards would not be much sought for by farmers, unless the children came to work each day and all day. I would suggest that children should not be permitted to work in agriculture under 10 years of age; from the ages of 10 to 12 that they might work a portion of their time; after 12 years of age that they might work all their time.

Frome Bishop.

82. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—No way appears practicable to enforce education, except forbidding a child to be employed who has not been passed as reasonably educated according to his abilities and powers of learning unless he be 15 years old.

Trevil.

83. *Rev. A. Clive.*—I think that any enforcing of school attendance is impossible, unless the parent is indemnified for the loss of the child's wages consequent on his being at school instead of work.

SURREY.

Albury.

84. *Rev. G. R. Portal.*—I think that no child should be employed for wages under 13, unless he or she has passed the fourth standard.

Bramley.

85. *Rev. H. B. Power.*—The last. I think half day or alternate day attendance would not answer at all in agricultural districts.

Byfleet.

86. *Rev. N. T. Spicer.*—The second [alternate day] seems to be most practicable, though in itself most difficult I apprehend to be carried out.

Capel.

87. *Mr. W. W. Kibblewhite.*—I believe, if any restriction is to be made, that the only practicable one is alternate weeks for an agricultural district.

Carshalton.

88. *Rev. W. A. B. Cator.*—I am of opinion that some system of compulsory education is by all means desirable, but which is most suitable I am at a loss to say.

Chobham.

89. *Rev. S. J. Jerram.*—I fear that the enforcing some amount of school attendance would be attended with insuperable difficulty. I am inclined to think that alternate days would answer best in a widely scattered parish, and half days in those which are more compact.

Godstone.

90. *Rev. G. T. Hoare.*—The third [printworks] appears to be most applicable to our circumstances. The distances preclude the first; and the nature of agricultural employments would make the second very difficult.

Limpsfield.

91. *Rev. S. Charlsworth.*—In agricultural labour, work and school cannot be had on alternate hours or alternate days; a week should never be broken into. In farm labour alternate weeks even would be most inconvenient. I doubt if any provision for combining school and labour be feasible. I think that any rule enforcing compulsory attendance at school after 10 years of age would work unjustly or injuriously both to employers and parents, and would be evaded.

Lingfield.

92. *Rev. J. Thomas.*—Certainly not one or two. They should attend during the winter months. They are scarcely ever wanted at this season.

Oxted.

93. *Rev. A. Brenan.*—The above Acts are hardly applicable to a country parish such as this; it would be sufficient if the children were not employed before 12, and induced to attend the night schools when at work.

Send and Ripley.

94. *Hon. F. Scott.*—Certain number of months during winter, under 11 years of age.

Shalford.

95. *Arthur Grenfell, Esq.*—I should enforce a certain number of attendances per month or per quarter; then a boy could be employed when he is really wanted, and make up for his schooling when he can best be spared.

Stoke d'Abernon.

96. *Rev. F. P. Phillips.*—Of the three, the alternate whole day is preferable, but I doubt any one being practically possible. The best suggestion I can give is compulsory attendance till 11 or 12 years.

Titsey.

97. *G. Leveson Gower, Esq.*—I consider the half-day plan impracticable as applied to agricultural employment. The alternate day plan would very much interfere with the school arrangements, and with the ordinary staff of teachers in a country school, make it very difficult to carry on the work. The third (printworks) is more intelligible, but anything that interferes with regular attendance from day to day is very injurious. It may not be so much so in the manufacturing districts, where the children are more intelligent, but in country districts, spasmodic attendance would be of very little use. If children are to work, they should be required to attend school for six months successively, say the six winter months, and work the other six.

Wanborough.

98. *Rev. George Chilton.*—The half-day plan is much the best for the children. The alternate day plan is preferred by the farmers, and the third (printworks) is preferred by the parents, but neither are so good for the children.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Alveston.

99. *Sir Robert N. C. Hamilton.*—A boy having a certificate at 10 years of age should be considered freed from school. If it is desired to encourage him to continue attendance, it must be made worth his while. He cannot be supposed to give up any of his wages.

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BUBBENHALL.

100. *Rev. Arthur A. Fanshawe.*—Modes one and two would not be very practicable, as a farmer, who employs a boy, would require that boy's service for the whole working day, and from day to day. I would require a certificate of their having attended a school in the parish where they live for a certain number of days, during a certain number of previous years, say four.

EXHALL.

101. *Mr. H. B. Bomford.*—We should have to do without the boys if we could not have them for the day. So I should think the best plan would be to stay at school till they have learned sufficient.

HARBURY.

102. *Rev. M. H. Hole.*—I am of opinion that compulsory attendance at school would have to be enforced with great caution and consideration; but I believe no employer or labourer would object to no child being allowed to receive wages under 10 years of age, *absolutely* I say receive wages, because it would be difficult to prevent a child helping its parent, *in the parent's own allotment*, and such allotments are very general in this county.

Half-time, as enforced in the Factory Acts, would be simply ridiculous, as no farm work could be carried on if boys were absent half the days in the week. But it appears to me that the Revised Code affords a ready solution of the problem. Let the *haf-time* be for the *year, i.e.*, let every child from 10 to 11, and for such further period as may be necessary to secure its passing the *fourth standard*, be required to attend the 200 times required by this code for children to be presented for examination.

The less busy seasons of the year easily allow of this.

KINWARTON.

103. *Rev. Richard Seymour.*—I should be glad to see a law by which no boy should be regularly employed under 9 years of age, unless he can pass the third standard, nor between 9 and 10 until he can pass the fourth standard. I think the same law should empower the board of guardians to allow, in the case of large families or low earnings, 1*s.* a week and the costs of the schooling to any child between 6 and 10 who, in their opinion, need this help to enable it to forego work and attend school. Without some such help our agricultural labourers cannot as things now are, keep their boys from work long enough to enable them to get the most moderate competency of instruction. I could illustrate this by facts, if it was necessary.

SNITTERFIELD.

104. *Mark Philips, Esq.*—No child ought to be employed who has not attended school regularly up to the time of entering service, at 10 years of age for boys. There is not a sufficient number of boys in this parish for the half or alternate day system.

TYSOE.

105. *Rev. C. D. Francis.*—I think that no child under 12 years of age should be allowed to work all the year round, who has not passed Standard IV., if such work interferes with his attendance at school for a certain number of hours. I do not think that such a restriction would seriously interfere with farm work, as he could make up his hours, partly by attendance at night school, and partly by attendance at day school during slack times of the year.

WILTSHIRE.

ASHTON KEYNES.

106. *Rev. R. Bishop.*—Alternate whole days at school and at work appears to me the best mode of enforcing school attendance, should it be deemed necessary to make education compulsory.

BROAD CHALK.

107. *Dr. R. Williams.*—The first and second modes might operate with doubling the amount of hands; the third seems to imply least troublesome innovations. But the simplest plan would be to require a certificate of certain attainments for all boys employed below 12.

BURBAGE.

108. The *Ven. Archdeacon Stanton.*—The half day is the best.

CASTLE COMBE.

109. The *Rev. R. C. Christie.*—The alternate day plan is to be preferred.

CHRISTIAN MALFORD.

110. The *Rev. R. V. Law.*—The farmers in this neighbourhood would never consent to half days or alternate days, except in the case of two brothers of nearly the same age. I should, therefore, suggest a number of days in the preceding six months.

CLYFFE PYPARD.

111. *H. N. Goddard, Esq.*—A boy in agricultural employment would be valueless to an employer who could not command his services every day, as teams of horses, &c. must stop in his absence.

DOWNTON.

112. *Rev. R. Payne.*—I do not think that any modification of the Factory Acts, such as half or alternate days at school, would in any way suit agricultural districts; but I have always thought that there is a very feasible way of securing education in these districts, viz., that of making it penal to employ any child below a certain age, unless that child was possessed of a certain educational certificate.

I would venture to recommend that the educational certificate should be that of having passed Her Majesty's inspector's examination in Standard IV., and no child until 15 should receive wages until it had obtained that certificate. This plan might require a few additional inspectors, but I see no difficulty whatever in carrying it out.

Let the penalty be 5*l.* or 1*l.* for the first offence, for paying wages to any child under 15 without the educational certificate, recoverable before magistrate, and half to go to the informer; and the magistrates should hold that evidence of work done was sufficient presumptive evidence that wages had been paid, and the thing would be done, for no employer of labour would place himself at the mercy of the child he employed to inform against him, whenever he chose, or indeed any one else. Of course I except the harvest months, say August and September, from this law. The beneficial results would, I believe, be incalculable. The parents would see that their children must be taught, or they would remain dependent upon them so much longer, and they would send them regularly to school, until the examination was passed. If the inspector would be very strict in reading, I would forego the dictation; but I think it would be better to take the standard as it is. The parents would learn sensibly the value of education, and with that perhaps would feel some gratitude towards those who provided it; and so it would tend to restore the balance between managers of schools and parents and children, which has been sorely disturbed by the recent course of action of the Committee of Council, throwing the whole inconvenience of non-attendance, &c. on the managers, and really making them dependent upon the parents and children. I do not think above 5 per cent. of children who have been kept regularly to school would fail to satisfy the examiner in that standard at 10 years of age; if it was 10 per cent. there probably would not be 2 per cent. after 11 if there had been regularity. I imagine that there is no district which has not schools sufficiently near each other, although there may be some where the Government inspector has not at present the entrance. This would be an additional reason for the Committee

of Council waiving all conditions (I should say everywhere, but certainly in smaller parishes) of giving aid and paying for results, however they were obtained. Then all schools would be open to them, and the Government aid would reach all parishes, as they profess to wish.

I doubted much whether I ought not to have put 11 instead of 10. What I should like would be, if a distinction could be drawn, to allow a child of 10 or indeed it might be any age with the educational certificate to earn wages at odd jobs, potato planting, &c., but not to go to a farm, say not work for a man renting 50 acres before he was 11, or even 12. They ought not to have the care of large horses, or be in solitude whole days before 12.

[The following letter was subsequently received from Mr. Payne.]

113. Dear Sir,

In reply to your question whether I should recommend any compulsory attendance at day or night school after a child had gained the certificate proposed, I reply I *do not*.

My principle is to secure an *adequate—i.e.* the best I can—education before labour commences, and then leave it free. I have no objection to a higher standard (if it were thought that the agricultural interests would submit to it) as the condition of receiving wages. I have placed it as low as possible, and should be very glad if Standard VI. even in reading could be substituted for standard IV., but I feel sure that it would be better for the child, and more convenient to the employer, to have it over, so far as compulsion goes, *once for all*. Suppose the question was, whether you would have children working under certain limitations from 9 or 10 up to 13, I feel sure that it would be better for the child and the employer to prohibit it either directly or by way of certificate until 11, and then leave it free. It would cause far less irritation and inconvenience, and would be far more simple and certain in its operation.

Night schools would no doubt be continued and attended voluntarily in many cases, and would probably be far more beneficial than, so far as my experience goes, they have proved hitherto, because you would start with a far greater amount of instruction, and far *more evenly distributed*, a very important consideration when you come to estimate the amount of teaching power required. I think that they should be aided by the Committee of Council in all ways. But I can conceive nothing more hopeless than *compulsory* attendance at night schools. Think of a boy who, having been at work all day is tired and done up in the evening, or of another with greater physical strength and better spirits, who lays himself out for a little fun of some kind after work. I should like to know what power on earth would prevent No. 1 falling asleep, and No. 2 finding his amusement in some way in the schoolroom, as you oblige him to be there instead of out of it.

I should have thought that throughout the Factory Bills the requirements of *attendance*, as distinguished from learning, would have proved a very great defect, but I am sure it would in the country. However, I have already replied to your question, and if at greater length than was necessary pray excuse it, and ascribe it to my sense of the importance of every thing connected with the education of the young in agricultural districts.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Downton, Oct. 2. Richard Payne.

Durnford.

114. *Edward Hinxman, Esq.*—I think it is very desirable that boys should be sent to school as long as the circumstances of the parents and the wants of the neighbourhood will allow it. In this county the average age in which this could be done, would be, I think, about 12. I do not think that any of the factory plans are practicable on the widely scattered farms of South Wilts.

Great Bedwyn.

115. The *Rev. J. D. Hodgson.*—I think the alternate day plan well worth a trial.

Longbridge Deverill.

116. The *Rev. W. D. Morrice.*—Alternate days would suit the school managers and children, if they would suit the farmers and there were a sufficient supply of children, which is doubtful. Attendance during preceding six months would seem an excellent plan.

Netherhampton.

117. *Rev. D. Olivier.*—In this agricultural hamlet I should think the half-day system best. I am inclined to think, too, that this mode should be insisted on until a boy or girl was 13, unless he could before that pass under Standard IV. of the Revised Code; in this case he might be supplied with a certificate, and at once allowed to work if a doctor certified he was strong enough.

Stratford-under-the-Castle.

118. *Mr. Edward Waters.*—I think that the most convenient mode is by means of night schools after work begins. I am opposed on principle to compulsion.

Wootton Rivers.

119. *Rev. W. J. Brodribb.*—With considerable doubt I incline to think that the half day would be the best mode.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Alvechurch.

120. The *Venerable Archdeacon Sandford.*—Allow no boy to work regularly at farm labour until 11 years of age. From 11 to 14 years of age allow eight hours work per diem, and compel attendance at night school from 11 to 16 years of age.

121. [Another plan suggested by the Rev. H. R. Sandford, Her Majesty's Inspector of schools, is as follows:—No child under 10 years of age to be employed. No child under 13 years of age to be employed, unless attending school (*a*) either two hours a day, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., five days in the week; or (*b*) four hours a day, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., on alternate days or alternate weeks. Boys under 16 to attend night school three hours a week, and boys under 14 to work only eight hours a day.]

Churchill.

122. *Rev. R. P. Turner.*—I should very much doubt whether either of the above plans could be carried out satisfactorily in the case of agricultural labourers, and in this particular parish neither seem needed.

Fladbury.

123. *Rev. J. Haviland.*—I think that the best mode of enforcing school attendance would be to prohibit the employment of children under a certain age (say 13), unless they can read and write fairly. It is a common thing to find young men of 18, 19, and 20 quite unable to read in consequence of not having been sent to school in childhood.

Harvington.

124. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—The simplest course would be to pass a legislative enactment prohibiting the employment in agricultural labour of boys below the age of 10 and girls below the age of 13; and of boys between the ages of 10 and 13, and girls between the ages of 13 and 15, unless they receive from a licensed inspector a certificate of their being properly instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and the first principles of religion.

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E. 1.

MARTLEY.

125. *Rev. H. J. Hastings.*—I think it very difficult to apply the half-day system to boys employed in agriculture. The alternate day system would be better, but that would entail the necessity of twice the number of boys being kept, and boys are scarce. Perhaps the third plan of requiring attendance during a certain number of hours between Christmas and 3rd of May. I think that, perhaps, the plan proposed of requiring a certificate of proficiency as a condition of employment might work well.

NORTON.

126. *Chas. Randell, Esq.*—I believe all that can be done is not to allow children to be employed before 10 years of age, and to provide good schools for them. The parents would avail themselves of such schools, and more heartily if not compelled. I doubt the practicability of prohibiting work until an examination in reading and writing has been passed. It would sometimes happen that one of a large family, strong but stupid, could not pass, although better able to earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week than others of more intelligence. This would be a hardship which the parents would feel strongly, and would make compulsory education very unpopular.

SALWARPE.

127. *Rev. W. W. Douglas.*—From inquiries I have made I believe that the printworks' mode would work the best. Many of the farmers would not object to let the boys come to school in the winter months, if they might employ them in the summer.

128. INFORMATION given with respect to the COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION, Questions 30 to 38.

Parish.	31. How many cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient?	32. Is the supply sufficient?	34. Are they conveniently situated?	35. Is there a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms?	36. Are they overcrowded with family or lodgers?	38. Is the accommodation being improved?
HEREFORDSHIRE.						
Ashperton	—	—	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Byford	About 2.	No.	Yes.	—	—	—
Dorstone	3 or 4.	Yes.	Comparatively.	—	—	—
Downton	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Frome Bishop	2.	Yes.	Generally so.	Yes (with 2 bedrooms).	Yes (with both).	—
Staunton-on-Wye	—	Sufficient for those who work here.	Yes.	Most have 2 bedrooms.	Many are.	—
Trevil	—	Yes.	—	Most have 2 bedrooms.	Sometimes with lodgers.	—
SURREY.						
Alfold	—	—	Yes.	—	Occasionally.	—
Bramley	—	—	Yes.	Scarcely.	In many cases.	—
Byfleet	—	—	Yes.	No.	Yes, with both.	—
Chiddingfold	—	—	Not generally.	No.	In many cases.	—
Chobham	—	Yes.	No.	—	—	—
Frimley	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes, with lodgers.	—
Godstone	4.	—	Yes.	No.	Yes.	—
Limpsfield	—	—	In some cases 2 miles.	Yes.	In some cases.	—
Lingfield	4.	Yes.	Generally.	No.	Too much so.	Yes.
Oxted	3.	Nearly.	Generally.	No.	Sometimes with lodgers.	Yes.
Send	3.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Sometimes.	—
Shalford	—	—	Yes.	Probably.	Sometimes.	—
Stoke d'Abernon	2.	No.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	Yes.
Titsey	4 to 5.	Soon will be.	Yes.	—	No.	Yes.
Thorpe	5.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Several.	—
WARWICKSHIRE.						
Allesley	—	—	Generally.	No.	Yes, by family.	No.
Alveston	1.	No.	Yes.	No.	Some are.	Not on farms.
Barford	—	—	Less than a mile.	Most have 2 or 3 bedrooms.	Not particularly.	—
Bubbenhall	2.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Yes, with both.	No.
Eatington	3 to 4.	Yes.	—	—	—	—
Exhall	—	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—	—
Fillongley	—	—	—	No.	Some are.	—
Leek-Wootton	—	—	Yes.	No.	Yes.	—
Rowington	—	Yes.	Generally.	No.	Yes.	—
Solihull	—	—	Generally.	No.	Yes.	—
Tysoe	3 or 4.	Yes.	Generally.	No.	Some.	No.
Wasperton	3.	Yes.	No.	No.	Yes.	No.
Wellesbourne	4.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—	—
WILTSHIRE.						
Ashton Keynes	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes, by family.	No.
Berwick St. John	—	—	—	No.	—	No.
Broad Chalk	—	—	Yes.	—	Sometimes.	Yes.
Broughton Gifford	3.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Very few lodgers.	—
Burbage	—	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes, by family.	—
Castle Combe	—	—	—	Yes.	Yes, by family.	No.
Clyffe Pypard	—	Yes.	—	—	In two or three cases by family.	Yes.
Corsley	2.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Donhead St. Mary	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	—
Downton	3.	Yes.	—	—	Not generally.	—

INFORMATION given with respect to the COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION—*continued.*

Parish.	31. How many cottages per 100 acres are considered sufficient?	32. Is the supply sufficient?	34. Are they conveniently situated?	35. Is there a sufficient number with two or three bedrooms?	36. Are they overcrowded with family or lodgers?	31. Is the accommodation being improved?
WILTSHIRE—*continued.*						
Durnford	2.	No.	Yes.	—	—	Yes.
East Knoyle	3.	Yes.	—	No.	—	Yes.
Great Bedwyn	2 to 3.	Yes.	Yes.	Scarcely.	In some cases.	Yes.
Longbridge Deverill	—	—	No.	Yes.	In some cases.	—
Netherhampton	—	—	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Stratford	—	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Wroughton	—	—	Yes.	No.	—	Yes.
Wootton Rivers	—	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Yes, by family.	—
WORCESTERSHIRE.						
Alvechurch	2.	Scarcely.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	Slight.
Churchill	—	—	Yes.	—	Some are.	—
Fladbury	2.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	Slight.
Harvington	4.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Many are.	No.
Madresfield	—	No.	—	No.	No.	Yes.
Martley	2 or 3.	Yes.	Generally.	No.	Some.	—
Norton	2½.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	No.	—
Rock	—	—	—	No.	Often.	—
Salwarpe	—	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Some.	No.
Upton-on-Severn	—	—	Yes.	No.	Many.	—

QUESTION 37.—General description of the cottages.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

ASHPERTON.

129. *Rev. John Buckle.*—The cottages mostly consist of kitchen, back kitchen or wash-house, with two bedrooms, one being the landing of the stairs; fireplace in one bedroom; all windows opening. No accumulations of filth, &c. are permitted. Lodgers not taken in without permission of landlord. Each cottage has oven, most have pumps for well water. Good sized gardens, about one-eighth of an acre; pigsties, &c. at end of garden. Owned for most part by Rev. J. Hopton, the principal landowner. Rent from 4*l.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*, depends upon size of garden. Farmers generally allow their labourers several rows of potato ground at a cheap rate.

BYFORD CUM MANSEL GAMAGE.

130. *Rev. B. L. S. Stanhope.*—The land in this parish is principally the property of two landowners, and improvements are being made by them in regard to amount and construction of cottages. The rent varies according to size of cottage and garden; average from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* All the cottages recently built have three bedrooms.

DOWNTON.

131. *A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq.*—1. Constructed usually of brick or stone, and contain on ground floor, living room, back kitchen, stairs, and pantry, 12 feet by 15; on first floor, generally three but sometimes two bedrooms, with separate entrances to each, 12 feet by 15. Proper arrangements are made for ventilation and drainage. A garden, pig-sty, and small outhouse attached to each cottage. The cottages are not usually supplied with pumps, but water is obtained at a short distance.

3. In this parish every cottage belongs to myself, and they are let on an average of 1*s.* per week, including garden.

FROME BISHOP.

132. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—I have cottages of every description, from one small sitting-room and one bedroom to two good sized sitting-rooms and three bedrooms. Large families are often in small cottages, and the reverse; they have generally good gardens. I have known five grown-up persons live in a cottage with two bedrooms of the worst description, and yet keep it sweet and tidy, as I saw in my weekly visit to one of them, who was for years bedridden. There is amongst landlords a custom of letting the cottages with the farms, and to deliver the inmate, bound hand and foot, to the not tender mercies of the employer; this is a system landlords should never follow.

STAUNTON-ON-WYE.

133. *Rev. H. W. Phillott.*—Most cottages consist of a kitchen and back kitchen and two bedroom, or quasi bedrooms upstairs; but in some cases the second bedroom is only a part of the landing place, and very insufficient in ventilation and light. But several cottages are not so well off as these, and have no second bedroom; the water supply is almost always insufficient. Wells are very difficult to sink in this soil, and most cottagers have to go a long distance for water. The drainage is bad. Most houses have gardens, and some good ones. The ownership is much divided, and the worst cases are those which belong to the small proprietors. Rent is, I think, never lower than 2*l.* 12*s.*, and mounts up to 5*l.* 5*s.*, for three rooms and small garden; only one or two dwellings (outhouses and cellars used as such) carry so low a rent as 2*l.* 12*s.* I should think the average would be 4*l.* or 4*l.* 10*s.*

TREVIL.

134. *Rev. A. Clive.*—The cottages are of all sorts. Newly built ones are generally sufficiently convenient. Some of the older ones, many of which were originally built by the occupiers, are cribbs from roadsides and odd corners of land, to which they obtained a title by prescription, and which have since been bought by adjoining landowners, are bad and inconvenient; they are gradually, but not rapidly, in process of demolition and reconstruction. The worst, however, are those belonging to small freeholders, who cannot afford to repair them.

SURREY.

ALFOLD.

135. *Rev. R. T. Sparkes.*—The cottages at Alfold are mostly old roomy houses, the bedrooms generally insufficient in number and inconveniently arranged; the gardens are very good, with a supply of water.

Rent from 3*l.* to 6*l.* a year. The cottages belong to the tradesmen and landowners; the tenants are expected to deal at the shops of the former.

BRAMLEY.

136. *Rev. H. B. Power.*—The cottages vary very much in accommodation and rent. Those in the village are the worst, and generally without gardens; they also differ in ownership, but I do not believe that any belong to tradesmen with whom the occu-

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E.
4.

piers are obliged to deal. In the outlying districts they are let with the farms, as a general rule, and these cottages are pretty good.

BYFLEET.

137. *Rev. N. J. Spicer.*—The cottages have generally three rooms and small scullery, &c. Rent from 2*s.* to 4*s.* a week, or more with good garden.

CARSHALTON.

138. *Rev. W. A. B. Cator.*—The cottages are built of brick and slated; accommodation spare. Drainage very indifferent, now being attended to. Usually two bedrooms and a sitting-room. Water supplied by wells. Gardens not general, but a few allotment gardens; outhouses fair. The owners are retired tradespeople. Rent 3*s.* to 4*s.* a week.

CHOBHAM.

139. *Rev. S. J. Jerram.*—Water supply and garden usually good; in other respects there is much room for improvement, particularly with regard to the number and size of the rooms. I do not think there is much, if any, compulsory dealing. Many of the cottages belong to the labourers themselves. Rent is about 5*l.* to 6*l.* per annum.

GODSTONE.

140. *Rev. G. T. Hoare.*—A few good cottages stand on the estates of the two great landowners; the rest are generally small and crowded into three groups without ventilation or drainage, outhouses, gardens, or water supply. Cheap tenements run up by small speculators rented high. An attempt was made a few years ago to drain the village into the stream which flows near, and some landlords avail themselves of this mode of relieving their houses at the expense of their neighbours. Some of the wells in the village are polluted by the near proximity of cesspools in a porous soil. We have many cottages unfit for human habitation. They are occupied habitually by the most ignorant and disreputable of our people. In such cases the house and its inhabitants act and react upon one another with the worse results.

LIMPSFIELD.

141. *Rev. S. Charlesworth.*—It seems to me that the acreage of a parish is a most insufficient means of testing the number of cottages needed, that it can indeed be no possible criterion, except in the case of *arable land* only and a purely agricultural labouring population. We have 260 houses, about 150 of which are occupied by labourers, many of whom have shifting employments; some are at times carpenters, bricklayers, brickmakers, gardeners, blacksmiths, whilst a large portion of our parish consists of open commons and extensive woods, moreover, many living in our parish go out of it to work, and some not living in our parish may be employed on the land. The amount of population (taking adults and children) is the only estimate upon which a calculation can be made. I estimate that we have one house for every two adults and three children; this is a favourable allowance, and would be ample if we had not some 10 or 12 one-room'd cottages.

LINGFIELD.

142. *Rev. J. Thomas.*—One living room entered by front door, one smaller behind for all domestic purposes, cooking utensils, tubs, and some provisions. Two bedrooms. Water supply very fair. All have gardens, but outhouses are not common. Owned chiefly by landowners. Rent about 2*s.* a week.

SHALFORD.

143. *Arthur Grenfell Esq.*—1. Generally brick. 2. Water supply excellent generally, and as the village is not crowded, and many of the cottages are isolated and probably well cared for as a rule, there is not much complaint, I believe, on these points. Where there is no garden ground accommodation ground is to be had, though on a limited scale, but as such is of great value and a decided boon to the poor, not only employing their spare time and supplying their table with luxuries, but giving them more interest in life and inducement to exertion and honesty. 3. Country landlords generally. 4. Rents are ordinary, but steadily rising.

STOKE D'ABERNON.

144. *Rev. F. P. Phillips.*—1. Some newly built by myself generally good. All three bedrooms; drainage, water, and ventilation considered; brick built; outhouses; garden good size.

2. Many old. Some of timber only being old barns, ill-drained and ventilated, crowded.

3. All the cottages belong to landlords, except perhaps three or four belonging to their occupants.

4. Rent: I allow my tenant farmers to hold cottages for use of men working on their farms under regulations. I fix the rent at 2*s.* per week for cottages of three bedrooms. Other rents about 2*s.* 6*d.* Cottage accommodation is the most important possible question on morality, religion, decency, and physical well being; but the labouring man does not appreciate enough the advantage of a good cottage. He needs to be taught it, partly by education, partly by encouragement, partly by restrictive rules. To do this the landowner and tenant must both act together and on the cottager. Rules should be drawn by the landowner, approved by the tenant farmer, and enforced. Every landowner should supply cottages enough for the farm, and permit the tenant farmer to place his labourers therein; but never ought to let the controlling power slip from his own hands as regards restriction of rent, number of lodgers, cleanness, &c.

TITSEY.

145. *G. Leveson Gower, Esq.*—1. They are mostly old cottages, some farmhouses converted into dwellings. The rooms are large, but the lower story low, the bedrooms being relatively better than the basement. The ventilation and drainage are good.

2. Of the 23 there are only two that have three bedrooms. The two new pair that I propose building will have three each. On the hill the water supply is bad; I provide a soft water tank, and put shooting to all the cottages. In the vale we have wells and the brooks; the water supply may generally be said to be good. The gardens are large usually, and allow of the cottagers growing wheat. The outhouses are convenient; they consist of a woodhouse, bakehouse, and privies with cesspool in the new cottages; in the old ones the oven is generally in the house, and it is only necessary to provide woodhouse and privies. The farmers object to labourers keeping pigs as a rule; perhaps half the cottages are provided with pig-sties.

3. In this parish all the cottages are mine. In Limpsfield, and especially Oxted, the cottages are the property of small tradesmen and others, the consequence is that in many cases the rents are high and the cottages bad. I have often purchased cottages from small owners; I have always found the rents are from 15 to 20 per cent. higher than I should charge for the same kind of cottage, and are taken weekly instead of yearly. Rent for cottages with large gardens 4*l.* 4*s.* I am no advocate for very low rents, but I consider 4*l.* 4*s.* to 5*l.* the most that a labourer earning 14*s.* can afford to pay.

THORPE.

146. *Rev. G. Drury.*—Of the cottages a few are large and good, rooms 14 feet square or more; three have three bedrooms, others have two rooms only, 10 feet square; the ventilation pretty good; no drainage. Water supply in some cases deficient, and bad in quality; good gardens. Bad conveniences, and deficient in number in several cases; the owners are the squire and other landowners. In two cases the

cottages are the property of the labourers; they are both bad.

WANBOROUGH.

147. *Rev. George Chilton.*—1. Brick, tiled or thatched; rooms about 12 feet square; no special provision for ventilation or drainage; rooms low; windows small.

2. Kitchen and back kitchen, two bedrooms, good gardens or allotments, fair outhouses.

3. All belong to the landowner.

4. Rent 5*l.* a year.

WARWICKSHIRE.

ALLESLEY.

148. *Rev. W. Bree.*—Mostly brick, the size of the the rooms too small for the families occupying them. The cottages being scattered over a large area in groups are not generally defective in ventilation and drainage.

Accommodation is often defective, many of the cottages having only one room upstairs, many of them have a garden attached, with outhouses. Water supply generally good.

The greater number belong to small proprietors. Not aware of tenants being obliged to deal with owners.

ALVESTON.

149. *Sir R. N. Hamilton.*—This is difficult to answer; the old cottages are very different from the new, and in the village separate cottages are not built, but blocks more like streets, mostly without gardens. It is not possible to purchase land for cottage building on farms, but in villages bits of land may be obtained, and on these patches cottages or habitations are built on speculation and let out to labourers. They are usually with one room and a kitchen down stairs, and two, or perhaps three, bedrooms above. The rent of the whole house varies from 6*l.* to 10*l.*; lodgers are taken in to make up the rent, and overcrowding is the consequence of high rents.

BUBBENHALL.

150. *Rev. A. A. Fanshawe.*—1. One half of the cottages are sufficient.

2. Number of rooms deficient in proportion of 35 to 20.

Number of gardens deficient in proportion of 33 to 22.

Water supply good.

Outhouses, &c. generally very deficient.

3. Chiefly by small owners of land, and by a charity in the city of Coventry.

4. Rent varying from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week. The cottage accommodation in the parish is bad. I would prohibit any labourer (with a family of sons and daughters at home) from occupying a cottage with less than three bedrooms. So long as men are allowed to lodge in the houses of the poor, where young women and girls are residing, the morality and health of the labouring poor will suffer.

EATINGTON.

151. *Rev. G. H. Biggs.*—Size very various. Ventilation usually good, because the doors are left open. Drainage bad. There are a few with three bedrooms, the majority two, and some only one. Good water supply from wells. Almost all have gardens or allotments. The greater number have pigsties. About 30 belong to Mr. Shirley; the remainder to small proprietors. None to tradesmen who compel the labourers to deal with them. Rent 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year.

FILLONGLEY.

152. The *Rev. J. L. Morris.*—The cottages are usually built of brick, and slated or tiled, and in a few cases thatched. The drainage is often defective. The better class of cottages have three bedrooms, but there are many with two, and a few with only one; some of them have large families in them. The water is derived from wells. Most of the cottages have gardens; but there are also allotments, which can be had by nearly all legally settled parishioners. The cottages belong to a great number of people. The rent varies from 3*l.* to 5*l.* They pay 10*s.* for a quarter acre of allotment.

ROWINGTON.

153. *Rev. P. B. Brodie.*—The lower room is often very small though usually sufficient; bedrooms are never large enough; ventilation by the windows, rarely opened, and chimney, which is often stopped up; poor people as a rule dislike fresh air in-doors. Drainage often very defective; open drains common, and privies too near the house and very foul. Pigsties never properly cleaned are always a nuisance. Number and size of bedrooms rarely sufficient. Water supply in most cases satisfactory. Most cottages have a garden and out-houses. [The owners are] small landowners and small tradesmen who mostly live at a distance. Cottages built of brick, roofs tiled; bedrooms very cold in winter. Most of the cottages are old and many out of repair. New ones rarely built and those never large enough. I think the Nuisance Act has done some good, but much yet remains to be done. I think the health and morality of the poor is seriously affected by the want of proper room in the cottages. The landlords as a whole only care to get their rent, and do nothing here either for the comfort or morality of their tenants.

SHUSTOKE.

154. *R. F. T. Croxall, Esq.*—The cottages are good and are brick-built with tile roof. Most of them have three bedrooms. The parish belongs almost entirely to two proprietors, and the cottages are chiefly occupied by labourers on those estates. Rent about 4*l.* a year, and lodgers are not permitted. The cottage gardens are good and well kept.

SNITTERFIELD.

155. *Mark Philips, Esq.*—In the village itself the cottages are very much crowded together and the drainage is bad. Water is obtained by pumps and wells. Several tradesmen have cottages which they let; these are generally slightly built and let high. The average rent of a cottage and garden may be called 4*l.* per annum. The landowners' cottages are scattered and generally detached from the main village, and all have outhouses and gardens. Many field gardens are let, about one-eighth of an acre each, and well cultivated. Many pigs are kept, but many old cottages are without convenience for keeping a pig.

SOLIHULL.

156. *Rev. P. M. Smythe.*—In the older cottages there is generally only one room downstairs, and one up. The ownership of the cottages in the village is in the hands of a variety of persons. In the country districts they generally belong to the landowners. I have no doubt that the limited accommodation usual in our cottages has a bad effect on the health and comfort of our labouring poor. It has a tendency also to immorality; but I don't think that it has any effect on education, if by education is meant attendance at school. If by education is meant moral training both at home and at school, no doubt its effect is bad.

TYSOE.

157. *Rev. C. D. Francis.*—The cottages belonging to the principal landowners are in good repair and of sufficient accommodation. This includes about one-third. The remainder are some of them small, but as a rule in tolerable repair. They belong to farmers, tradespeople, &c., and some few to the parish under trustees. Most of them have been much improved of late years, and are fairly supplied with wood barns, pigsties, and outhouses. Rent, 2*l.* to 4*l.* There are

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still a few very bad in every respect. They have most of them gardens or allotments, some both.

Wellesbourne.

158. *J. M. Mordaunt, Esq.*—Good state of repair, principally brick; moderate size; good ventilation and drainage; good water and gardens. Owners, Lord C. Paulet, Sir C. Mordaunt, H. S. Lucy, Esq. Rent, 1*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* There are other tradesmen owners, but I am not aware that the owners are compelled to deal with them.

WILTSHIRE.

Ashton Keynes.

159. *Rev. R. Bishop.*—1. The cottages are constructed generally with kitchen and back kitchen and two up-stairs bedrooms varying in size from about 64 square feet to 156 square feet. The ground floors are of stone; ventilation is often imperfect in bedrooms; drainage generally good.

2. Accommodation sufficient if suitable houses are sought; water supply very good; gardens generally very small.

3. Several of the cottages are owned by the occupants, few by large landed proprietors, and most by men of the labouring class. Tenants are seldom or never obliged to deal with their landlords.

4. Rent of the very poorest houses, generally with one room on the ground floor and one above, 9*d.* per week; of houses with little better accommodation, 1*s.* per week; and of really comfortable cottages with two rooms below and two above, 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Berwick St. John.

160. *Rev. C. A. Griffith.*—Construction, sandstone and thatched roof; the majority have small rooms. Accommodation: few have a third bedroom. Ownership: most go with the farms and belong to the squire or the lord of the manor. Some are poor freeholds; some are better freehold cottages, with gardens (about four, generally about two or three, in a row). The average rent is 1*s.* a week.

Broad Chalk.

161. *Dr. Williams.*—Our cottages may be thus classified:—

1. Old farm-houses of small occupancies well preserved, very good.

2. Odd ditto, ditto, cut up, parcelled into three, with barely two rooms in each family's tenement; these are very bad. I have known three or four sons with their dank drying clothes in the bedroom of their parents, and their father bedridden.

3. Tolerable average cottages; about two rooms below, two or three above.

4. Very good new cottages, but the water of these in tanks not always so good as the old deep wells. Mostly the farmer has the control of the cottages, and quite properly as a rule; but a few tenements in which decent old people, past work, might escape the union, are much required on grounds of common humanity. Also the able-bodied labourer's cottage ought to have its plot of land. Cottages in this parish are improving in quality, but not multiplying rapidly enough in numbers. I have roofs burnt off and not replaced; fever caused by overcrowding, or a hundred causes; an old couple living about a year in a lambing shed; others sorely put to or indebted to individual charity for shelter, to escape the dreaded union house.

Broughton Gifford.

162. *Rev. Preb. Wilkinson.*—A large proportion of the cottages is owned by the residents. These are bad in every respect. The landowners have some dozen, but these always go with the land to the farming tenant. They are not cared for by the steward (we have no resident landlord) half as much as the farmer's house and premises. Tradesmen own some 20. The obligation of exclusive dealing cannot now, from circumstances, be enforced; it used to be most shamefully by a beer-house keeper and general storekeeper now dead.

The rent is about 9*d.* a week for a very small place indeed, fit for two or three people. 3*l.* 10*s.* or 5*l.* for cottage fit for a family with, say, garden under a quarter of an acre.

The country folks are far better off than the town-people. Each labourer and even each pauper has a separate house with separate day and night rooms. There is no such thing, as I have known and seen over and over again in towns, as a whole family sleeping and living in the same apartment.

Burbage.

163. *Archdeacon Stanton.*—1. Not well ventilated of necessity. Size of rooms generally 10 or 12 feet square.

2. Generally a small garden; water supply from wells.

3. Generally by landowners; the vicar has some and others also.

4. Rent from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per annum for labourers.

Castle Combe.

164. *Rev. R. C. Christie.*—The cottages, with few exceptions, belong to the lord of the manor, who has recently purchased the property. Ventilation and drainage indifferent. Water supply very bad. Nearly all the poor have allotments of land in addition to their gardens, which they find a very great help to them.

Clyffe Pypard.

165. *H. N. Goddard, Esq.*—With few exceptions the worst cottages are occupied by the owners, having been built at some period on waste land. This parish having a clay subsoil water generally bad. Gardens, including allotments, good; outhouses indifferent.

Rent varies from 42*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.*, depending in a great measure on the ownership.

Downton.

166. *Rev. R. Payne.*—We have all kinds of cottages, mud, brick, thatched, tiled, slated. Some old cottages have rather larger rooms, but then never more than two and sometimes only one bedroom, or one and a landing. Usually the living rooms are from 10 to 12 feet square with a pantry by the side, and sometimes a place for fuel behind; in this case there are sometimes three bedrooms, but except in quite modern cottages seldom more than two, or two and a landing, where a bed could be placed. Sometimes the fuelhouse is not under the same roof, and then there are only two bedrooms, and in some few cases only one. Never more than one bedroom, and often not that in old cottages; there is therefore very little ventilation, and no cottages have windows to open on the ground floor. Drainage, as the population is generally scattered in this parish, does tolerably.

Accommodation uncertain. There is no one in the parish to take any pains in getting a large family out of a small house into a larger, and they are generally becoming accustomed to it and do not feel the inconvenience, &c.

Water supply generally good. Most cottages have gardens, and a good many that have not have allotments.

Outhouses (privies especially) almost universally in a bad state for health and decency, in not in a few cases disgraceful.

Owned (1) by large landowners; (2) by small people who have built them as an investment; (3) an unusual number owned by labourers.

The third class are generally inferior, not so bad as the worst of class 2, because they (No. 3) are for the most part detached and stand in gardens, but inferior to many of the best of No. 2; indeed, with the exception of the cottages already mentioned, lately built by Lord Nelson, many of the cottages built by cottage

investors have been superior to those provided, and also built by the large landowners.

As to class 1, I would further add, that what appears to me a very injurious practice has been lately introduced, that, namely, that of letting a large number of cottages to the holders of the farms. I do not like the practice of making the tenants sign a paper to turn out at a week's notice when they hold from the landlord direct, I think it likely to interfere with their feeling of security and independence; but I object to it *much more strongly* when that power of turning a man out of house and home is transferred to the tenant farmer, who thus has the means in his power of unfairly coercing the labourer, and thoroughly taking away his independence and freedom of action.

I can suggest no mode of supplying good cottages on self-supporting terms, but that of agricultural labour being able to demand greater remuneration, and then the tenants could afford to pay somewhat higher rents.

DURNFORD.

167. *Edward Hinxman, Esq.*—Labourers generally have their cottages free of rent, this being considered in their wages. Some houses are good, some very bad, but a considerable improvement is going on in this respect. Since the law of settlement has been altered it is becoming almost impossible now for a farmer to get a labourer unless he can offer him a cottage.

A sufficient number of good cottages should be built on every farm by the landlord, and the tenants should be required to keep them in good order just the same as he does the rest of his farm buildings.

GREAT BEDWYN.

168. *Rev. J. D. Hodgson.*—1. New cottages all very good in these respects, and some of those which are older, but most of the old are small and bad.

2. In the new cottages there are generally three bedrooms and two good rooms down stairs, with outhouses and garden ground; wells sufficient.

3. The landowner for the larger part of the parish is the Marquis of Ailesbury.

4. The rents have hitherto ranged from 2*l.* for the poorest cottages to 5*l.* or 6*l.* for the new, but they are being revised considerably for the coming year.

LONGBRIDGE DEVERILL.

169. *Rev. W. D. Morrice.*—1. Size very fair; ventilation usually fair.

2. Accommodation usually fair; water and garden good; outhouses very fair.

3. Many now belong to Marquis of Bath as freeholder, others still leased on lives by smaller owners; very few in the hands of shopkeepers.

4. From 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week; Marquis of Bath's are mostly 1*s.*

WROUGHTON.

170. *Rev. J. C. Waugh, M.A.*—In this large village many of the cottages being in private hands are small and inconvenient; well ventilated, drained, and accompanied by gardens; there are also allotments varying from a quarter to one-eighth of an acre. The rent generally is not excessive..

WOOTTON RIVERS.

171. *Rev. W. J. Brodribb.*—Of the total number of 80 cottages, 30 are decidedly bad in all the respects above mentioned. These have for the most part only one bedroom, which is seldom more than 12 feet square, and in many cases is not ceiled. Of the remaining 50 as many as 10 may be fairly described as good and commodious, having besides the sitting-room two or three bedrooms of a decent size. The rest are somewhat indifferent, but not positively bad, though not sufficiently roomy. Water supply and garden good. Owned for the most part by the occupiers of the land. Rent 5*l.* to 2*l.* a year.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

ALVECHURCH.

172. *Ven. Archeacon Sandford.*—The average size of the rooms is about 14 feet by 10. The ventilation is very bad, there being often only one window in the house which opens, the casement of which is about 36 inches by 18. The drainage is very insufficient, the houses being often damp and privies few and offensive. The accommodation also is inadequate at times, only one bedroom to a family, very rarely indeed three bedrooms. Moreover, when the accommodation is increased, lodgers are invariably taken in unless an express veto is placed on this by landlord. Lodgers, indeed, are often found where there is not room even for the family. The water supply is good, but the wells are not unfrequently affected by soakage from the drains. The privies are often insufficient in number, *e.g.* one for five houses, and offensive. The garden supply is fair, and 22 acres of glebe have been let by the present rector as allotments; a quarter of an acre to each labourer. This answers very well. The cottages are owned partly by landowners and partly by tradesmen (but without the obligation mentioned in the question), and partly manufacturers who reside at a distance, and collect their rents by an agent. It is this last system that is most unsatisfactory. Average rent, 5*l.* or 6*l.*

CHURCHILL.

173. *Rev. R. P. Turner.*—14 cottages belong to the landowners, the rest to proprietors not owners of farms. Water supply fair; drainage middling; gardens to most of the cottages; allotments for those who want them. Rent, in two instances, 6*l.* 10*s.*; generally from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*

FLADBURY.

174. *Rev. J. Haviland.*—1. Many of the cottages are deficient in proper drainage and in bad repair.

2. Accommodation small in proportion to families; water supply fair; gardens tolerable; outhouses deficient; frequently one privy for several cottages.

3. Principally owned by persons in moderate circumstances, not landowners.

4. Average about 5*l.* per annum.

HARVINGTON.

175. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—Either timbered cottages with one good sized bedroom and one small bedroom up stairs, and with flagged sitting-room and small pantry on the ground floor; some of these have only one bedroom; or brick cottages with two or three small low bedrooms upstairs, and kitchen and back kitchen on the ground floor. Several cottages generally built under one roof.

Case 1 (*gross case*). House with one small sitting-room and one small bedroom contains the following inmates all sleeping in the said bedroom. Man and wife; five boys, aged 13, 9, 6, 4, and 2; two girls, aged 11 and 7; and an infant aged 3 months.

Case 2. House with one sitting-room and one bedroom contains, man and wife; two boys, aged 4 and 2; and four girls, aged 12, 10, 8, and 7.

Case 3 (*gross case*). A house with one sitting, one bedroom, and one small ditto, contains, man and wife; four boys, aged 18, 15, 11, 9; and three girls, aged 16, 13, and 6.

Case 4. A house with one sitting and one bedroom contains, father (a widower); two boys, aged 18 and 7; and three girls, aged 15, 12, 6.

Case 5. House with one sitting, one bedroom, and one small ditto contains, man and wife; four boys, aged 13, 10, 8, and 5; and one girl, aged 15.

MADRESFIELD.

176. *Rev. G. S. Munn.*—The cottages in this parish, *i.e.*, taking its ecclesiastical extent, are of all kinds, from the most comfortable to the veriest hovels. In Madresfield proper (Lord Beauchamp's estate) new cottages have been built; more are in course of con-

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struction; the old ones will be taken down. The new cottages contain three bedrooms, and are in all respects sufficient for their purpose; the village is well drained. Earth closets have been erected at the schools with success, and are to be applied to the new cottages. The bad cottages are some which have been allowed to be built on the waste land on the sides of the road, and afterwards become either absolutely the property of the lord of the manor or leased on lives to the builders or their families, who have not the means to repair, much less to improve.

MARTLEY.

177. *Rev. H. J. Hastings.*—The cottages are many of them old, built up in a slight way on waste land. The new cottages are chiefly put up in a neat way by persons who have a little money to lay out. The ventilation in the old cottages bad; no drainage; ownership, various. A good many belong to the lord of the manor, and many of these old, although new cottages have been built lately. A good many small owners. Rent about 4*l.* 4*s.* The farmers usually let their cottages at a reduced rent. They generally hire cottages with their farms, but the labourers are very glad to get a cottage independently of the farmer.

NORTON.

178. *C. Randell, Esq.*—One-third of the cottages have three bedrooms each. The others two, except two cottages, in which are old people without children. The usual size of living room, 12 by 12. With washhouse and pantry. Hovel, pigsty, and privy. Bedrooms, 11 by 9. All have gardens and allotments. Good water supply, drainage, and means of ventilation. All except four belong to landowner. Rent, 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.*

ROCK.

179. *Rev. A. James.*—The great bulk of the cottages in this parish are small freeholds, and these are the best cottages we have. The cottages which are part and parcel of the farms are the worst constructed and in the worst repair of any we have as a rule. The drainage and ventilation are fair; the gardens in general ample; water supply fair; outhouses (viz., privy and pigsty) pretty general; but the number of rooms and their size lamentably insufficient, either for health or morals.

SALWARPE.

180. *Rev. W. W. Douglas.*—Most of the cottages have two bedrooms, some only one, and common sitting room, which has to do for kitchen and all, and often for washhouse as well. Gardens generally are good. Some are let to farmers, who under-let them to their labourers. Rent, 4*l.* 4*s.*

QUESTION 30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation in regard to its effects on morality and education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

QUESTION 41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

HEREFORDSHIRE.

DOWNTON.

181. *A. R. Boughton Knight, Esq.*—In this parish there is sufficient cottage accommodation; the majority of the cottages is in good order. A good cottage no doubt adds to the health and comfort of the labouring poor, and usually induces habits of morality and a desire for education; it must, however, be borne in mind, that the best conducted people are selected for the best cottages. A pair of comfortable cottages, but devoid of all ornament, cannot be built in this neighbourhood under 180*l.* or 200*l.*; for which in my opinion the occupiers cannot afford to pay more than 5*l.* rent, wages being usually 10*s.* to 13*s.*

FROME BISHOP.

182. *Rev. W. P. Hopton.*—I have little doubt that the want of more bedrooms in the cottages has a hurtful effect with regard to illicit intercourse between the sexes, but I do not think it injures the health of the labouring poor, because the cottages, by reason of the outer door, are generally airy.

STAUNTON-ON-WYE.

183. *Rev. H. W. Phillott.*—Cottage "accommoda-"tion" is for the most part bad and insufficient in the numerous cases of small proprietors. Some of these dwellings are unfit for habitation, yet owing to the competition for houses in this parish the rents are very high, probably 25 per cent. higher than in other parishes.

SURREY.

GODSTONE.

184. *Rev. G. T. Hoare.*—This is a question for the great landowners. If they saw their interest (as we see it) in the increase of morality and education, and the consequent diminution of poor's rate and police expenses, one great difficulty would be removed; and it would be discovered that it *pays* to build good cottages.

TITSEY.

185. *G. Leveson Gower, Esq.*—I do not believe that cottages can be built to pay good interest on the outlay, if only a fair rent is charged. At the same time, to a landlord the indirect advantages are very great, and fully compensate for the outlay. A good deal of exaggeration is made use of as to the outlay. I find no difficulty in getting my tenants to pay the 5 per cent. on the outlay for new cottages.

WILTSHIRE.

ASHTON KEYNES.

186. *Rev. R. Bishop.*—By requiring every cottage to possess a garden of suitable size for the maintenance of the family, more comfort might be secured, and a very necessary restriction put upon the number of cottages per acre.

BROAD CHALK.

187. *Dr. R. Williams.*—It is almost a question whether each landowner might not be compelled to find cottages and allotment lands in proportion to his estate. (*a.*) The few cases in which the labourer has had a lease on lives of his own house seem to work very well. It keeps them off the parish. We have an old man of 90, who lives merely on a labourer's savings, and owns his own house. (*b.*) Allotments on easy terms in proportion to each farm would do good. (*c.*) The law of settlement might be abrogated in the sense of expanded; and so the labourer's labour would become worth more to him and to his employer. The above recommendation as to allotments proceeds upon the supposition that the patriarchal system of attachment here prevalent is to continue. But the recommendation of abrogating the law of settlement supposes a more general development in accordance with the broader maxims of social economists. *Either*, I hold, you must care for your peasants, or you must facilitate their movements.

BROUGHTON GIFFARD.

188. *Rev. Preb. Wilkinson.*—The problem to be solved is, how to provide decent cottages for the labouring poor, at such a rent as they can with their present wages pay, and as shall be a fair return on the capital expended. It is idle to adduce charitable or philanthropic schemes. They are of limited application. Any scheme must, in order to be generally applicable, be framed in self-interest. Make it worth the capitalist's while to build cottages, and there soon will be plenty of them. I cannot see what more the legislature can do. By the small Tenements Rating

Act (a very questionable measure in principle), cottages are exceptionally favoured in local taxation. Something may be expected from union rating in the supply of dwellings near work. But the real remedy must come from the labourer himself, from increased providence, self-reliance, and appreciation of decency and comfort. There are indeed improvements observable in the character of the labouring poor (they spend more on clothes, less on beer); but the great and effectual bar to the formation of habits of independence is the existence of a poor law. Why should a labourer provide against sickness and old age, when he has no interest in so doing. If by the age of 65 he is able to cease work and purchase an annuity of 2*s.* 6*d.* a week until death, the guardians very properly, in the discharge of their duty to the ratepayers, give him nothing. If he has lived freely and saved nothing the board give him 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. It is all one, only the careful man has lost a great deal of enjoyment. Out of door relief is a direct premium on improvidence. No class in the community spends so much in proportion to income on personal gratification as the average labourer. He supports all the beer and public houses. It seems to be implied that human nature in him is something different to what it is in other men, that in legislating for him the original motives of action may be ignored, that he will be provident without an object, self-reliant without self-interest.

The low condition of the labourer, whether in respect of wages and external circumstances, or of mental and spiritual enlightenment, is ascribable to the poor law. The first step for his elevation must be its gradual repeal.

I have been an active member of the board of guardians for 20 years, a clergyman in town and country for 27, a county magistrate for 18.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Harvington.

189. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.*—Beds to be let down by night and drawn up into a compact case against the wall by day might be provided for the downstairs sitting-rooms, for the sleeping accommodation of the male children, as in some of the peasants' houses in France, and as an improvement on the Scotch method of making beds in boxes. This would in many instances ensure a commodious sleeping apartment for the boys, and remove them from indecent approximation to the female members of the family. Such boxes might be let out by some society at moderate terms to cottagers, where the members of the family at home require such additional accommodation. I have seen in a nobleman's house a room so provided, used as a servants' hall in the day time, and servants' dormitory at night.

Norton.

190. *C. Randell, Esq.*—Cottages cannot be built on self-supporting terms if let by the landlord directly to the labourer. It is better to let them to the occupiers of the farm, who would generally be willing to pay a higher rent than he charged to his labourer; the convenience of having men living near to their work is well worth 1*l.* or 2*l.* a year. It has been objected that farmers having the control of the cottages might deal harshly with the occupants; but it is not so, on the contrary they look upon them as part of their establishment, and have far more care for them in sickness and misfortune than where the cottages are let by the landlord to the labourer. The remedy for bad or insufficient cottage accommodation is this, build new ones or improve the old ones, on condition that the occupier of the farm does all carting required, rents them from the landlord on such terms as will pay 5 per cent. upon the outlay, and lets them to his labourer not higher than 4*l.* per annum. No tenant worth having will abuse the privilege thus entrusted to him. It could be taken away if necessary at any time; for even where farms were let on lease, the cottages need not be included, but let from year to year. But this necessity I believe would be the exception, not the rule. Self-interest, if no better motive, would make the farmer careful of the welfare of good labourers, while those who are not deserving would change about as they do now. I have 15 cottages for labourers rented with my farm.

Opinions incidentally expressed upon various subjects.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Trevil.

191. The *Rev. A. Clive.—Education.*—The education is insufficient. The object ought to be, to give a child of 12 years old such a degree of education, that he will feel the value of it, not forget it, and avail himself of future opportunies of improving it. I cannot say that we have done this yet.

SURREY.

Godstone.

192. *Rev. G. T. Hoare.—Night Schools.*—The carters often throw difficulties in the way of boys otherwise willing to attend; want of funds is the great difficulty. The day master can work in the night school, but ought to be well paid for it. We cannot depend upon voluntary teachers for the regularity and discipline which ought to exist n the night school.

At the same we derive much benefit from the help of volunteers, male and female. It would be a great help to us if payment for results *pur et simple* were adopted; we could get teaching done in distant farm-houses, &c. under circumstances which made access to our schools impossible.

Titsey.

193. *Rev. A. Crowdy.—Night Schools.*—Looking on the one hand to the very unfavourable circumstances amidst which farm boys live, and on the other hand to the ascertained beneficial results and capabilities of night schools, I am decidedly of opinion that they might more than supply the deficiency of the day school. The lads are brought under good influences, especially when the clergyman takes a leading part in the school, at an age when they can better appreciate educational helps; and the blending of what is interesting with what is instructive in the subjects, makes the real work of the classes acceptable instead of distasteful I might add that as a means of developing the mental faculities, and humanizing the feelings and manners of these rough lads, I consider the night school has a special value.

WARWICKSHIRE.

Alveston.

194. *Sir R. N. Hamilton.—Education.*—If all children found habitually in the roads collecting manure, or otherwise loitering and playing, were directed to be taken before a justice of the peace, and should it appear that they did not attend any school, and the justice had power to order the parent to elect whether the child should be ordered to attend the National or local school, or be sent to an industrial school, parents would prefer sending them to the former at a cost of 1*d.* or 2*d.* than to the latter, which would take the children entirely from home and cost the parent from 6*d.* a week upwards, according to the decision of the justice of the peace. Out of school hours children may collect "droppings and manure" without interference.

195. *Sir R. N. Hamilton.—Game.*—It is the opinion of some that cottages have been allowed to fall into decay, if not actually pulled down, on estates, to prevent the disturbance of game where it is highly preserved. Game is necessary to induce residence, but its excessive preserving is an evil in many ways.

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E. i.

KINWARTON.

196. *Rev. R. Seymour.—Education.*—At least half the boys fail to attain the same amount of instruction as the girls.

WILTSHIRE.

DOWNTON.

197. *Rev. R. Payne.—Education.*—I think about one in four of the agricultural labouring class in this parish are growing up with insufficient education. By insufficient, I mean at least those who cannot read with such ease as to make it a pleasure, not a task. My opinion is grounded upon the state of those who come annually for confirmation, who are for the most part more ignorant than when they left school, but I cannot profess myself in a position to answer with any great certainty. This parish is unfortunately situated as to education, from the opposition in it, and consequent canvassing for children, so that those who do come to day or night schools think they do their teachers a favour, instead of the contrary. Perhaps that accounts for a good deal, but although I think that I have given night schools a fair trial, I have formed a very low estimate of the good which has accrued. Did all start with the certificate of Standard IV. it might be different.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

HARVINGTON.

198. *Rev. A. H. W. Ingram.—Mops.*—A handbill of a Worcestershire statute fair or mop, in 1734, exists. A statute fair is represented in Isaac Bickerstaff's drama of "Love in a Village," middle of the 18th century. The growth of manufacturing towns, by absorbing the labour of the rural districts near them, raised the wages of the agricultural labourer in the neighbourhood. Farmers residing in it therefore sought servants in districts where the population had outgrown the demand for agricultural labour. Mops, then taking the place of the old village wake (become obsolete, in consequence of an alteration of religious views), sprung up as labour markets, in which wages could be regulated by supply and demand, over a large area. To do away with them would lessen the wages of our agricultural youths in certain districts, and close a free and ready outlet for surplus labour. Mops, however, should be shorne of their present immoral influences. Two large rooms should be opened in the town where they are held, on the usual mop day, one for the convenience of female servants and their female friends and employers; the other room for the place of meeting of the male labourers and the masters seeking to hire them. Both rooms should be supplied with tables of refreshments, and the room where the female servants assemble should be under the supervision of a respectable female, and provided with conveniences, which would prevent the recurrence of indecencies which have occurred in towns where the 200 or 300 young females have been assembled for hiring in the streets, with a similar number of youths on the same day. The mop then, where the sexes are separated, and the young servants removed from the immoral spectacles, and hearing the ribald ballads howled in the streets, becomes for the day a large and well conducted registration office, opened just at the time most suitable for agricultural hirings, and not subject to the disadvantages of other registration offices, to which many masters and servants make fruitless journeys. Registration offices cannot be considered at present as substitutes for mops. For the present low wages of the agricultural labourer do not admit of his taking railway journeys to the offices for the purpose of hiring out his own children, on the risk of his not being able to do so. His present deficient education is a bar also to his entering into correspondence by writing with the proposed employers. In a mop where there are many employers bidding for labour, those who are hired know that they obtain the full market value for their services. This is calculated to create a contented feeling in the servants. To hire servants in agriculture on the same terms as domestic servants, as it has been proposed, would be inconvenient. The hiring of the former must be by the year. Farm labour is heavier at one period of the year than at another. It would not answer to a farmer to keep a servant for the light work of the winter, and allow him the liberty of leaving his situation at a month's warning, when the heavier labour of the summer is coming on.

199. SCHOOL RETURNS.—DAY SCHOOLS.

Parish.	Population.	Summer. Boys. Enrolled. Under 10.	Summer. Boys. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Summer. Boys. In Attendance. Under 10.	Summer. Boys. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Summer. Girls. Enrolled. Under 10.	Summer. Girls. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Summer. Girls. In Attendance. Under 10.	Summer. Girls. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Winter. Boys. Enrolled. Under 10.	Winter. Boys. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Winter. Boys. In Attendance. Under 10.	Winter. Boys. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Winter. Girls. Enrolled. Under 10.	Winter. Girls. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Winter. Girls. In Attendance. Under 10.	Winter. Girls. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Remarks.
HEREFORDSHIRE.																		
Ashperton	534	22	8	16	3	27	11	17	4	24	12	17	7	21	15	11	9	
Byford cum Mansel-Gamage.	332	13	4	12	3	18	10	18	10	The same as in summer.								
Downton	178	16	7	10	6	16	7	8	5	20	10	12	7	16	8	11	5	
Staunton on Wye.	660	49	16	47	15	41	12	38·8	10·6	The same as in summer.								
Trevil	140	6	4	—	—	1	3	—	—	Rather better attendance than in summer.								
SURREY.																		
Alfold	500	13	7	—	—	15	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Bramley	1,129	30	14	21	10	30	16	24	9	Much the same as in summer.								
Byfleet	770	43	9	33	8	31	19	30	14	45	11	30	7	31	19	31	16	
Capel	1,274	49		35		37		25		—	—	30		—	—	18		
Carshalton	2,538	12	6	8	4	6	7	4	6	11	6	7	5	8	6	2	5	
Chiddingfold	1,167	33	3	21	—	31	15	22	10	33	3	18	—	31	15	20	8	
Chobham	2,090	145	27	95	17	157	42	104	29	136	37	91	27	145	46	103	31	
East Horsley	228	7	—	5	—	24	6	20	5	7	—	5	—	20	6	20	5	
Frimley	2,620	34	415	25	10	60	30	50	28	About the same as in summer.								
Godstone	1,400	89	31	59	21	75	24	47	15	73	24	55	16	62	18	34	11	
Lingfield	2,200	35	33	25	20	45	14	38	12	45	40	30	25	34	14	27	13	
Oxted	1,074	36	12	35		29	24	35		Nearly the same as in summer.								
Send	80	39	11	24	7	39	10	25	6	38	11	22	7	38	10	24	6	
Shalford	1,293	78	21	75	18	70	12	60	8	About the same as in summer.								
Stoke d'Abernon	370	20	15	18	12	23	11	19	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Titsey	167	5	—	5	—	15	11	15	8	4	—	4	—	9	10	7	8	After the age of 8 the boys go to Limpsfield.
Thorpe	550	39	2	34	—	31	7	26	—	Much the same as in summer.								
Wanborough	197	15	2	13	1	21	12	18	7	—	—	11	1	—	—	13	7	

Day Schools—*continued.*

Parish.	Population.	Summer. Boys. Enrolled. Under 10.	Summer. Boys. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Summer. Boys. In Attendance. Under 10.	Summer. Boys. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Summer. Girls. Enrolled. Under 10.	Summer. Girls. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Summer. Girls. In Attendance. Under 10.	Summer. Girls. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Winter. Boys. Enrolled. Under 10.	Winter. Boys. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Winter. Boys. In Attendance. Under 10.	Winter. Boys. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Winter. Girls. Enrolled. Under 10.	Winter. Girls. Enrolled. 10 to 13.	Winter. Girls. In Attendance. Under 10.	Winter. Girls. In Attendance. 10 to 13.	Remarks.
WARWICKSHIRE.																		
Allesley	974	14	10	—	—	26	16	—	—	14	10	—	—	21	16	—	—	
Alveston	861	33	13	25	10	35	12	28	10	37	10	26	12	31	11	23	10	
Barford	750	45	10	40	8	38	14	36	12	45	10	40	8	38	14	36	12	
Bubbenhall	346	15	4	14	3	11	9	9	9	12	4	12	3	12	8	11	7	Also an infant school of about 35.
Eatington	713	39	5	30	5	22	7	20	5	The same as in summer.								
Fillongley	1,105	Boys about the same as in winter; more girls and infants.								23	20	18	15	19	8	12	7	About 40 farmers' children included in this.
Kinwarton	411	29	2	14	1	36	9	13	6	18	3	10	2	20	10	8	5	
Leek Wootton	408	30	15	10	12	40	15	16	5	About eight more boys than in summer. Girls about the same.								This is besides an infant school.
Rowington	1,030	46	8	33	5	54	11	41	7	34	12	22	6	38	12	22	8	
Snitterfield	881	70	17	60	15	64	29	60	20	70	17	60	15	64	29	60	20	
Tysoe	1,035	55	32	40	28	65	36	50	30	40	30	30	26	50	35	40	28	
Wasperton	269	15	2	15	2	13	6	13	6	15	2	15	2	13	6	13	6	
Wellesbourne	1,542	70	18	68	17	75	17	74	16	Very little variation in summer and winter.								
WILTSHIRE.																		
Ashton Keynes	1,070	13	3	12	3	11	2	12	2	13	3	12	3	11	2	12	2	
Berwick St. John	499	33	4	21	3	36	13	30	11	28	4	18	3	32	10	20	9	
Broad Chalk	800	37	8	19	5	44	28	34	16	Same on register as in summer; a slight increase in attendance.								
Broughton Gifford	621	27	5	24	4	27	9	24	8	22	7	20	6	22	9	20	8	
Burbage	1,603	125	12	103	9	135	20	114	9	115	9	75	6	120	21	70	11	Besides these there are many Sunday scholars.
Castle Combe	535	49	25	71		53	44	52	27	About the same as in summer.								
Chicklade	143	All children, as a rule, attend school until they can earn wages at work.																
Christian Malford	800	42	3	30	4	34	12	22	6	36	5	26	2	26	16	13	8	
Clyffe Pypard	910	23	—	17	—	29	8	23	7	No material difference.								
Corsley	1,220	28	18	20	12	44	18	35	12	15 or 20 per cent. less.								
Donhead St. Mary	1,482	44	12	40	6	59	7	50	4	About the same as in summer.								
Downton	2,400	131	91	90	53	184	58	138	28	Difference very trifling.								
Durnford	553	43	1	34	1	32	12	27	7	42	2	31	2	32	9	33	10	
East Knoyle	1,034	42	2	30	2	18	11	14	6	33	4	25	3	22	10	19	5	
Great Bedwyn	2,263	150	30	150		160	50	180		140	50	155		145	60	170		
Heytesbury	1,103	83	15	64	14	73	21	69	17	86	18	69	16	73	21	71	17	
Longbridge Deverill	1,197	101	18	59	8	93	28	58	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Market Lavington	1,583	34	1	18	8	—	—	—	—	51	10	43	7	—	—	—	—	
Netherhampton	120	29	—	24	—	14	5	12	4	29	—	24	—	14	5	13	5	
Stratford-under-the-Castle	332	19	—	15	—	25	2	20	2	20	—	15	—	29	3	19	2	
Wroughton	1,721	85	16	54	3	74	32	48	2	85	16	70	10	74	32	67	1	
Wootton Rivers	444	42	10	38	6	51	9	37	5	43	8	37	5	50	9	39	6	
WORCESTERSHIRE.																		
Alvechurch	1,581	40	10	37	8	30	5	27	3	30	10	17	8	15	5	12	4	The idlers are chiefly among the nailers.
Churchill	181	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	6	17		12	8	19		
Fladbury	823	26	21	—	—	30	14	—	—	About the same as in summer.								
Harvington	452	32	3	26	1	20	14	20	6	32	3	24	1	20	14	18	9	
Madresfield	271	13	13	11	11	18	2	16	2	13	14	10	12	18	2	14	2	
Martley	1,140	40	11	27	5	57	13	40	9	43	14	32	8	65	14	44	8	
Norton	400	18	—	—	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Salwarpe	442	22	14	20	8	18	6	12	4	24	18	20	12	20	8	12	8	
Upton-on-Severn	2,676	108·9	38	77·1	26·5	105·7	44	71·7	26·7	91·9	36	60·1	23·1	90	44	58	26·7	

200. Night Schools.

Place.	On Register. Under 12.	On Register. Over 12.	In Attendance. Under 12.	In Attendance. Over 12.	Number of Weeks open.	Number of Days open per Week.	Chief difficulties.
HEREFORDSHIRE.							
Frome Bishop	—	—	—	—	16	3	Masters don't spare the lads soon enough, and the lads dislike coming out in the evening.
Staunton-on-Wye	1	5	1	5	8 or 9	4	
Trevil	—	—	—	—	12	2 or 3	Distance of cottages, and indisposition of lads to come out in evening.

Answers to Printed Questions.

Mr. Norman.

E. i.

NIGHT SCHOOLS—*continued.*

Place.	On Register.		In Attendance.		Number of Weeks open.	Number of Days open per Week.	Chief difficulties.
	Under 12.	Over 12.	Under 12.	Over 12.			
SURREY.							
Abinger	—	—	—	—	13	2	None.
Albury	—	—	20		26	3	Want of interest on the part of scholars.
Alfold	6	8	4	8	26	1	Distance after day's work.
Byfleet	30		—	—	16	3	
Carshalton	—	15	—	9	30	3	
East Horsley	9	7	5	6	21	2	Fatigue after day's work.
Frimley	(One about to be formed).				13	3	Different ages in same class; a young man of 20 and a youth of 13 being equal in attainments.
Godstone	2	49	·8	30·4	16	3	Want of funds.
Limpsfield	—	—	50		17	3	Distance after work. Want of teachers.
Oxted	—	22	—	15	26	2	Difficulty in getting regular attendance. Want of teachers.
Send	3	9	3	6	11	2	Want of teachers.
Stoke d'Abernon	3	12	2	10	16	3	
Titsey	—	—	1	17	13	3	Insufficiency of teachers and funds.
Thorpe	—	24	—	11	13	4	
WARWICKSHIRE.							
Allesley	1	13	—	—	20	1	The scattered state of parish.
Alveston	No register is kept.				15	3	Distance.
Barford	—	16	—	16	16	2	Irregularity of attendance.
Eatington	6	35	4	28	18	4	Want of teachers.
Fillongley	—	—	14		16	2	Want of interest among the scholars.
Harbury	—	—	—	—	20	2	Want of teachers.
Leek Wootton	—	20	—	—	In winter	2	
Rowington	—	—	6 to 10		About 14	2	Scattered position of cottages. Fatigue of pupils.
Tysoe	6	30	5	25	24	2	Indifference of parents, and their sons.
Wellesbourne	4	35	4	20	16	2	Irregularity.
WILTSHIRE.							
Ashton Keynes	45		—	—	16	3 for girls; 2 for boys.	Want of efficient teachers and school-room.
Berwick St. John	16 to 18		—	—	20	2	Want of paid master.
Broad Chalk	—	40	—	27	20	3	Fatigue; sleepiness; bad weather; want of novelty.
Broughton Gifford	—	25	—	18	8	3	Diversity of acquirements among scholars. Irregularity.
Burbage	—	30	—	30	13	3	Difficulty in getting master.
Castle Combe	—	—	4	34	13	3	
Christian Malford	3	62	2	40	20	2	Bad weather. Distance from home. Want of teachers, especially for girls.
Clyffe Pypard	3	7	3	4	23	3	
Corsley	—	—	13	15	22	3	Contrast to agricultural employment.
East Knoyle	2	46	2	26	18	2 or 3	Want of teachers.
Great Bedwyn	—	37	—	32	18	3	Want of teachers. Distance and fatigue.
Heytesbury	—	71	—	43·5	24	2 and 3 alternately.	Want of teachers. Fatigue of scholars. Indifference of parents.
Longbridge Deverill	32	56	26	51	26	2	Want of teaching power.
Market Lavington	—	24	—	16	14	3	
Netherhampton	—	—	6	10	16	3	Want of teachers. Want of funds; and fatigue of scholars.
Stratford-under-the-Castle	7	11	7	8	16	3	
Wootton Rivers	7	13	5	10	15	4	Indifference of scholars.
WORCESTERSHIRE.							
Alvechurch	—	19	—	10	18	3	Indifference of farmers and boys. Fatigue. Want of teachers.
Fladbury	—	43	—	—	21	3	Indifference of young men. The late hours to which boys are kept at work.
Harvington	5	10	4	8	13	3	
Madresfield	2	14	1	11	Michaelmas to Easter.	2	Boys kept too late at work to attend.
Norton	—	12	—	12	12	2	Indifference of parents and boys.
Upton-on-Severn	40		—	—	12	2 or 3	Want of funds to pay teachers.

EVIDENCE accompanying Mr. CULLEY'S REPORT.

INDEX to EVIDENCE.—OXFORDSHIRE and BERKS.

OXFORDSHIRE.

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APPENDIX A. - - - - 325 to 339
Contains a summary of the answers given in 79 of the Commissioners' Circulars of Inquiry returned from 57 parishes.
Of these circulars,

36	were returned from	Woodstock Union.
10		Witney Union.
1		Chipping Norton Union.
4		Banbury Union.
7		Bicester Union.
5		Thame Union.
1		Wycombe Union.
4		Abingdon Union.
11		Henley Union.

37 circulars being returned by clergymen for their respective parishes, 17 by landowners (of whom 4 are also occupiers of land), 20 by occupiers of land (of whom 19 are also guardians of the poor), 1 by a land agent, and 4 by schoolmasters.
The above summary also contains tabulated labour returns from 35 farms, extending over 16,536 acres, of which 11,238 acres are arable, arranged thus :—

TABLE A. - - - - - 326
Giving in detail the number, age, and sex of persons employed on 35 farms during the spring quarter, with a description of the nature of the soil and course of husbandry, where given by the occupier.

TABLE B. - - - - - 327
Shows how the employment varies throughout the year on the whole acreage (16,536 acres).

TABLE C. - - - - - "
Gives the spring employment on seven farms on which steam cultivation is used (these farms extend over 5,199 acres).

TABLE D. - - - - - "
Gives the employment during the winter quarter upon the same farms treated in Table C.

TABLE E. - - - - - 328
Gives the labour returns for nine parishes, as given by clergymen for their respective parishes.

TABLE F. - - - - - "
Gives the total return of males and females under 18 years employed in farm labour, as given by 9 clergymen for their respective parishes, and 35 occupiers for their farms (taking the spring return in the latter case to represent the average employment for the year.
Appendix A. also contains tabulated forms of School Returns, of which—

TABLE A. - - - - - 336
Gives the school returns from all the parishes (27) in Woodstock Union.

TABLE B. - - - - - 337
Gives the school returns from seven other parishes in Oxfordshire.

TABLE C. - - - - - "
Gives a summary of school returns from 33 parishes.

TABLES D. and E. - - - - 338
Gives the night school returns from Woodstock Union and six other parishes.

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APPENDIX B. Nos. 1 to 64b - - 339 to 356
Contains evidence more or less peculiar to the parishes from which it is derived, viz. :—

1. Aston North.
2. Aston Steeple.
3. Barton Steeple.
4. Barton Westcott.
5. Begbroke.
6. Bladon.
7. Blenheim.
8. Cassington.
9. Combe.
10. Deddington.
11. Dunstew.
12. Glympton.
13. Hampton Poyle.
14. Hampton Gay.
15. Kiddington.
16. Kidlington.
17. Rousham.
18. Sandford.
19. Shipton-on-Cherwell.
20. Stonesfield.
21. Tackley.
22. Woodstock.
23. Woolvercott.
24. Wootton.
25. Yarnton.
26. Asthall.
27. Bampton Aston.
28. Black Bourton.
29. Brightwell-Baldwin.
30. Eynsham.
31. Handborough.
32. Minster Lovell.
33. Standlake.
34. Stanton Harcourt.
35. Enstone.
36. Adderbury East.
37. Alkerton.
38. Drayton.
39. Epwell.
40. Hempton.
41. Wardington.
42. Wroxton-cum-Balscott.
43. Bucknell.
44. Cottisford.
45. Kirtlington.
46. Launton.
47. Weston-on-the-Green.
48. Aston Rowant.
49. Little Milton.
50. Shirburn.
51. Waterpery.
52. Stoken Church.
53. Headington.
54. Clifton Hampden.
55. Culham.
56. Nuneham.
57. Toot Baldon.
58. Sandford-on-Thames.
59. Caversham.
60. Hambledon.
61. Henley.
62. Pyrton.
63. Swyncombe.
64. Watlington.

APPENDIX C. - - - - 356 to 366
Contains evidence applicable to areas larger than parishes.

Mr. Culley.

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Resolutions of Boards of Guardians - - 356
Woodstock, Witney, Banbury, Bicester, and Henley Boards, Nos. 65 to 69.
Medical evidence - - - - 357
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Evidence given by relieving officers - - 357
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" Capt. C. Mostyn Owen - "
" Police Inspector, Witney - "
" Rev. H. Tufnell Young - 365
Evidence on pauperism - - - "
Rating of close and open parishes - - "

BERKSHIRE.

APPENDIX A. - - - - - - 367
Contains a summary of the answers given in 85 of the Commissioners' Circulars of Inquiry, returned from 61 parishes.
Of these circulars—

51	were returned for	Wantage Union.
10		Faringdon Union.
4		Abingdon Union.
2		Wallingford Union.
8		Bradfield Union.
4		Newbury Union.
1		Hungerford Union.
4		Wokingham Union.
1		Windsor Union.

36 circulars being returned by clergymen for their respective parishes, 12 by landowners (of whom 4 are also occupiers of land), 34 by tenant farmers (of whom 30 are also guardians of the poor), and 3 by schoolmasters.
The above summary also contains tabulated labour returns from 49 farms, extending over 25,762 acres, of which 18,920 are arable, arranged thus—
TABLE A. - - - - - 368
Giving in detail the number, age, and sex of persons employed on 49 farms during the spring, summer, and winter quarters, with a description of the nature of the soil and course of husbandry, where given by the occupiers.
TABLE B. - - - - - 370
Shows how the employment varies throughout the year on the whole acreage (25,762 acres).
TABLE C. - - - - - "
Gives the total return of males and females under 18 years of age, as made to the Assistant Commissioner by clergymen for their parishes and occupiers for their respective farms.
Appendix A. also contains tabulated forms of school returns, of which—
TABLE A. - - - - - 382
Gives school returns from 21 parishes in Wantage Union.
TABLE B. - - - - - 383
Gives school returns from Beenham, Englefield, Bearwood, and Finchampstead parishes.
TABLE C. - - - - - 383
Gives school returns from six parishes (Ardington, Farnborough, Hermitage, Bradfield, Ufton, and Barkham) not included in Tables A. or B.

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TABLE D. - - - - - 383
Gives a summary of the school returns from 25 parishes for which all particulars were given.
TABLE E. - - - - - 384
Gives the night school returns for Wantage Union.
APPENDIX B. Nos. 1 to 65 - - 386 to 404
Contains evidence more or less peculiar to the parishes from which it is derived, viz. :—
1. Aldworth.
2. Ardington.
3. Beedon.
4. Blewbury.
5. Brightwaltham.
6. Catmore.
7. Chaddleworth.
8. East Challow.
9. West Challow.
10. Childry.
11. Chilton.
12. Compton.
13. Fawley.
14. Farnborough.
15. Hampstead Norris.
16. Hanney.
17. East Hendred.
18. West Hendred.
19. East Ilsley.
20. West Ilsley.
21. Letcombe Basset.
22. Letcombe Regis.
23. East Lockinge.
24. Peasemore.
25. Upton.
26. Sparsholt.
27. Wantage.
28. Charlton.
29. Grove.
30. Ashbury.
31. Bourton.
32. Buckland.
33. Coleshill.
34. Little Coxwell.
35. Eaton Hastings.
36. Hinton Waldrish.
37. Longworth.
38. Pusey.
39. Uffington.
40. Stanford-in-the-Vale.
41. Woolstone.
42. Cumnor.
43. Frilford.
44. Kingston Bagpuze.
45. Longcot.
46. Steventon.
47. Long Wittenham.
48. South Moreton.
49. Beenham.
50. Bradfield.
51. Burghfield.
52. Englefield.
53. Grazeley.
54. Mortimer-West-End.
55. Ufton.
56. Sulhampstead.
57. Shaw-cum-Donnington.
58. Thatcham.
59. Welford.
60. Winterbourne.
60*a*. Kintbury.
61. Barkham.
62. Bearwood.
63. Finchampstead.
64. Wokingham.
65. Windsor.
APPENDIX C. - - - 404 to 410
Contains evidence applicable to areas larger than parishes.

Nos.
66–71. Resolutions of Boards of Guardians. Wantage, Faringdon, Abingdon, Bradfield, Newbury, and Hungerford Boards. (Nos. 66 to 71.)
72, 73. Medical evidence.
74–78. Relieving officers' evidence.
79, 80. School teachers' evidence.
Evidence given by—
81. J. S. Bowles, Esq.
82. Rev. T. Stevens.
83. H. R. Eyre, Esq.
83. G. C. Cherry, Esq.
84. Resolutions passed at a meeting of Newbury Farmers' Club.
Nos.
85. Letter from J. Walter, Esq, M.P.
86. Letter from H. Tucker, Esq.
87. Sanitary improvement of cottages, by Mr. W. Menzies.
88. Pamphlet on improvement of labourers' cottages, by H. R. Eyre, Esq.
90. Evidence on pauperism.
APPENDIX D.
Contains evidence on subjects interesting to the Commission not peculiar to the county of Berks, viz. :—
91. Loans for cottage building, contracted under authority of Inclosure Commissioners.
96. Earnings at piece-work wages.

OXFORDSHIRE EVIDENCE.

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

A. j.

APPENDIX A.

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULARS OF INQUIRY.

*THE following answers are collected from 79 circulars of inquiry (43 long and 36 short circulars) returned from 57 parishes in Oxfordshire, of which—

36	circulars	were returned from	Woodstock union.
10	„	„	Witney union.
1	„	„	Chipping Norton union.
4	„	„	Banbury union.
7	„	„	Bicester union.
5	„	„	Thame union.
1	„	„	Wycombe union.
4	„	„	Abingdon union.
11	„	„	Henley union.

37 circulars being returned by clergymen for their respective parishes, 17 by landowners (of whom 4 are also occupiers of land), 20 by occupiers of land (of whom 19 are also guardians of the poor), 1 by a land agent, and 4 by schoolmasters.

I. As to Employment in Private Gangs.

The Assistant Commissioner only received one return of persons employed in private gangs, viz., from Kirtlington parish, where two mixed gangs of boys and girls are employed for four or five weeks in May and June hand weeding corn which has been horse hoed. These gangs are together composed of about 30 boys and as many girls of the following ages :—

14	boys	between 8 and 10	years.
11	„	„ 10 and 13	„
5	„	„ 13 and 18	„
5	girls	„ 8 and 10	„
13	„	„ 10 and 13	„
12	„	„ 13 and 18	„

About one-third of the children live on the farm and two-thirds come from a village two miles distant; the hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner; the 60 children are divided into two mixed gangs, each gang being under the charge of a steady married labourer. Speaking of these gangs, Captain Dashwood says :—"I thought of dividing the "sexes, but found it was not advisable, as children of a "family came together and brought their meals together, "the elder children taking charge of the younger. "The children are not subject to any ill-treatment, "nor are they in any way injured by the nature of "their employment; they are never employed in "weeding high wet corn. I do not think that any "legislative enactment is necessary for private gangs. "The state of education of the children is, however, "unsatisfactory; there are schools, but the children "are not very regular in their attendance. My belief "is that the primary schools ought to be supported in "part by a rate to be paid half by the owner and "half by the occupier, so as to get both parties to take "an interest in the management of schools. Under "the present voluntary system too few persons are "really interested; difficulties are also created by the "present special denominational religious teaching."

II. As to the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women not in Gangs, either "Public" or "Private," but individually or in company with a few other Persons.

Longer Circular, Questions 22 *a.* and *b.*
Shorter Circular, „ 1, 2, and 3.

The following summary will give the substance of answers to these questions from 79 circulars returned from 57 parishes, the tabulated labour returns being compiled from 9 returns for entire parishes and 35 returns (showing the age and sex of persons employed at different seasons of the year) made by as many occupiers of land whose occupations altogether extend to 16,536 acres situated in eight different unions.

The tabulated forms will show the age at which children begin to be employed, to what extent youthful and female labour is employed as compared with adult male labour, and to what extent the demand for manual labour on farms varies throughout the year. These forms will also indicate to what extent the manual labour on a farm is influenced by the proportion of arable and pasture land, the course of husbandry, the nature of the soil, and the use of steam cultivation.

†Table A. shows the number, age, and sex of persons employed during the spring quarter on 35 farms, extending over 16,536 acres.

Table B. shows how this employment varies throughout the year.

Tables C. and D. show the same particulars for persons employed during the spring and winter quarters on seven farms where steam cultivation is used, extending over 5,199 acres.

Table E. gives the number of children, young persons, and women employed in agriculture in nine parishes, with a population of 3,124, and an acreage of 14,490.

Table F. is a summary of Tables A. and E.

* The evidence from three additional circulars (one long and two short) received after this summary had been completed will be found in Appendix B. under the head of the respective parishes to which they apply, viz., Aston Rowant, Hempton, and Wroxton, making a total of 82 circulars received.

† A very complete Labour Return for 340 acres in Aston Rowant parish arrived too late to be inserted in this table.

Table A.

Labour Returns for Spring Quarter as given by the Occupiers of Farms in County of Oxford.

Union.	Parish.	Extent of Farm in Acres.			Nature of Soil.	Course of Husbandry.	Males.						Females.						
		Arable.	Pasture.	Total.			Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Woodstock	Cassington	325	200	525	-	-	—	—	3	4	13	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Kidlington	80	270	350	-	-	—	—	2	1	13	16	—	—	—	1	4	1	6
„	„	500	210	710	On stonebrash	4 course	—	2	3	6	30	41	—	—	—	3	4	1	8
„	„	140	100	240	-	-	—	—	3	—	9	12	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
„	Shipton	781	195	976	On stonebrash and clay.	4 course	—	—	2	8	31	41	—	—	—	—	7	1	8
„	Stonesfield	103	5	108	-	-	—	—	1	—	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Wootton	390	35	425	On stonebrash	-	—	—	2	5	12	19	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	„	600	80	680	„	4 course, variable.	—	—	1	10	21	32	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
Witney	Asthall	420	80	500	Both light and heavy land.	5 course	—	—	6	4	12	22	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	Bampton	376	68	444	Gravel	4 course	—	1	4	2	13	20	—	—	1	2	12	1	16
„	„	200	75	275	„	„	—	—	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	4	—	—	4
„	„	320	110	430	Variable	„	—	1	2	6	9	18	—	—	—	—	5	4	9
„	Black Bourton	565	36	601	-	„	—	—	3	5	16	24	—	—	—	—	10	—	10
„	Eynsham	407	283	690	Loam on gravel	„	—	—	5	3	24	32	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
„	„	300	200	500	„	„	—	—	5	3	22	30	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Banbury	Adderbury	146	176	322	-	-	—	—	4	—	11	15	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
„	Alkerton	175	125	300	Light soil	5 course	—	—	2	2	11	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Drayton	160	40	200	-	-	—	1	—	1	8	10	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	Neithrop	146	314	460	Heavy loam	6 course	—	—	2	—	13	15	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
Bicester	Bucknell	470	74	544	-	-	—	—	4	2	12	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	„	176	212	388	-	4 course	—	—	3	3	16	22	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	„	219	80	299	-	„	—	—	3	2	12	17	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	Cottisford	560	30	590	-	4 and 5 course	—	3	5	3	34	45	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	Kirtlington	927	101	1,028	-	-	—	—	6	3	38	47	—	—	—	—	5	2	7
„	Launton	130	200	330	-	-	—	—	2	2	10	14	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
Thame	Little Milton	379	276	655	-	4 course	—	—	2	2	10	14	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	Shirburn	440	190	630	-	-	—	—	3	5	28	36	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	„	298	317	615	-	4 and 5 course	—	—	—	1	25	26	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	Waterstock	118	208	326	Gravel and clay	5 course	—	—	2	2	23	27	—	—	—	—	5	4	9
„	„	82	182	264	„	„	—	—	1	4	13	18	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
Headington	Headington	67	62	129	Sandy loam and clay.	4 course	—	—	1	2	12	15	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Abingdon	Nuncham	300	564	864	Loam on gravel and clay.	„	—	—	1	11	17	28	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Henley	Henley	220	130	350	Loam on chalk	„	—	—	—	5	10	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Sonning	353	63	416	-	-	—	—	2	2	12	16	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	Swyncombe	365	7	372	-	-	—	—	4	1	7	12	—	—	—	—	5	1	6
	Total	11,238	5,298	16,536	-	-	—	8	89	113	554	764	—	—	1	10	130	20	161

Table B.

The following Return shows the Variation in the Labour Returns for the different Seasons of the Year on 35 Farms (given in detail for the Spring quarter, Table A.) The Summer Return includes the extra harvest hands in eight cases; the other Returns include only the ordinary staff for the different seasons of the year. These 35 farms extend over 16,536 acres, of which 11,238 are arable and 5,298 are pasture.

	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring - - - -	—	8	89	113	554	764	—	—	1	10	130	20	161
„ Summer - - - -	—	7	93	120	659	879	—	—	—	15	149	22	186
„ Autumn - - - -	—	5	92	120	595	812	—	—	—	11	119	18	148
„ Winter - - - -	—	4	82	113	526	725	—	—	—	8	67	14	89

Table C.

Labour Return for *Spring Quarter* on 7 Farms in Oxfordshire on which Steam Cultivation is used.

Name of Parish in which Farm is situate.	Acreage.			Males.						Females.						
	Arable.	Pasture.	Total.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Kidlington - -	500	210	710	—	2	3	6	30	41	—	—	—	3	4	1	8
Shipton - -	781	195	976	—	—	2	8	31	41	—	—	—	—	7	1	8
Wootton - -	600	80	680	—	—	1	10	21	32	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
Eynsham - -	407	283	690	—	—	5	3	24	32	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
„ - -	300	200	500	—	—	5	3	22	30	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Kirtlington -	927	101	1,028	—	—	6	3	38	47	—	—	—	—	5	2	7
Shirburn - -	298	317	615	—	—	2	2	23	27	—	—	—	—	5	4	9
Total - -	3,813	1,386	5,199	—	2	24	35	189	250	—	—	—	3	34	10	47

Table D.

Labour Return for *Winter Quarter* on 7 Farms in Oxfordshire on which Steam Cultivation is used.

Name of Parish in which Farm is situate.	Acreage.			Males.						Females.						
	Arable.	Pasture.	Total.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Kidlington - -	500	210	710	—	2	3	6	27	38	—	—	—	3	4	1	8
Shipton - -	781	195	976	—	—	2	8	31	41	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Wootton - -	600	80	680	—	—	1	10	21	32	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
Eynsham - -	407	283	690	—	—	5	3	24	32	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
„ - -	300	200	500	—	—	3	3	22	28	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Kirtlington - -	927	101	1,028	—	—	6	3	38	47	—	—	—	—	5	2	7
Shirburn - -	298	317	615	—	—	—	4	22	26	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
Total - -	3,813	1,386	5,199	—	2	20	37	185	244	—	—	—	3	28	7	38

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

A.
j.

TABLE E.

Union.	Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	Males.					Females.						
				Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Woodstock -	Dunstew - - -	407	1,600	—	2	4	6	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„ -	Hampton Poyle -	125	772	—	—	10	8	18	—	—	—	—	12	—	12
„ -	Kiddington - -	305	2,450	—	—	4	7	11	—	—	—	—	8	1	9
„ -	Rousham - -	131	920	—	2	0	8	10	—	—	—	—	4	2	6
„ -	Stonesfield - -	650	1,020	—	2	10	13	25	—	—	—	2	4	1	7
„ -	Sandford - -	476	2,240	2	3	11	22	38	—	—	—	—	18	2	20
„ -	Yarnton - - -	294	1,613	—	2	6	10	18	—	—	—	—	11	1	12
Witney -	Brightwell Baldwin -	277	1,660	—	—	6	11	17	—	—	—	1	23	—	24
Bicester -	Weston on the Green	459	2,215	—	5	15	6	26	—	—	—	—	4	2	6
Total -	- - - - -	3,124	14,490	2	16	66	91	175	—	—	1	2	84	9	96

TABLE F.

Shewing the TOTAL NUMBER of MALES under 18 *years of age*, and FEMALES *of all ages*, returned as employed in Farm Labour in Circulars returned by Clergymen for Parishes and Occupiers of Land (taking the Return of Persons employed in the *Spring Quarter*, as given by Occupiers' Labour Returns).

Unions.	Males.					Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Woodstock Union - -	2	13	62	108	185	—	—	—	6	80	12	98
Witney „ - -	—	2	32	37	71	—	—	2	6	63	6	77
Banbury „ - -	—	1	8	3	12	—	—	—	—	12	1	13
Bicester „ - -	—	8	38	21	67	—	—	—	—	26	4	30
Thame „ - -	—	—	7	14	21	—	—	—	—	20	4	24
Headington „ - -	—	—	1	2	3	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Abingdon „ - -	—	—	1	11	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Henley „ - -	—	—	6	8	14	—	—	—	—	11	1	12
Total - - -	2	24	155	204	385	—	—	2	12	214	29	257

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

Long Circular, 22*c*.—"In what kinds of work "are they employed during the different seasons "of the year?"

Short Circular, 1, 2, 3.—"To what extent are "boys, girls, and women employed in agriculture "in your parish?"

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS.

Boys under 10.—"Field keeping or bird scaring." "Stone picking." "Picking twitch" (otherwise couch, or scutch, or squitch). "Pig keeping."

Boys over 10.—Employed throughout the year as carter or ploughboys, driving teams and helping shepherds and cattle men; employed also in the same manner as younger boys.

Girls over 13 are occasionally employed in weeding corn, stone picking, twitch picking, &c.

Women (chiefly married) and girls over 15 are employed in spring in stone picking and weeding; in summer in singling and hoeing turnips, hoeing and weeding corn; in autumn in cleaning land for winter seed crops and cleaning roots, &c.; in winter in cleaning and cutting roots, occasionally in spreading manure and lifting roots. Throughout the year, as occasion serves, they are employed with the threshing machine, and in many villages the whole population, male and female, of all ages, turn out to hay and harvest work. Except in helping their parents at piece work, girls under 13 years of age are rarely employed.

WOODSTOCK UNION.

Rev. E. L. Lockyer, Barton Wescott, says, "All "the boys over 10; no young women; about three "married women. In autumn the whole parish, "men, women, and children, turn out to reap or "glean."

Rev. H. Brooks, Steeple Barton,—"Boys drive and "hold the plough all through the year; occasionally "they scare birds. Women are employed in spring "in hoeing, stone picking, and cleaning fallows; in "summer and autumn in weeding, haymaking, and "harvesting; in winter with the threshing machine "and chaff cutter and in cleaning roots."

H. Barnett, Esq., M.P., Glympton,—"Girls are "employed at 13 to 15 years of age when required "at harvest time and in picking stones. Women are "frequently employed in farm work."

C. E. Thornhill, Esq. (Chairman of Woodstock Union), says, "Except during the time of harvest, "boys under 10 years of age are not generally "employed in this parish or union. In considering "applications for relief I find that the guardians of "the Woodstock union do not, as a practice, ask why "a boy of the family making application, being of or "under that age, is not at work; but if there happens "to be a boy 11 years old or more, such a question "is almost always asked."

WITNEY UNION.

Rev. G. S. Griffiths, Bampton Aston,—"Boys "begin from 8 years of age in spring. Girls are not "often employed."

Mr. H. Bateman, occupier, Asthall,—"Boys are "employed in agriculture as soon as they are strong "enough, and are kept all the year round. Girls "are employed by their parents in time of harvest, "rarely employed by the farmers. I may here state "that girls and boys under 10 years of age are "employed by their parents in harvest time, and in "many instances on my farm children under 10 "years of age have earned for their parents 1*s.* to "1*s.* 6*d.*, and in one or two cases 2*s.* per day. Very "few go out in winter; about 20 may be induced to "go out in the whole parish during hay harvest, but "the majority are very indifferent whether they go "or not."

Mr. H. Akers, Bourton, occupier, says, "Employ- "ment of girls very rare in my parish; occasionally "one or two may be employed for a few weeks tend- "ing sheep or scaring birds. During spring and "summer most of the able-bodied women are em- "ployed in weeding, hoeing, and hay and corn har- "vesting. During the winter months about one- "fourth of them are so employed when the weather "is good."

Mr. Samuel Druce, occupier, Eynsham,—"At 12 "years old boys generally obtain constant employment. "A few boys between 9 and 12 frighten birds and "mind sheep, &c., having only occasional employ- "ment. Girls are not employed. About one woman "to every 100 acres is employed in this parish."

Walter Strickland, Esq., J.P., Standlake, says, "Boys are employed from 9 years upwards at all "times of the year. Girls are seldom employed. "Some women are employed on all the farms, but "chiefly in summer."

Banbury Union.

Mr. W. Chamberlin, owner and occupier, Adderbury,—"Boys are employed from 9 to 10 years of age "as plough boys. Girls are not employed. Com- "paratively few women are employed except in fine "weather, in spring spreading clots, hay making, and "reaping."

Mr. Davis, occupier and guardian, Alkerton,— "Boys are not generally employed in this parish "until 9 years of age; they generally begin at the "spring seeding to keep birds off corn, to mind sheep "on the side of the roads, or as plough boys. No "girls are employed. Women sometimes assist in "hoeing and weeding corn."

Mr. S. Berridge, occupier and guardian, Drayton, —"Boys are not employed under 12 except as 'field "'keepers.' No girls are employed, and I think the "demand for domestic servants is so great that they "go out to service as soon as they leave school, they "being *preferred* from the *agricultural* districts. Wo- "men are employed in light field work from March "till May with their husbands, hoeing corn, then "haymaking and harvest work. In the winter "months you seldom see one employed out of doors."

Bicester Union.

Mr. W. B. Savin, occupier and guardian, Bucknell, —"I never employ boys under 10. I do not employ "any girls. I employ women in common field work, "and very few of those, and principally used in pick- "ing stones on grass land, hay work, &c., but no "employment in the dead winter months."

Mr. Jos. Waters, occupier and guardian, Cottisford,—"Boys are employed at all seasons of the year, "especially at seed time and harvest. Girls are not "employed. Women are chiefly employed in spring "and summer months."

Mr. Thos. Barford, occupier and guardian, Launton,—"Boys from 10 years of age all the year. Girls "not at all. Women in fine weather during spring, "summer, and winter.

Sir H. Dashwood, Bart., landowner, Kirtlington,— "Boys from 8 years upwards are employed from May "to September, and from 10 years upwards in winter "months. Girls are employed in May and June "(in fine weather only) for weeding; in harvest "they assist their parents. A few women are em- "ployed all the year round; they are chiefly married "women."

Thame Union.

Mr. E. L. Franklin, occupier,—"Boys are em- "ployed all the year round, and commence work at "10 or 11 years old. Girls are not employed. Wo- "men are employed during spring, summer, and "autumn."

Mr. John Watson, bailiff, Shirburn,—"Boys from "10 years of age for about two months in spring and "six weeks in autumn to keep birds off newly sown "fields. Girls under 14 or 15 are not employed. "Women are employed throughout the year, varying "in number on this farm from 9 in March to 12 in "July and 3 in December."

J. W. Henley, Esq., M.P., landowner, Waterpery, says, "Boys are seldom employed under 10 or 11 years "of age, except now and then crow keeping for per- "haps three weeks or a month at a time. Not many "girls are now employed in farm work; they get out "to service. Women are employed in haymaking, "harvesting, and weeding. As many as wish to get "work generally can do so."

Wycombe Union.

Rev. H. T. Young, J.P., landowner, Stoken Church, —"Boys go out at 8 years old to drive horses and "take care of pigs and sheep; they are never em- "ployed in the beech woods except to drive teams, "carting the wood, or to look after pigs. Girls are "not employed in field work as a rule; they go out into "the fields in harvest time to help their parents reap "and bind the sheaves; they are chiefly employed at "lace work, at which a handy girl of 14 years old "can earn about 2*s.* per week. Women are employed "at times at stone picking and weeding and reaping "in harvest, but I think the cases are exceptional; "their chief employment is lace making."

Abingdon Union.

Rev. J. Gibbs, Hampden Clifton,—"Boys are em- "ployed (but not permanently till about 11 years "old) as early as 9 years old for bird keeping, pig "keeping, &c., but only during parts of the year; in "winter such very young boys are at home. As a "rule girls are not employed, occasionally the elder "girls of 11 or 12 years old ask leave from school for "a job in the fields, such as scutching, weeding. At "harvest time too the school girls, elder and younger, "go to help their parents by binding up sheaves, &c. "Women are not employed to any extent; they are "not encouraged to work in the fields except at har- "vest time. A few, however, work nearly, if not "quite, all the year round."

The Rev. Wm. Harcourt, landowner, Nuneham,— "No girls are employed here, and no women are "employed on my farm; only five married women "are employed on the other three farms in Nuneham "parish."

Henley Union.

The Rev. Joshua Bennett, Caversham,—"Very "few boys leave our school before the age of 9, and "then they are for the most part only employed in "bird keeping in spring and autumn. As a rule, no "girls under 13 years are employed in agriculture; "the wives of labourers and their eldest daughters "(if they have not left home as domestic servants) "are regularly employed on the farms."

Rev. W. H. Ridley, Hambledon (Bucks),—"Boys "from the age of 9. Girls from 14, but not then so "commonly as boys; they pick up couch, trim swedes "and turnips, hoe corn, &c. At least one-fifth of the "labourers' wives are employed on the farms."

Edward Mackenzie, Esq., landowner, Henley,— "Boys from 10 years old throughout the year. Some "girls from 12 years, weeding and picking couch; "women doing same work as girls."

Hugh Hamersley, Esq., J.P., landowner, Pyrton, —"Boys are generally employed in this parish from

Oxfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
A.
j.

" 10 years of age. Girls leave school about 12 years " old; places for the more intelligent are usually " found in domestic service. Employment in agri- " culture for those so young is a rare exception, and " may be said to be limited to the very few whose " qualities do not fit them for other employment. " Women, both married and single, are employed in " farm labour; the former to add to their weekly " means; the latter are usually those who have tried " domestic service and have failed."

Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene, landowner, Swyncombe,— " Boys are employed from 10 years throughout the " year, some even younger. I have an industrial " school, and the children are employed during the " intervals of teaching on the land allotted to the " school or on my estate. Girls of all ages are em- " ployed in harvest, and also in stone picking, with " their mothers. 22 women are employed generally " on the different farms in this parish."

F. E. S. Viret, Esq., J.P., Watlington, — " It is " very seldom, if ever, except during harvest, that " boys under 11 years are employed in agriculture " in this parish; to the best of my knowledge girls " are not so employed. Women are employed weed- " ing, and at times with threshing machines, and as " usual in hay-time and harvest; occasionally some " of the women are employed in spreading manure, " to which they make no objection."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

Long Circular, 22 (*d*).—" Do they live on or near " the farms on which they work? If not, how " far have they to come from their homes to " their daily work?"

Shorter Circular, 4.—" To what distance do the " children, young persons, and women employed " on your farm and in your parish generally go " to work?"

17 witnesses say the labourers are "near" their work; 20 witnesses say the labourers live within a mile of their work; 2 witnesses say "one mile;" 13 witnesses say from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles; and 2 say from 2 to 3 miles.

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

Long Circular, 22 (*e*) and (*g*). *Short Circular*, 5. —" What are the hours of work?"

The answers to these questions given in 55 circulars (some examples of which will be found below) show that *for men* the most usual hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with two hours allowed for meals, in summer, and from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter, with one hour allowed for meals, making a working day of 10 hours in summer and nine hours when there is sufficient light in winter. In many cases the work commences at 7 a.m. instead of 6 a.m., the men breakfasting at home and having only one hour allowed for meals; in some cases they cease work at $5\frac{1}{2}$ p.m., having only $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours allowed for meals instead of two hours, thus again bringing up the working day to 10 hours. In some parishes the working hours appear to be reduced to nine hours, work ceasing at 5 p.m. instead of 6 p.m., with the same allowance of time for meals. Carters, cattle-men, and shepherds, with their attendant boys, have to begin work at 5 a.m. in summer and remain at work till 5 or 6 p.m., as the case may be; other boys over 10 years of age have the same hours as ordinary men. Where horses, as is commonly the case, work from 7 a.m. till 3 p.m., only resting for 20 minutes or half an hour at 12 o'clock to let the ploughman have his luncheon, the carter boy comes to the stable at 5 a.m., is allowed from 6 to 7 o'clock for breakfast, drives his team, with a short interval, till 3 p.m., and then has till 4 o'clock for dinner, and again goes to work till 5 or 6 p.m.

The most usual hours of work for women are from 8 a.m. till 5.m. in summer, and 4 p.m. in winter; in many parishes, however, especially in Bicester union, they cease work at 4 p.m. as well in summer as in winter, in each case the hour is allowed for dinner. In hay-time and harvest these hours are considerably lengthened for extra wages, and when with the threshing machine women's hours are the same as those for men.

WOODSTOCK UNION.

Mr. Hutt, occupier and guardian, Water Eaton,— " Women work from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for nine months " during the year, during the other three months in " harvest and hay time from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., wages " varying from 4*s.* to 6*s.* per week."

Mr. R. J. Newton, occupier and guardian, Kidlington and Begbrooke,—" Day men work from 6 a.m. to " 12, and from 1 p.m. to $5\frac{1}{2}$ p.m.; carters from 5 " a.m. to $6\frac{1}{2}$ p.m.; women from 8 a.m. to 12, and " from 1 p.m. to $5\frac{1}{2}$ p.m. One hour is allowed for " dinner and half an hour for breakfast for those who " begin work at 6 a.m."

H. Barnett, Esq., M.P., landowner, Glympton,— " The ordinary times for men are from 6 a.m. to 6 " p.m. in summer, and from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in " winter; two hours in summer and one hour in " winter being allowed for meals."

C. C. Dormer, Esq., Rousham, landowner,—" Boys " who are employed keep the same hours as men, " viz., from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., except in harvest, when " the hours are unlimited."

Mr. Thos. Taylor, occupier and guardian, Shipton, " —Women work from 8 a.m. till 4 p.m., except in hay " and corn harvest, when they work from 8 a.m. to " 6 p.m.; in the former case they are allowed one " hour and in the latter $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours for meals."

Mr. Smith, occupier and guardian, Wootton,— " Boys, 7 a.m. till 5 p.m.; women from 8 a.m. to 5 " p.m.; $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours being allowed in each case for " meals."

WITNEY UNION.

Mr. Bateman, occupier and guardian, Asthall,— " Boys come early and go home to breakfast, then " work till dinner time, after dinner assist the stable- " men, watering the horses and other light duties, " more as training work to fit them for higher duties. " The women profess to be at work at 8 a.m., take " *two* hours in the day for refreshment, and think it " hard to be kept after 6 in summer or 4 in spring " and autumn."

Messrs. Jos. and Saml. Druce, occupiers, Eynsham,—" Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., taking " one hour for dinner."

Mr. A. Ackers, occupier and guardian, Bourton,— " Boys in winter 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., in summer one " hour longer (one hour's interval for dinner). Women " 8 to 5 in summer, 8 to 4 in winter, one hour's " dinner interval. In haymaking and corn harvest " occasionally work later."

Rev. R. W. Higgs, Handborough,—" Usual hours " of work in summer 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., in winter " 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. They have an hour for dinner, and " generally breakfast before leaving home for work."

BANBURY UNION.

Mr. W. Chamberlin, occupier and guardian, Adderbury,—" Women work from 8 to 5, except in hay time " and harvest, when they work from 8 to 7, or later " when very busy. Men from 6 to 6, except shep- " herds and carters."

Mr. Davis, occupier and guardian, Alkerton,— " Boys above 10 years of age from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. in " the winter months, and 6 p.m. in the summer months. " One hour, 6 to 7 a.m., given for breakfast, and from " 3 to 4 p.m. for dinner" (applies to team boys, G. C.)

Mr. Saml. Berridge, occupier and guardian, Drayton,—

" Men, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. } Longest hours in har-
" Women, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. } vest, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m."

BICESTER UNION.

Mr Jos. Waters, occupier and guardian, Cottisford, —" Boys, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Women, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m."

Sir H. Dashwood, Bart., Kirtlington,—" Women " from 8 a.m. till 4 p.m., with an hour for dinner."

Captain Dashwood, occupier, Northbrook,—" Men,

" 10 hours (6 a.m. to 6 p.m. with two hours' rest); " women, 7 hours (8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with one hour for " dinner). Women threshing 10 hours with extra " pay."—(On this farm "Scotch" hours are kept, G. C.)

THAME UNION.

Mr. John Watson, bailiff, Shirburn,—"6 a.m. to 6 " p.m. for boys, two hours for meals."

Mr. E. L. Franklin, occupier, Little Milton,—" Women 8 a.m. to 5 p.m."

ABINGDON UNION.

Rev. E. Peel, Toot Baldon,—" Men, 6 a.m. to " 6 p.m.; women, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m."

HENLEY UNION.

Hugh Hamersley, Esq., landowner and occupier, Pyrton,—" Boys being employed with the carters or " shepherds take the regular time with them from 5 " to 5 in summer, and from 6 to 5 in winter, two " hours off for meals. Women commonly work from " 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner."

CIRCULAR QUESTION 22 (*h*).

" Does the demand upon their physical powers in- " juriously affect their health and constitution?"

22 witnesses answer "No." 1 witness says "Yes."

CIRCULAR QUESTION 22 (*i*).

" Are the young, or the females, whether young or " grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?"

21 witnesses (all who answer the question) say "No."

CIRCULAR QUESTION 22 (*j*).

" Do any special employments injuriously affect " females or the young generally?"

21 witnesses say "No."

WOODSTOCK UNION.

Rev. J. Hoskyns Abrahall, Combe, says, " Gloving " is an employment well nigh universal among the " girls, and begins at their eighth year. From the " fluctuations in the glove trade it is not a very re- " liable means of subsistence, and seems to give " occasion to immorality, from the fact that the girls, " when it is dark and they can no longer work, walk " out and meet the youths, who are then returning " from their work."

Rev. F. Robinson, Stonesfield, says, "That the " sedentary habit of the glove maker tends to render " the young women less robust."

WITNEY UNION.

Rev. R. W. Higgs, D.C.L., Handborough, says, " The health is materially affected by the sedentary " occupation of glove making; in it all the women " here are employed."

CIRCULAR QUESTION 22 (*k*).

" Have you any observations to make as to the " effect of the employment of females in agricul- " ture on morals and on their proper training for " domestic duties?"

Two witnesses answer that the effect is generally bad.

Four witnesses answer "No."

Other witnesses answer as follows:—

WOODSTOCK UNION.

Rev. J. H. Brookes, Steeple Aston,—" I think it " certainly tends to rub the bloom off their womanly " modesty, it also unfits them for domestic service; " in fact, I believe this employment does tend in some " degree to promote the difficulty of finding good " domestic servants. As to married women who are " mothers, I believe it would answer to them better in " the long run to stay at home and guide their children " and household well."

Rev. C. Reade, Cassington,—" I think that the " effect of such coarse labour is to destroy the gentler " qualities of a woman's nature."

Rev. Jos. Dodd, Hampton Poyle,—" Upon the whole " I do not think it desirable that women should be " employed too much in the fields. The advantage to " them is but small, as their domestic concerns must " suffer."

The Ven. Archdeacon Lower, Kidlington,—" Agri- " cultural female labourers are almost always married, " and they compare favourably for morals with other " classes."

WITNEY UNION.

Rev. H. Gregory, Asthall,—" Restriction in our " parish does not seem to be required. Very few " females—about half-a-dozen only—go out to field " work, and I think the habit is of itself dying out. " Stone picking on ploughed lands and turnip clean- " ing are dirty and cold operations for females, but " those who go out don't complain, say it is healthy, " and not being up to earning money in other way, " are glad to do so in this."

W. Strickland, Esq., J.P., Standlake,—" No, young " girls not being so employed here."

CHIPPING NORTON UNION.

Rev. John Jordan, Enstone,—" I do not see how " any restrictions of this sort could be imposed with- " out depriving families of their means of subsistence. " If female labour were to be at all prohibited, hay " and corn harvest are the most perilous seasons for " morality."

BICESTER UNION.

Mr. W. B. Savin, Bucknell,—" Yes; but it is not " advantageous to the tenant farmers to employ them, " and they are more required in domestic service, " where the morals and conduct are generally looked " after."

F. D. Hibbert, Esq., J.P., Bucknell,—" Certainly, " indoor places as servants are easily obtained."

Sir H. Dashwood, Bart., Kirtlington,—" When " females are employed under the superintendence of " the farmer restrictions appear unnecessary."

Rev. W. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green,—" No. " Does not apply to this parish, as no children or " young persons are employed."

THAME UNION.

Mr. E. L. Franklin, Little Milton,—" Girls are " seldom employed and not wanted in these parts."

Mr. John Watson, Shirburn,—" I think no restric- " tion should be placed on the employment of women. " The local doctor informed me that women employed " in the fields are generally more healthy than others " not so employed."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. H. T. Young, landowner, Stokenchurch,—" I " should say it was desirable, and under no circum- " stances would I allow them to work in mixed gangs. " When I say this I refer to other parishes rather " than the one in which I live."

ABINGDON UNION.

Rev. J. Gibbs, Hampden Clifton,—" As a rule the " employment of females in agriculture is most unde- " sirable. It is said in the case of young women to " lead to much coarseness and immorality, and in the " case of mothers of families it is noticed that when " they work in the fields their families remain un- " cared for and their homes are untidy and neglected."

Rev. Wm. Harcourt, landowner, Nuneham,—" I do not think the employment of married women " who have young families at home to be right in a " moral point of view, and I think the employment " of young men and women together in the fields " injurious to themselves and useless to the farmer."

Rev. C. Rankin, Sandford,—" Yes, for I think " great evils result from mothers leaving their families " all day to go to work."

Rev. Ed. Peel, Toot Baldon,—" Especially of the " *young*. I do not think *they* ought to be employed " in field work at all. It is *most* demoralising to " young girls."

HENLEY UNION.

Rev. J. Bennett, Caversham,—" I consider it " most prejudicial, if not actually demoralising, for " young females to be employed in agriculture at all.

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

A. j.

" They are subjected to many temptations to go wrong, " and frequently do so."

Rev. W. H. Ridley, Hambledon.—" It is very " injurious to them *morally;* they gain coarse, " rough, immoral habits. It is very injurious " *physically;* they get rheumatism very extensively. " It is very injurious *domestically;* their homes and " families are miserably neglected. It is very " injurious *religiously*, for they are so tired that they " use no religious opportunities on week-days or " Sundays."

Hugh Hamersley, Esq., J.P., Pyrton,—" It would " not be desirable that young girls should be generally " employed in agriculture; the association with the " older women, who frequently are not of the best " class, would not tend to improve their morality or " render them fit for the duties of after-life. I do " not think it would be desirable, neither is it needed, " to place restriction on their employment in this " parish."

Mr. G. Dixon, occupier, Swyncombe,—" Most " desirable, as nothing tends to lower the character " of our agricultural women as early employment in " the fields, throwing them in the way of unprincipled " young men, and forming intimacies which in most " cases leads to the ruin of the former. This is my " experience in this parish."

Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene, Swyncombe,—" It is still " more important in the case of females, and I believe " the field employment is most prejudicial to the " character of females, and with young girls there is " not even the excuse of profit attached to their " labour. The constitutional objections, though great " in themselves, are slight compared to the coarse " habits contracted by association in the fields with " those of the other sex."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

Long Circular, 22 (*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work?

If so, would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest?

Short Circular, 7.—Is it desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, and especially of the young, in agriculture?

11 clergymen answer that no legislative restriction is desirable, 21 occupiers and landowners answer to the same effect. 2 clergymen answer that female labour should be confined to hay time and harvest. 4 clergymen answer that female labour should be confined to married women, or single women of a certain age, and 2 occupiers give the same answer.

Other witnesses answer as follows :—

Rev. J. H. Brookes, Steeple Aston,—" Yes, and " with this I would extend the small allotment or " cottage-garden system, and let the women give " their spare time in fine weather to doing light work " in their husband's garden."

Rev. J. H. Abrahall, Combe,—" The people of this " parish are so poor that one is not disposed to " recommend any restriction of their means of " subsistence."

Rev. C. S. Peel, Rousham,—" The females em- " ployed in agriculture do not usually go to service, " nor are those *regularly* employed on farms as a rule " good managers."

" There is no reason why they should not be as " moral as others in the same class of life."

Rev. F. Robinson, Stonesfield,—" I do not observe " any difference between those engaged in agricul- " ture and those otherwise engaged."

Rev. L. A. Sharpe, Tackley,—" Farm-work makes " them of rougher, untidier habits in married life " than service."

Rev. W. A. Plumptre, Woodstock,—" The employ- " ment of girls in the glove factories totally unfits " them for domestic service and for home manage- " ment."

The Rev. S. Edwards, Woolvercott,—" They are " not generally employed, only at hay harvest and " 'squitching' time, and this occasional field-work " does them no harm. Their employment as rag- " cutters at the mill is far more deteriorating to their " morals and home virtues."

WITNEY UNION.

Rev. S. Gregory, Asthall,—" No ill effects of " such employment have come under my knowledge, " but of necessity it precludes 'proper training' for " domestic duties."

Rev. R. W. Higgs, D.C.L., Handborough,—" There " can be no question as to its debasing effect on " morals, and its being detrimental to training for " domestic duties."

CHIPPING NORTON UNION.

Rev. John Jordan, Enstone,—" When females get " associated with males in field labour it leads to " immorality, but field employments do not spoil " females for domestic duties, as gloving and lace- " making do."

BICESTER UNION.

Capt. Dashwood, Kirtlington,—" I do not think " field labour is at all injurious unless the homes are " far distant from the place of labour; it is generally " supposed that it causes the families and cottages to " be more untidy, but from experience I believe that " those who are respectable and orderly housekeepers " remain so, and the slovenly would, if not at work, " be only idling their time, and their families and " homes would generally remain dirty and uncared " for."

Rev. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green,—" I have the " greatest possible objection to the employment of " young females in agriculture, and I use every en- " deavour to prevail on parents to send their children " to service. Most of the young girls begin service " at about 12 years of age."

Rev. W. Nuttall, Shirburn,—" My own parish only " shows me that where the mothers work the chil- " dren are neglected."

CIRCULAR QUESTIONS.

Long Circular, 22 (*m.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

If so, please to state the age below which you would recommend that boys should not be so employed.

Short Circular, 6. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and if so, at what age would you place the limit?

1 clergyman, 1 landowner, and 6 occupiers answer that there should be no restriction.

14 clergymen, 3 landowners, and 5 occupiers would restrict employment to boys over 10 years of age.

1 clergyman, 1 landowner, and 2 occupiers would limit employment to boys over 11 years of age.

2 clergymen and 5 occupiers think that boys should not be employed under 12 years of age.

2 clergymen think boys should not be employed under 14 years of age.

Other witnesses answer as follows :—

WOODSTOCK UNION.

C. E. Thornhill, Esq., J.P., Wootton,—" Having " regard to the rate of wages in this district, it would " not be fair to ask the labourer to keep his boys idle " after 10."

Mr. Smith, occupier, Wootton,—" I think it requires " no restriction, as they are not wanted until 10 " years old permanently."

WITNEY UNION.

Mr. H. Bateman, occupier, Asthall,—" If this parish " is a fair sample, I should say 'No.' My experience

" tells me that a boy at 10, if healthy, is quite fit for " field work."

Mr. H. Akers, occupier, Bourton,—" I do not think " more than one or two boys are employed in this " parish under 10 years, and those only occasionally, " such as pig or sheep tending.

" I would suggest 10 years as minimum age for " boys to work on the land."

BANBURY UNION.

Mr. Davis, occupier, Alkerton,—" I have never " seen any ill effect from boys going to work too " young, but I think they grow and gain strength " from the exercise they take; weakly boys often " improve in health after they commence work."

BICESTER UNION.

Mr. Jos. Waters, occupier, Cottisford, says, " Not " unless you intend to keep them at school, for in " most of the large and populous villages they will " be the greatest nuisance we shall have to contend " with; if you intend to compel them, I would say " till they can read and write fairly."

Sir H. W. Dashwood, Bart.,—" No boys should " go to work in the winter under 12, or in the " summer under 8, except when assisting their parents " during harvest."

Rev. W. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green,—" I would " restrict the age to 10, but as it often happens that " a boy of 9 is physically stronger than one of 10, " I would allow a boy of 9 to go to work if he could " read and write fairly."

WYCOMBE UNION.

Rev. H. T. Young, landowner, Stokenchurch,—" I " do not think boys ought to go to work before they " are 11 years old, and then only to tend sheep and " pigs or pick stones. The going to plough is much " too hard work, it stunts their growth and makes " them prematurely old. From want of strength, " moreover, they frequently have bad accidents with " horses."

ABINGDON UNION.

Rev. J. Gibbs, Hampden Clifton,—" It is most " desirable, for the boys' sake, that they should not " leave school before 12 years of age. Those who do " so seem to lose all the good and useful knowledge " which they have been taught and to lapse into " ignorance. But, on the other hand, in many cases " a restriction on the age at which they may be per- " mitted to work would tell very hardly on parents " with large families, to whom an extra 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* " is of immense importance."

Rev. Wm. Harcourt, landowner, Nuneham.—I " think it desirable, where practicable, that children " should be kept at school till 12 years of age, and " I think it highly desirable that young persons after " that age should have some schooling provided for " them to which their employers should contribute. " Farmers could send their lads whom they employ " to school, without inconvenience, from the middle " of October to the end of February, for four seasons, " at 6 p.m., and the parish schoolmaster might school " them for 1½ hours, being compensated for the extra " demand upon his time, and perhaps allowed to " deduct an hour from his previous work."

Rev. E. Peel, Toot Baldon,—" Very desirable. I " should place the limit at very lowest at 10; better " still at 12."

HENLEY UNION.

Hugh Hamersley, Esq., landowner, Pyrton,—" I " cannot see that it is desirable to place a limit on " age; when boys become too old for the control of " the village school they are better at work, and in " large families their earnings are almost a necessity."

Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene, landowner, Swyncombe,— " It would be desirable to place restriction, if pos- " sible, but without some extraordinary inducement " I cannot see, in an agricultural parish, how it could " be acquiesced in by the parents, partly from repug- " nance to any interference with their domestic ar- " rangements, but more especially from inability to " maintain their families without the earnings of the " children."

CIRCULAR QUESTION.

22 (*o.*) Do you see reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture; and if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

15 witnesses say, "No."

2 witnesses say, " 10 hours exclusive of meal times."

2 witnesses say, " 6 hours per day."

CIRCULAR QUESTION III.—23 to 25.

III. As to requiring some amount of SCHOOL ATTENDANCE in the case of CHILDREN earning WAGES by EMPLOYMENT in FARM LABOUR.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, " especially with a view to the better education " of such children," your opinion is invited on the following points:

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–39).

1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Printworks Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

25. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet the circumstances; or whether *any other mode that you might wish* to suggest appears to you preferable.

Of 43 Longer Circulars returned for Oxfordshire by clergymen for their parishes,—

2 circulars say, "No restriction necessary."

4 circulars say, "Factory Act (No. 1)."

1 circular says, "Factory Act (No. 2)."

3 circulars say, "Print Works Act (No. 3)."

2 circulars say, " Print Works Act, with a dif " ference of 6 to 12 months."

2 circulars say, " Print Works Act, with a dif " ference of 12 months according to choice of parents " and slack time of work."

Others answer as follows:—

WOODSTOCK UNION.

Rev. J. H. Brookes, Steeple Aston, says, "I do " not think any one of these plans practicable. To " enforce any of them by law would go far to dis- " courage the employment of boys on farms alto- " gether; the uncertainty of our climate and the " corresponding uncertainty for farming operations " make (1) and (2) quite impossible. I think (3) " less impossible; but it could not be carried out " without giving great dissatisfaction to the em- " ployers and doing serious injury to the discipline " of the school."

Rev. H. A. Collier, Combe, says, "The system of " alternate weeks at school and at work has been tried " in this parish, and met with some success. Such " an arrangement is more convenient both to the " farmer and the schoolmaster, and quite as well for " the children."

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

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j.

Rev. J. Hoskyns Abrahall, Combe,—"I am in "favour of a free elementary education provided by "the State, and as regards children compulsory in "the absence of a better education. Evening instruc- "tion should, I think, form a considerable part of the "instruction given."

Rev. Thos. Curme, Sandford, says, "If children "might not legally be employed until they could read "well and write parents would send them to school, "that the children might earlier earn wages."

Rev. G. J. Brown, Shipton-on-Cherwell, says, "I make it a rule to admit no one to my night school "under 12 years of age; up to that age, or nearly so, "they should in my judgment be kept at the day "school. At all events I should not be inclined to "let them go to work till they had learned to read "and write with facility."

Rev. L. A. Sharpe, Tackley, says, "All children "should be obliged to attend school till 8 years old or "longer, till a certificate of competency in reading, "writing, and arethmetic can be given. It is no use "to forbid doing work unless the educational test is "added."

Rev. C. S. Peel, Rousham, says, "I would compel "attendance at school up to 10 years of age, and "after that age leave attendance at a night school "optional. It would be difficult to enforce the Fac- "tory and Printwork Acts in agricultural districts."

Rev. S. Edwardes, Woolvercott, says, "Modes (1) "and (2) would have the effect of lowering the stan- "dard of education in the school generally. I have "had occasion to observe in preparing young persons "for confirmation that many have improved them- "selves in reading, &c. after leaving school. Perhaps "the best method (if the Committee of Council would "allow it) would be to *substitute* an evening for an "*afternoon* school."

Witney Union.

Rev. H. Gregory, Asthall, says, "Perhaps in small "rural parishes, as a step in the right direction, "one day in the week at school would be sufficient. "The loss in earnings would not be great, and I "think by degrees parents would wish to give up "more for their children's schooling."

Bicester Union.

Rev. W. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green, says, "I "would restrict the age of children going out to "work to 10; but it often happens that a boy of 9 is "physically stronger than one of 10. I would allow "a boy of 9 to go to work if he could read and write "fairly."

Henley Union.

Rev. A. R. Hogan, Watlington, says, "I think "any of the above modes would be very inconvenient "in an agricultural district; but if the children were "required to be at school (for their whole time) from "December 1st to March 1st it might be very bene- "ficial, there being little to do on the farms during "that period."

Rev. D. G. Compton, Wroxton, Banbury (in a circular returned too late to be put in its proper order), says, "I should judge that none of these three "ways would be so suitable for an agricultural dis- "trict as the rule of boys going to school regularly "till they are 10 years of age, and then going out to "work if they will, with the obligation of attending "the night school during the winter months."

Circular Question.

Longer Circular, 27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

13 circulars say "Not at all."
9 circulars say "Only on wet days."
5 circulars say "Slightly."
3 circulars say "Considerably."

Woodstock Union.

The Ven. Archdeacon Lower, Kidlington, says, "The children from the hamlets of Thrupp and "Water Eaton are absent about one-third of the "time."

Rev. C. S. Peel, Rousham, says, "Some families "make distance an excuse for not sending their "children to school, but it is doubtful if they would "be sent were a school near at hand."

Circular Questions.

Longer Circular, 28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

Shorter Circular, 8. What means of education are provided in your parish for the children of the agricultural labouring class? Do they take advantage of them? If not, are there any other causes besides early labour to which you attribute their non-attendance?

The following answers include those given to the first question and the latter part of the second:—

29 witnesses say "Not at all."
5 witnesses say "Very little."
11 witnesses say "Considerably."
11 witnesses say "The non-attendance is to be "attributed to the indifference of parents."
4 witnesses say "The non-attendance is caused by "the early labour of children."

The Rev. C. Reade, Cassington, says, "To a cer- "tain extent: a free but compulsory system of educa- "tion is best suited to us."

The Ven. Archdeacon Lower, Kidlington, says, "At least one-fourth are absent, but it is more owing "to the carelessness of the parents than to their "poverty."

The Rev. C. S. Peel, Rousham, says, "In cases of "large families assistance as a rule can always be "obtained by parents towards the expense of school- "ing."

The Rev. S. Edwards, Woolvercott, says, "Occa- "sionally a child is kept from school by the state of "his shoes. The attendance is worse in the case of "some who are above the rank of agricultural la- "bourers. Of course when there is a large family "the children leave school early, but while they are "on the books of the school their attendance is regu- "lar. The parents contrive to find the school pence, "even when they have to take credit at the shop, 2*d.* "per week for each child. The presence of artisans "and farmers keeps up the standard of education."

The Rev. W. A. Plumptre, Woodstock, says, "There is a fund at the rector's disposal for paying "for the schooling of the poorest children (about 30 "in number), and this ensures their attendance."

Circular Question.

29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

19 circulars say "No."
5 circulars say "Sewing only."

Henley Union.

The Rev. A. R. Hogan, Watlington, says, "Yes, "in the Countess of Macclesfield's private training "school at Watlington for servant girls."

An account of the industrial schools maintained by Mr. Ruck Keene at Swyncombe and by Lady Macclesfield at Watlington will be found in the general evidence received from those parishes.

Circular Question.

30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

The following answers also include those given to a portion of the Short Circular, question 9.

12 witnesses say that overcrowding is evidently prejudicial to health and morals.

Rev. C. Read, Cassington, says, "Overcrowding "should be met with legislative interference. The "fault lies with the poor themselves, and I think "that until we have a better educated class of labourers "legislation cannot be regarded as interfering un- "necessarily."

Mr. S. Berridge, occupier and guardian, Drayton, says, "Parents and grown up sons and daughters, when "they come home at certain times of the year, sleep "in the same room, which makes them insensible of "any sort of delicacy or moral propriety."

Mr. Joseph Waters, occupier and guardian, Cottisford, says, "In my opinion this ought to be the first "step towards national education: first improve the "dwellings and then educate, as what is the use of "education when you find six or seven grown up "people of all sexes and in all conditions of life sleep- "ing in one small room, which is no uncommon "case."

Rev. H. T. Young, Stokenchurch, says, "Over- "crowding leads to moral results which are shocking."

Circular Question.

31. How many cottages per hundred acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in your parish?

9 witnesses answer this question where the cultivation is described as chiefly arable or mixed.
3 say that 4 cottages per 100 acres are necessary.
3 say that $3\frac{1}{2}$ „ „ „
3 say that 3 „ „ „

Circular Questions.

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?

33. If not, what is the proportion?

circulars give no answer.
26 circulars say "Yes."
5 „ „ "Yes, and more."
2 „ „ "Nearly so."
12 „ „ "No."

Woodstock Union.

Mr. R. J. Newton, occupier and vice-chairman of guardians, Kidlington, says, "Four cottages are con- "sidered sufficient for the accommodation of persons "employed on the land in my parish, and fewer would "do if they were attached to steadings with an extra "bedroom for young men. Not having cottages on "my farm costs me 1*s.* a week extra for seven carters, "and their work is not so well done, nor can be. I "pay carters 13*s.* a week."

Circular Question.

34. Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.*, not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done?

circulars give no answer.
42 circulars say "Yes."
5 „ „ "No."

Circular Question.

35. Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms, and a sitting room, for the larger families?

15 circulars say "Yes."
4 „ „ "Scarcely."
6 „ „ "No."

Circular Question.

36. Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family, or with lodgers?

27 circulars say "Yes."
24 „ „ "No."

Circular Questions.

Long Circular, 37. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.). 3. *Ownership, i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. *Rent.*

Short Circular, 9. What is the condition of the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood? Are they sufficient for the supply of the labour required? Are they conveniently situated with respect to the farms? Are they overcrowded, and have any evil results to morality come under your notice in consequence? Are they well supplied with water, and well ventilated?

The answers to these questions will be found in the general evidence from the respective parishes; the following summary will, however, indicate the general bearing of the evidence.

The cottages are described (in number) pretty equally as "good or fair" and "bad." Rooms are generally described as small, and in most cases the accommodation is described as insufficient for the larger families.

Ventilation is generally described as fair; in 7 cases it is described as bad.

Drainage is usually described as "bad;" in 5 cases it is said to be good.

Water supply generally good; bad in 6 cases.

Most cottages have gardens or allotments, though in some cases the allotment land is let at high rents, and in some cases there is no provision either of gardens or allotment ground.

Outhouses are seldom mentioned, and are very deficient in many villages.

The ownership of cottages generally rests with the landowner, but this is more particularly in the small close parishes; the cottages in the larger open villages commonly belong to small tenement holders and tradesmen; there is, however, no instance mentioned of a tradesman compelling his tenant to deal with him. Cottage rents vary from 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, being lowest for the accommodation in the case of landowners' cottages, for which 1*s.* a week is a very usual rent, and highest in the small towns and open villages, where they belong to speculators.

Circular Question.

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

9 circulars say "No."
5 „ „ "Yes."
2 „ „ "More than sufficient accommodation.

Capt. F. L. Dashwood, Kirtlington, says, "My "landlord having just purchased the estate belong- "ing to one of the Oxford colleges is shortly going "to build some more cottages."

Circular Question.

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79. March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

12 circulars say "No."
1 circular says "Yes."

Woodstock Union.

Mr. Wm. Wing, owner and occupier, Steeple Aston, says, "The effect of the Union Chargeability Act is "to increase cottages in parishes formerly *close*, and "to diminish the demand in the open parishes. I "and my son have each of us a good cottage un- "tenanted in the neighbouring parish (open) of "Steeple Barton."

Bicester Union.

Rev. W. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green, says, "The "Union Chargeability Act has indirectly reduced our "rates, as neighbouring proprietors are supplying the "cottage deficiency. In past years, from having a "superabundance of labourers, the maintenance of "the sick and aged employed in outlying parishes "fell heavily on us."

Circular Question.

40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, the Inclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including, by s. 9, "The erection of "labourers' cottages, * * and the improvement "of and addition to labourers' cottages."

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

A. j.

Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

The Rev. P. Maurice, D.D., Yarnton, says, "I "have no remark to make on account of the apathy of "the owner and the extreme poverty of the labourers "themselves."

Capt. F. L. Dashwood, Kirtlington, says, "No; "my landlord has erected cottages under the In- "closure Commissioners, and has found no diffi- "culties."

Circular Question.

41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

Eight circulars say "No."

Woodstock Union.

The Venerable Archdeacon Lower, Kidlington, says, "I think if a company were formed and mem- "bers took out shares in small sums it would pay "interest at 5*l.* per cent. on a good cottage and gar- "den provided for the poor."

The Rev. C. S. Peel, Rousham, says, "It does not "seem possible to build a good cottage that will re- "munerate the landlord and not be burdensome to "the tenant. In Oxfordshire, where wages are low, "1*s.* a week is the highest rent a labourer should "pay, if he is to live well, *i.e.* have sufficient food "and firing, coals cost him 18*s.* 6*d.* a ton, with a "station a mile off."

The Rev. E. L. Lockyer, Westcott Barton, says, "The compulsory sale of improper cottages to Go- "vernment or some building company for the purpose "of erecting proper cottages."

The Rev. P. Maurice, D.D., Yarnton, says, "I "cannot suggest anything that seems to me feasible "owing to the peculiar nature of the ownership of "the soil."

Circular Question IV.

42. It would be of great assistance towards forming a correct judgment upon the question of requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour if you could furnish the Commissioners with precise information, or with an approximate estimate, relating to the points embodied in the following tables.

43. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class in attendance at elementary schools in the parish of .

The following tables will give a summary of the information given to the Assistant Commissioner in answer to this question (the answers to the shorter circular question 8, which involve no school returns, will be found in the general evidence from each parish). The expression "Agricultural Labouring "Class" was always pointed out by the Assistant Commissioner, and the returns asked for as of that class only.

Table A. shows all the children of the named class, with their respective ages and sexes, at any elementary school (as far as the Assistant Commissioner could ascertain) in Woodstock union.

Table B. shows the numbers, ages, and sexes of children in average attendance at seven other elementary schools for which returns were made.

Table C. is a summary of Tables A. and B.

Table A.

Woodstock Union.—Day School Returns.

Name of Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	In Summer.								In Winter.							
			On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.				On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
			Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
*Aston, North	296	1,272	11	—	21	10	11	—	16	7	11	—	21	10	11	0	16	7
*Aston Steeple	736	1,870	54	7	37	7	46	5	32	7	56	8	39	8	48	6	34	5
*Barton Steeple	859	2,710	54	32	46	30	50	29	43	27	48	26	40	24	44	23	37	21
Barton Westcott	302	650	7	—	12	3	7	—	12	3	7	—	12	3	7	—	12	3
Begbroke	104	623	6	1	7	3	6	1	7	3	6	1	7	3	6	1	7	3
*Bladon	666	1,350	46	4	48	9	36	2	38	5	44	7	43	12	35	3	37	4
Blenheim	118	2,940	No School. Children go to Bladen and Woodstock.															
*Cassington	433	2,990	31	12	18	4	27	9	18	3	31	12	18	4	27	9	18	3
Combe	627	1,450	25	5	11	2	20	1	11	2	29	6	11	2	24	6	11	2
Deddington	2,024	3,990	73	10	95	13	55	6	76	9	88	15	124	20	66	11	89	15
*Dunstew	407	1,370	11	1	10	5	12	1	14	8	12	1	14	8	12	1	14	8
*Glympton	153	1,232	10	2	11	8	10	2	11	8	10	2	11	8	10	2	11	8
Hampton Gay	67	620	No School.															
*Hampton Poyle	125	830	4	2	5	4	3	2	4	3	4	2	5	4	3	2	4	3
*Kiddington	305	2,450	14	2	11	12	11	2	9	10	14	2	11	12	11	2	9	10
*Kidlington	1,507	5,000	22	24	38	19	20	20	37	14	24	26	33	15	20	24	32	12
Rousham	131	920	No School. Children go to Steeple Aston.															
Sandford	476	1,850	23	3	32	4	20	2	25	3	20	4	32	3	16	3	24	2
*Shipton	131	1,220	12	—	10	7	10	—	8	6	12	—	10	7	10	0	8	6
*Stonesfield	650	1,020	57	10	58	3	40	5	42	2	55	11	56	5	33	7	34	4
*Tackley	626	2,850	37	6	50	6	18	4	31	3	38	4	60	5	25	4	31	4
†‡Woodstock	1,201	360	14	4	11	—	9	2	9	—	14	4	11	—	9	2	9	—
Woolvercott	617	1,600	26	2	25	6	22	1	21	4	26	2	25	6	20	1	16	4
*Wootton	1,238	3,720	46	2	44	10	43	2	34	8	49	5	38	14	42	5	30	10
Worton (Over)	82	623	10	1	12	2	6	1	9	1	10	1	12	2	6	—	8	—
Worton (Nether)	61	790																
*Yarnton	294	1,613	17	—	20	3	15	—	18	2	17	—	21	2	15	—	17	3
	14,236	47,913	610	130	632	170	497	97	526	138	625	139	654	177	500	112	508	137

* These 15 parishes have a night school (*see* return).

† A night school for Old Woodstock maintained and taught by Mr. Banbury and his family (Old Woodstock is in Wootton parish).

‡ The Woodstock return is confined to the children of agricultural labourers.

TABLE B.

Giving the SCHOOL RETURNS from UNIONS other than WOODSTOCK, with the NAMES, POPULATION, and ACREAGE of the Parishes from which such Returns were made.

Union.	Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	In average Attendance.								——
				Summer.				Winter.				
				Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		
				Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	
Witney -	Brightwell -	277	1,660	13	—	18	6	13	—	18	6	No night school return.
„ -	Hanborough	1,059	2,820	50	6	37	2	51	8	33	4	Night school.
Banbury -	Wroxton -	751	2,900	32	2	29	11	32	2	29	11	Night school.
Bicester -	Weston -	459	2,215	28	10	25	7	28	10	35	7	Night school.
Thame -	Shirburn -	292	2,411	15	1	11	5	15	1	11	5	Night school.
Henley -	Watlington -	1,938	3,440	60	11	65	16	60	11	65	15	No night school return.
		4,776	15,446	198	30	185	47	199	32	181	48	
Witney -	Asthall -	424	1,180	10		16		11		17		Night school.

TABLE C.

Total number of children under 10 years of age and between 10 and 13 years of age (of the agricultural labouring class) in average attendance in summer and winter at all schools for which returns separating the ages and sexes were made to the Assistant Commissioner.

These returns (including four small parishes in Woodstock union in which there is no school) are from 33 different parishes, with a population in 1861 of 19,012, and an acreage of 63,359.

In summer—

Boys under 10 - 695
„ 10 to 13 - 127 } 822
Girls under 10 - 711
„ 10 to 13 - 185 } 896
} 1,718.

In winter—

Boys under 10 - 699
„ 10 to 13 - 144 } 843
Girls under 10 - 689
„ 10 to 13 - 185 } 874
} 1,717.

CIRCULAR QUESTION.

44. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work.

Rev. J. H. Brookes, Steeple Aston,—"Of girls kept " at home to help at house work, as their mothers " say, we have a good many; few boys are neither " at school nor at work."

Mr. Chas. Howett, Steeple Barton:—
" 6 boys between 8 and 10 years.
" 8 girls „ 8 and 10 years.
" 12 „ „ 10 and 13 years.

"These numbers are not affected by the change of seasons."

Rev. Thos. Curme, Sandford:—
" 2 girls between 8 and 10.
" 2 „ „ 10 and 13."

Rev. E. L. Lockyer, Barton Westcott:—
" 6 boys between 8 and 10.
" 6 girls „ 8 and 10."

Rev. H. Gregory, Asthall:—
" 6 or 7 males and as many females."

CIRCULAR QUESTION.

45. Approximate number of young persons of the agricultural labouring class growing up with insufficient education.

Rev. J. H. Brookes, Steeple Aston,—" There are a " good many such; the cause is generally parental " negligence; in some cases knowledge once acquierd " has been lost; in others the boy has been taken from " school too early."

Mr. Chas. Howett, Steeple Barton, says, "25 males " and 30 females. Their knowledge is of the most " meagre description, chiefly arising from the fact " that their was no National school in the village till " within the last two years."

Rev. C. P. Collier, —" Imperfect, from leaving " school too early."

Rev. Jos. Dodd, Hampton Poyle,—" Nearly all, for " they go to work too soon."

Rev. Thos. Curme, Sandford, says, " 12 males and " 8 females read very badly or not at all."

Rev. P. Maurice, D.D., Yarnton,—" None but are " able to read and write a little."

Rev. C. W. Bartholomew, Glympton, —" Those " who have grown up in the parish are all fairly " taught, but occasionally a strange shepherd or carter " comes in from some other parish with neglected " children."

Rev. J. Dry, Weston-on-the-Green, —" Sadly " deficient."

CIRCULAR QUESTION IV. 46 to 51.

46. Is there an evening school in your parish?
47. How many weeks in the year is it open? At what periods of the year?
48. How many nights per week?
49. How many hours per night?
50. What is the number of scholars?
51. What are the subjects of instruction?

Tables D. and E. will sufficiently illustrate the answers to these questions.

The total number of evening scholars receiving instruction in the 33 parishes, for which Table C. gives a summary of the day school returns, is 389, exclusive of Wroxton, for which the number of scholars is not given.

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

A. j.

Table D.

Woodstock Union.—Night School Returns.

Name of Parish.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Weeks in the Year.	Periods of the Year.	Nights per Week.	Hours per Night.	Subjects of Instruction.
Aston, North	—	—	16 to 20	Winter	2	2	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.
Aston Steeple	4	16	16	„	4	1¾	„ „ and scripture.
Barton Steeple	2	22	20	„	3½	1¾	„ „
Barton Westcott	No return of night school.						
Begbroke	„	„					
Bladon	20		17	„	2 or 3	1½	„ „
Blenheim	No return of night school.						
Cassington	4	16	17	„	3	1½	„ „ and geography and scripture.
Combe	No return of night school.						
Deddington	„	„					
Dunstew	3	9	20	„	3	2½	——
Glympton	3	12	16	„	2	2 to 3	Reading and writing.
Hampton Gay	No return of night school.						
Hampton Poyle	2	11	20	„	1	1½	„ „ and singing.
Kiddington	8 to 12		15	„	2	2	„ „ and dictation.
Kidlington	3	15	16	„	3	1½	——
Rousham	No return of night school.						
Sandford	„	„					
Shipton	—	13	16	„	2	1½	Reading, writing, and scripture.
Stonesfield	32	—	20	„	3	2	„ „
Tackley	12		9	„	4	2	——
*(Woodstock)	30		—	„	2	2	——
Woolvercott	No return of night school.						
Wootton	—	35	20	„	2	2	Reading, writing, history, and geography.
Worton, Over	No return of night school.						
Worton, Nether							
Yarnton	16	13	20	„	3	2	Reading, writing, and music.
	283						

* This school is for Old Woodstock, in the parish of Wootton, and is managed and supported by Mr. Banbury and his daughters.

Table E.

Night School Returns from Unions other than Woodstock, giving the Names of the Parishes, &c.

Union.	Parish.	Pupils. Under 12.	Pupils. Above 12.	Number of Weeks open.	Number of Nights per Week.	Number of Hours per Night.
Witney	Asthall	5	12	17	2	1½ to 2
„	Handborough	14		25	4	2
Banbury	Wroxton	—		20	2	1½
Bicester	Bucknell	28		20	—	—
„	*Weston	48		20	6	2
Thame	Shirburn	5	11	15	2	2

* At Weston-on-the-Green the children under 16 are taught three nights per week and the young persons over 16 on the remaining three nights.

In all of these six evening schools the subjects of instruction are reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Circular Question.

52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?

12 circulars say "No."
1 circular says "Some good."
6 circulars say "Yes."

Woodstock Union.

Rev. C. W. Bartholomew, Glympton, says, "No; "but when they have been taught it keeps up the "knowledge fairly."

Rev. W. B. Lee, Wootton, says, "It would if all "the boys attended the day school till the age of "12."

Circular Question.

53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

7 circulars say "Want of teachers."
2 circulars say "Want of funds."
2 circulars say "Weariness after work."
4 circulars say "Ignorance of the value of education and want of parental discipline."
4 circulars say "Low wages and late hours."
2 circulars say "Dependent on the clergymen as "teachers."

Woodstock Union.

Rev. H. A. Collier, Bladon, says, "An evening "school to be efficient should be held every night "in the week except Sunday. It is impossible for

" the clergyman of the parish to give so much time " to it, therefore it must either be kept up by a large " staff of voluntary teachers or by regular paid " teachers. A really efficient evening school would " be of immense benefit to boys between the ages of " 12 and 18, both morally and intellectually."

Rev. J. Hoskyns Abrahall, Combe, says, " It was " found that the meeting of the boys and girls in " going and returning from the school has given " occasion to somewhat rude conduct on the part of " the former, and on this being stopped by the sepa- " ration of the boys and girls, both the boys and girls " have ceased to attend the school. I hope, however, " to overcome this obstacle."

Rev. C. W. Bartholomew, Glympton.—" I have " found no difficulty, as I make it a personal matter. " No one teaches but myself, and no scholar absents " himself without giving me an excuse. Besides the " regular instruction I generally read some story " from which they may get amusement and instruction " as well."

Rev. D. C. Compton, Wroxton.—" The difficulty of " combining lads of 16 and upwards with those of a " younger age."

Rev. W. Nuttall, Shirburn.—" There is no diffi- " culty; all attend well."

Oxfordshire. Mr. Culley. A. j.

OXFORDSHIRE EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX B.

B.

Numbers 1 to 64b.

Containing: Answers given to the questions in Commissioners' circulars of inquiry, which ask for a description of the state of cottages and supply of garden or allotment ground, and such other evidence as is peculiar to each parish; evidence about schools which is not given in Summary A. (especially of industrial schools); evidence as to the wages and earnings of labourers; evidence given by the labouring class themselves; and extracts from circulars which were returned too late to be inserted in Summary A.

Woodstock Union.

1. Aston North - Pop., 296 - Acr., 1,272.

[All the cottages in this village appear to belong to the chief landowner, who has 50 for about 850 acres of land let in farms. One estate of 150 acres has no cottage. The cottages are several of them new, and the village in a pretty good state.—G.C.]

2. Aston Steeple - Pop., 736 - Acr., 1,870.
With the hamlet of Middle Aston.

Rev. J. H. Brooks says, " We have plenty of good " water everywhere. Gardens are wanting to a good " many of the cottages. More allotment gardens are " needed though we have already many of them. A " very considerable number of our cottages belong to " very small proprietors; hence they are many of them " built on insufficient space, unprovided with proper " outlets, kept in wretched repair, and very highly " rented. One room down stairs and one above " fetch 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, and further accommodation " implies a proportionally higher rent; the smallest " scrap of garden or outhouse is taken into account " and paid for."

2a. *Mr. W. Wing* says, " Some of the cottages are " overcrowded, and I fear we have some bad cases " of female profligacy. Many cottages are without " gardens of any size, but there is no lack of con- " veniently situated allotments."

2b. [The chief landowner for about 1,100 acres of farm land has about 15 cottages let at moderate rents; he supplies about 22 acres of allotment ground, of which another proprietor also supplies 17 acres. One estate of 300 acres has four cottages. About 100 cottages belong to 25 small proprietors. Rents vary from 30*s.* to 100*s.* a year.—G.C.]

3. Steeple Barton - Pop., 859 - Acr., 2,832.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. Charles Howett, schoolmaster, says of the cottages, " They are constructed of stone generally; the " rooms are about 10 feet by nine feet; they are badly " ventilated and badly drained. They have generally " two rooms on the ground floor; one of these is the " living room, the other serves as a pantry; two bed- " rooms. There are several instances where there is " only one room on the ground floor and but one " bedroom. The water supply is very deficient. " There are no gardens near the cottages, but an " allotment ground outside the village. There are " no outhouses. By far the greater portion of the " cottages are owned by petty tradespeople. There " is no actual agreement that the tenant shall be " obliged to deal with his landlord as far as I am " aware, but it is looked for by the landlord, and such " a system certainly exists. The average cottage " rent is about 1*s.* 4*d.* a week. The cleanest, most " regular, and best of my scholars live in clean, tidy " houses, whereas the dirty and irregular ones inhabit " the contrary. In this village, where, on the whole, " the cottage accommodation is bad and the water " supply deficient, fever of a more or less aggravated " form is always lurking about."

[In this parish there are about 150 cottages let at rents varying from 30*s.* to 80*s.* a year, many of them very bad. These cottages belong to about 40 different persons, many of them small tradesmen. The chief landed estate, having about 1,300 acres let in farms, appears to be represented by 10 cottages; and another estate of about 500 acres has apparently no cottages belonging to it, with the exception of one landowner, who for about 120 acres has seven cottages, and lets 11½ acres in allotments and the 10 cottages named above. The landowners in this parish leave the necessary supply of cottages to private or speculative enterprise. In Steeple Barton there are 10 very poor cottages with one bedroom each and one room down stairs. These cottages are let at rents varying from 2*l.* to 3*l.* per annum, viz., one let at 40*s.*, two at 52*s.*, one at 53*s.*, six at 60*s.* One of these cottages is inhabited by nine persons, two by eight persons each, and the remaining five by five persons each.—G. C.]

3a. *Edward Bull*, labourer, has a very bad cottage; gets 10*s.* a week, and works at Worton; has about 2½ miles to go to his work.

3b. *Mrs. Thos. Smith:* " We have a very bad cot- " tage; the rent is 1*s.* 4*d.* a week, with a little bit of " land. There are a good many as bad houses here, and " a many men out of work. My husband has two chains " of allotment land. I believe all the poor people " have mostly."

3c. *Mrs. Ann Smith* has a very poor house, with one bedroom, for which she pays 10*d.* a week, with no land; herself and three grown up sons at home.

3d. *George Grunsley* (ploughing, his son driving team): " I am a carter, and get 10*s.* a week, and 1*s.* " extra for Sundays. I have four children at home. " This boy with me is the eldest at home; he is 12. " He was at school a short time, but he had to come " out to work at 9, and he can't neither read nor write " much now. I have charge of seven horses, and he " and another lad help me. My boy has 3*s.* 6*d.* a " week, and his money and mine is all that is coming

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B. j.

" in. It ain't much living, the way we have to get " on. Bread is about all we can get, and about 2 lb. " of bacon for the family for a week. There is some " people half starving in Barton. Some of them can't " get work, and some won't work; but there's a good " many as would work if they could get it. The " girls do a bit of gloving, and some of them get out " to service. I have one out at service, and I have a " girl of 7 at home that ought to be at school, only I " can't afford to send her. Our hours for horses are " just now 7½ a.m. to 3½ p.m., and we only stop about " five minutes in this cold weather and eat a bit of " bread at 12; in summer they (horses) go from 7 to " 3, and we stop a bit longer. I have to be in the " stable at 5, and I'm not done generally till 7. My " boy comes out at 6½ and goes at 5."

3e. The following evidence was given to the Assistant Commissioner by the wife of a farm bailiff in Steeple Barton parish (a Scotch woman):—

" We have no women workers just now. In harvest and lifting potatoes we have three or four. Our men have 15*s.* a week, and a gallon of beer a day for four weeks in harvest. Horses and men work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; day labourers from 6½ a.m. to 6 p.m. Horses and their men rest from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in summer, and from 11½ a.m. to 1 p.m. in winter. Day labourers rest one hour for dinner and half an hour for breakfast. The difficulty of working the Scotch hours is that the men live so far from their work. Wages were dropped round here 1*s.* a week lately (Dec. 3, 1868). If the men here get a shilling extra, they cannot take it home and make a good use of it; it goes in drink to a certainty. The Scotch have nothing to drink with; they get their money twice a year and have a good warm dinner every day (referring to payment in kind). It's the awfullest place in harvest this ever was. The men get a gallon of beer, and they get drunk and won't work, and go about swearing at everything. Some of our men have drunk two gallons a day. It costs near 60*l.* a year for beer for this bit of a farm of about 300 acres."

3f. *Thos. Harley* has a wife and four children (eldest 9), living in a cottage with one small bedroom, for which he pays 1*s.* 4*d.* a week rent. " My girl of 9 " goes to the parish school and pays 4*s.* a quarter. " They lock the school door and turn the children " into the street for two hours in the middle of the " day, and we are two miles from the school. I lost " a child lately, I believe from catching cold from " this plan. Farmers about here keep one carter, and " all the rest bits of halfling boys at 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a " week each; the shake of the plough nearly knocks " them over. Each carter on this farm has charge of " a pair of horses."

3g. Of six men resting for dinner on Col. Bowyer's farm in Barton, two, both young men, could neither read nor write.

3h. Both Steeple and Westcott Barton require some action on the part of the inspector of nuisances.

3i. 27 young men out of work in the two Bartons at the time (Oct. 28, 1868) of the Assistant Commissioner's visit.

4. Westcott Barton - Pop., 302 - Acr., 920.

Rev. E. L. Lockyer says of the cottages, " They " are very bad, very small, and average perhaps of " three rooms. No spring water. They are mostly " built on a small area adjacent to a running brook, " which forms the water supply as well as drainage. " They belong chiefly to small tradesmen who are un- " able to keep them even in a proper state of repair. " The state of cottage accommodation is the great " drawback to improvement in the parish. They are " quite sufficient in number; it is size and quality " which is so bad."

4a. [Assistant Commissioner's note.—About 50 cottages, belonging to about 12 different persons (all small tradesmen, &c.) having from one to 12 cottages each. In this parish the landowners appear to have no cottages; the largest estate has about 300 acres let in farms. Some of the cottages are in a very bad state.]

4b. *Mrs. Albert Smith* (husband a farm labourer): " He has only done a day or two's work since harvest." Man aged 21.

4c. *Wm. Smith*, aged 21, carrying home acorns to sell at 6*d.* per bushel: Has done no work for five weeks; " harvest wonderfully forward and no turnips; " 27 of us this morning out of work."

4d. In Steeple and Westcott Barton, joining one another, I saw many very poor cottages. Great want of an inspector of nuisances here. 27 young men said to be out of work.

4e. *Mrs. George Smith:* My husband is out of work, " and has only done a month since harvest if it were " all put together; it's almost starvation; there are " 27 of them out of work here (two Bartons) this " morning."

House with one bedroom, no land, rent 1*s.* 2*d.* a week; no offices. Several houses in a very bad state with no land.

5. Begbroke - Pop., 104 - Acr., 623.

One landowner has eight cottages for about 140 acres of farm land; the other landowners are represented by one cottage amongst them for about 400 acres of land let in farms. The parish is not sufficiently supplied with labourers' cottages, there being 10 for about 640 acres of land in mixed cultivation. This is one of the many small parishes in Woodstock Union, so small that the officiating clergyman did not think it necessary to make any return to the Assistant Commissioner, as it " could not, being so small, be of any " importance in drawing up statistics for a report on " the Union."

5a. [There is a small dame's school, as will be seen from a return made by the mistress.—G. C.]

5b. *Charles Byles*, farm labourer: " My cottage be- " longs to one of the landowners; I pay 3*l.* a year for " it and a small garden. The cottage is a very poor one " with two bedrooms, one very small, both against the " thatch. I get 11*s.* a week all the year round; I'm " a cattle man, and work on Sundays as well. All " men here get 11*s.* I have no Michaelmas money. " In harvest I have to go milking in the morning " and at night, for which I get 6*s.* a week, and " I go reaping with my boy between times. Last " harvest I earned 14*s.* a week besides the 6*s.* for " milking, but it was so excessive hot we could not " work hard in the middle of the day; that extra " harvest money is all the chance I have in a year of " adding to the 51*s.* a week. I have seven children. " The eldest boy, 13, has 3*s.* a week regular; he drives " a team and does any odd job; the next boy, 11, is " doing nothing, I can't get him anything to do at " this time of year; the next two (eldest 9) are at " school."

6. Bladon - Pop., 666 - Acr., 1,350.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. H. A. Collier says, " Several of the cot- " tages in this parish contain a sitting room and three " bedrooms; they are built of stone, have slated roofs, " and good ventilation. Others are good convenient " cottages, but have only two bedrooms; a very few " others are bad, having only one bedroom, and in " one instance no back way out at all. Nearly all the " cottages are the property of the landowner. Rent " from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a week."

6a. Mrs. Wilsdon has five children, one bedroom, and no back door; pays 8*s.* for 20 poles of allotment; her husband has been more or less out of work for five weeks.

6b. [Bladon and Hensington.—This parish supplies labour to one or two parishes round, especially Blenheim; the chief landowner has 35 cottages (his land let in farms in the parish, being about 750 acres); some of these cottages are new, and built with a desire to give every necessary accommodation to the labourers and their families.—G. C.]

7. Blenheim - Pop., 118 - Acr., 2,940.

This parish consists almost entirely of Blenheim Park. There are eight labourers' cottages, some of which are attached to the Park farm; all of these cottages are good. A great part of the labour required is supplied by surrounding parishes.

7a. The following information was supplied to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Napier, agent to the Duke of Marlborough:—

Allotments.

"There are 914 allotments and 360 cottages on the "Duke's estates in Oxfordshire; a few of them are "20 poles each; the greater portion are 40 poles "each. They are let at an average rent of 2*l.* per "acre, the landlord paying rates and taxes."

Wages and Earnings.

"I find there are 35 able-bodied men employed on "the Duke's farm all the year round, viz.,—

2 foremen at 20*s.* 6*d.* per week } Including house-
2 cattle men at 16*s.* 6*d.* ,, } rent and firing.
2 shepherds at 21*s.* ,, }
9 carters at 13*s.* 3*d.* ,, Some of these have

a cottage and firing free, which would make their wages 15*s.* 9*d.* per week.

20 labourers who earn 14*s.* 6*d.* each per week, being often employed at piece work, which is paid for at the rate of,—

Price of Piece Work.

8*s.* 6*d.* per acre for hoeing turnips.
4*s.* 6*d.* ,, ,, corn crops.
From 8*s.* to 14*s.* per acre for reaping.
From 8*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* per acre for mowing and carrying hay.
Thatching is done at 11*d.* per square.

8. Cassington - Pop., 433 - Acr., 2,990.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. C. Reade says, "The cottages vary; some are "tumble-down and little better than piggeries; "landlords of such an abomination ought to be subject "to a severe fine. The rent exceeds by far the value "of such tenements."

8a. [The chief landowner in this parish has about 20 cottages for 1,140 acres of farm land (eight or nine of the best of which are occupied by railway labourers). Another estate of 300 acres has five cottages; the remaining cottages belong to small tenement holders. Ch. Ch. Coll., Oxford, has 80 acres without a cottage. Cottage rents vary from 2*l.* to 5*l.* a year.—G. C.]

9. Combe - Pop., 627 - Acr., 1,450.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

There are some very poor cottages in this village, which supplies some labour to Blenheim.

The chief landowner has 32 cottages for about 1,100 acres let in farms; he supplies 16 acres of allotment ground.

Some labourers have no allotment or garden, and several of the cottages belong to small tenement holders. Rents vary from 52*s.* to 90*s.* a year.

9a. *Rev. J. Hoskyns Abrahall* says of the cottages: "Size of rooms about 10 feet square, the ventilation "sufficient, the drainage defective, the number of "rooms insufficient, the water supply good, the "gardens not always attached to the cottages; if so "they are small. The outhouses are sufficient, but "I wish they would follow me in the adoption of "earth closets. The cottages are chiefly in the hands "of landowners; many, however, are in the hands "of other persons, resident and non-resident; none "of the owners are tradesmen with whom the "tenants are obliged to deal. The average rent of "cottages is 4*l.* 10*s.* As to morality, it seems to "me to be much affected for the worse by the in-"adequate accommodation."

9b. *Mrs. John Horn* (husband a farm labourer): "My husband has 10*s.* a week, he had 11*s.* up to "last week (Oct. 27); he gets hoeing by "the great," "I don't know what he has in hay time; I can't tell "what he earns in harvest, he never tells me. I pay "1*s.* 8*d.* a week rent; we have two bedrooms. My "husband has half allotment, one chain at 3*s.* 6*d.*"

9c. *Mrs. Walter Huckens*:—"My husband is a farm "labourer; he has 10*s.* a week if they make all time; "sometimes he loses a day or two days from wet and "they take it off. He works for Mr. Baker; last "week he had only four days. I have two children, "one 6 years old, the other 3. I can't say what "my husband gets in piece work; in harvest, if I "help him with a little boy, we can cut and tie an "acre a day, and we got 9*s.* an acre last harvest; the "crops was light, the rabbits had eat so much, you see "sir, or we would have got 10*s.*; we had a fortnight "at this. After this fortnight he had no more harvest "work. Sometimes we have a month. We pay 1*s.* 4*d.* "a week rent. We have no allotment ground; if we "could get an allotment it would help a good deal— "most of the labourers have allotments. I never was "at school. I went to field work about 12. My "husband tries to teach me to read. My children "should be sent to school to 12; I wish I had been. "I have been at work hard all day at gloving, I havn't "earned 5*d.* They begin learning to glove at 8."

10. Deddington - Pop., 2,024 - Acr., 3,990.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. J. Turner says, "The cottages are owned "by landlords and only a few by tradesmen. The "garden accommodation is very meagre, but there "are allotments which the cottagers rent. Rents of "cottages vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week."

10a. The following is from the Assistant Commissioner's notes on this parish:—Deddington with its hamlets is an open parish into which labourers have been driven from surrounding close parishes; there are about 240 cottages belonging to about 50 owners, the three largest estates, approaching 300 acres each, not being represented by any cottages; several of the cottages in Deddington proper are very bad; in Grove Lane, commonly called Hell Lane, are seven or eight houses with no back door, a sink in front of the cottages, and one watercloset for the lot; the whole place has a horrid stench. Rent of these cottages 1*s.* 2*d.* a week; they belong to small tenement holders. The inspector of nuisances certainly does not do his duty.—G. C.

10b. *William Wheeler*, farm labourer:—"Himself, "his wife, and three sons, eldest 16, in one very small "bedroom. For this cottage, with two rooms and no "back door, Wheeler pays 1*s.* 3*d.* a week. The next "cottage to this is equally bad, and is inhabited by a "man, his wife, and three children. One watercloset "serves both cottages. Wheeler's eldest son, 16, can "neither read nor write; the two others can read a "little."

10c. Evidence of inspector of police:—"In the pa-"rishes of Deddington, Dunstew, North Aston, and "adjoining parishes, women are employed on farms "at 8*d.* a day for eight hours work, between 8 a.m. "and 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner.

"Boys are chiefly employed to drive ploughs. They "begin to go out to work at 7 years of age. "Their hours of work begin at 6 a.m. Boys under "9 are paid 1*s.* a week; at nine they are generally "raised to 2*s.* a week. Cottage accommodation in "some parishes is very limited."

11. Dunstew - Pop., 407 - Acr., 1,600.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

The chief landowner is the only cottage owner, having 64 cottages for about 1,400 acres let in farms; he also supplies 12 acres of allotment ground, 20 poles being the ordinary size of allotment, let at 6*s.* 6*d.* a year. The Church farm of 180 acres has no cottage, and any deficiency of labour probably arises from this cause. Most of the cottages are in good condition, there are, however, a few poor ones with one bedroom, such as those occupied by John Claver and Jonas Stock-

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ford; John Claver having a wife and four children, and Jonas Stockford a wife and six children, his eldest daughter being 18 and eldest son 15.

11a. *William Irons*, an old labourer: "Several of the "farmers have one or two cottages for carters attached "to their farm steading. I dare say its better for the "people that live in them, but it fetches fresh people "into the parish sometimes, when there's plenty "of people in it. The boys go to plough here some-"times not much higher than the plough handles, "the farmer gets them at 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* a week, and "so they are cheaper than men."

11b. The Assistant Commissioner saw in one field three ploughs working, one a swing plough with a man and pair of horses, the others wheel ploughs with two boys and three horses to each; the eldest of the four boys was 14, who with the carter looks after the eight horses.

12. Glympton - Pop., 153 - Acr., 1,232.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

The chief landowner has 22 cottages for about 950 acres of farm land. Magdalen College, Oxford, has 70 acres, and the glebe 55 acres, without any cottage, and as there is no other cottage proprietor there are therefore not cottages enough to supply the labour of the parish; those which there are are well cared for, as well as the persons living in them, by the chief landowner, who charges a small rent (30*s.* a year), and supplies allotment ground at the rate of 3*s.* a chain (30*s.* an acre), the usual allowance to a family being two chains.

12a. *Henry Barnett, Esq.*, M.P., Glympton Park, says, "The cottages in the parish are sufficient in ac-"commodation, and well ventilated and conveniently "situated with regard to the farms, and not over-"crowded. This cannot be said of many cottages "in the neighbourhood, but evil results to morality "from overcrowding have not come to my notice, "Our cottages have either gardens or allotments of "lands generally attached to them. The rents are "very low, and often paid by the produce of apricot "trees planted against the houses."

12b. *Mrs. James Lowe* (husband cowherd to Mr. Barnett): "My husband has 11*s.* a week, Sundays "and all. I have five children, eldest nearly 9; three "are at school. My husband pays schooling himself, "1*d.* each per week. We pay 30*s.* for cottage and "garden of five or six poles. None of my children "earn anything; we have nothing except what my "husband earns; he gets 1*l.* over for the harvest, and "nothing else extra in the year. He goes very little "to harvest. Ordinary labourers get 10*s.* a week, "men who go with the machine get 12*s.* We have "two chains of allotment ground, for which we pay "3*s.* a chain."

12c. *Mrs. Castle*, husband a farm labourer: "My "husband has 12*s.* a week; he goes with the engine "when required; he gets piece work in harvest, fagg-"ing and shocking, and thatching. He took cutting "and shocking wheat this year at 10*s.* or 11*s.*, I don't "justly remember which. My son, 16, has 9*s.* a week. "My boy of 9 is at school; he goes crow keeping for "a week perhaps at a time, and gets 4*d.* a day. Our "allotment is two chains; we pay 3*s.* a chain for it, "and 30*s.* a year for our cottage."

13. Hampton Poyle - Pop., 125 - Acr., 772.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. Jos. Dodds says of the cottages, "Most of "them are of moderate size, but ventilation and drain-"age defective. Accommodation and water supply "fair. Gardens good generally. The cottages are "for the most part owned by the landed proprietors, "by whom a few of the cottages have within the few "last years been much improved. The rents vary "from 1*s.* a week to 1*s.* 6*d.*; some are paid annually. "Some pay but a slight quit rent to the lord of the "manor."

13a. [Assistant Commissioner's note.—The chief landowner has six cottages for above 500 acres let in farms. Another estate of 200 acres has three cottages.]

14. Hampton Gay - Pop., 67 - Acr., 620.

The chief landowner has one cottage for 420 acres. Wadham College has six cottages for 200 acres.

15. Kiddington - Pop., 205 - Acr., 2,450.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

The Rev. J. G. Brown says of the cottages that, "The accommodation and construction is fair. All "the cottages belong to the landlord. The rents are "moderate, and they have a fair quantity of garden."

15a. *H. L. Gaskell, Esq., J.P.*, Kiddington Hall, says the "cottages are good, well supplied with water, "and well ventilated. All the cottages have good "gardens and allotments."

15b. [All the cottages, of which about 36 are inhabited by labourers, belong to the chief landowner, who has about 1,500 acres let in farms. There are therefore not sufficient cottages to supply the labour of the parish. The rectory farm has no cottage. 11½ acres are let in allotments, and the cottages are well looked after by their owner.—G. C.]

16. Kidlington - Pop., 1,622 - Acr., 5,010.
Cultivation mixed.

The Ven. Archdeacon Lower says of the cottages, "The greatest portion are constructed of "stone walls with slated roofs, some with stone walls "and thatched roofs. A very few are of wood and "plaster. The larger number of them have one sit-"ting room and two bedrooms. Many have one sit-"ting room and three bed room; some have only one "sitting and one bed room. There is a good supply "of water to most of them, also gardens and out-"houses. The owners are mostly middle-class per-"sons. The rents are dear, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* "per week. There ought not to be less than two or "(if possible) three bedrooms in labourers' cottages."

16a. *Mr. Hutt*, guardian for Water Eaton, a hamlet of Kidlington, says of the cottages, "They are, I should "say, about an average, but short in number. They "are well supplied with water and well ventilated. "They have all gardens."

16b. In Kidlington, with its hamlets of Gosford, Water Eaton, and Thrupp, one landowner for about 1,250 acres of farm land has apparently 14 cottages; another for 800 acres has 16 cottages; another for 240 has seven; and Exeter College also has seven for about 550 acres. There are a few very poor cottages in the parish, and six small thatched cottages with one bedroom about the centre of Kidlington village; rents 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. In one of these there sleep in the small bedroom—

Father and mother,
Two grown up sons,
Two grown up daughters,
Three little children.

Rents are high in this parish, ranging from 3*l.* to 5*l.*

16c. *Mr. R. J. Newton*, occupier, and vice-chairman of Woodstock Board of Guardians:—

"The hours of work for men and boys are from 6 a.m. to 5½ p.m. in summer, with one hour for dinner and 15 or 20 minutes for breakfast. In winter they work from light till dark. Carters come in summer at 5 a.m. and remain till 6½ p.m.

"Women work from 8 a.m. till 5½ p.m., with one hour allowed for dinner.

"Wages.—I pay my shepherd 13*s.* a week, besides certain allowances which make his wage worth on an average 16*s.* to 17*s.* a week for the year. I pay carters (of whom I have seven) 13*s.* a week. They are only allowed to take piece work in harvest, when they have about a fortnight's cutting, and for another fortnight receive 4*s.* a day for leading. Their harvest earnings would be worth a little over 5*l.*, and their average wage for the year about 14*s.* a week. I pay ordinary labourers 11*s.* a week. They earn at piece work about 2*s.* 3*d.* a day for six weeks hoeing

corn, and about 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a day for six weeks hoeing turnips. In hay time for about a month they earn about 2*s.* 6*d.* a day; in harvest they earn 4*s.* 6*d.* a day for about four weeks; and their total earnings would be about 33*l.* a year, or, say, an average of 12*s.* 8*d.* a week.

"Women working from 6 a.m. till 5½ p.m. have 10*d.* per day.

"Boys of 11 or 12 get 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.

"Of the Factory Act modes of providing for school attendance for boys who are employed in farm labour, the provision under the Printworks Act is the only one applicable to farm labour, and would be improved by substituting twelve for six months, so that children might attend school when there was no demand for their services in farm labour. I think, however, it would be better to let them remain at school up to 11, and then let all legislative interference cease. About four cottages per 100 acres of land are required for the accommodation of persons employed in agriculture in this parish. Fewer would do if attached to the farm offices, with an extra bedroom for a young man. I have to pay my carters 13*s.* a week instead of 12*s.* because they live so far from my farm, and their work is not so well done as it would be if they lived near, nor can be."

16d. *Mr. Scroggs*, occupier and guardian: "The "summer staff on my farm is the same as in winter, "except in hay-time and harvest; all my labourers "live near the farm. I have two cottages let with "with the farm which belong to the duke. I think "no boy should be employed in farm labour under 10 "for the sake of education. I use two horses abreast "in spring and summer, but three in a line in autumn and winter; we don't want so many teams, "and it eases the horses, and lets us use colts or mares "in foal without over-working them. Two horses "abreast can do as much as three in a line, and if I "had a large farm I would always work two abreast."

Wages.—"I hire one carter by the year; he has "13*s.*, and 1*l.* at Michaelmas, and for about five "weeks in harvest he has 15*s.* a week; he pays 1*s.* "a week for his cottage and about a chain of ground. "I pay ordinary men 11*s.* a week, and 1*s.* extra to "Sunday men. The Sunday men have no chance of "increasing their wages, except in harvest, when "they have a fortnight's cutting, receiving half-pay "for milking during the same fortnight. Two men "work for me by the piece, but they don't seem to "care to earn much more than if they worked by the "day."

16e. *Mrs. Bowerman*: "My husband is a milkman, "and has 12*s.* a week. We pay 1*s.* 9*d.* a week rent; I "have only one bedroom and no back door. Four "cottages here have each one bedroom; down further "the cottages have two bedrooms, and they don't "pay but 1*s.* a week because they belong to the "farms. Each farm has four cottages. We don't do "much gloving here; women either work out or "mind their children. We do a bit of fagging, but "by the time we get better victuals and a drop of "beer there aint much left, enough to buy us a pair "of shoes maybe. Last week I got 3*d.* for a bit of "sewing, so we had 12*s.* 3*d.*, and I spent it this "way,—

	s.	*d.*
Meat - - - -	3	7½
Bread - - - -	3	0
Rent - - - -	1	9
Tea, sugar, flour, soap, and soda	3	7½
Boy's schooling - -	0	2
	12	2

"So I had a penny left."

16f. *Thomas Grace*, a farm labourer, about 60 years of age (working for Mr. Newton): "I have 11*s.* a week. "I have to walk four miles to Wootton to my house, "and it takes me three hours a day going and coming, "besides my work; but I would not live here if they "had a house to give me. I would not like to leave "my parish where I have been all my time; younger "men would leave, I dare say, but I would rather "walk the four mile."

16g. December 8.—Two lads, 18 and 15, attending sheep folded on swedes; two women (both married) pulling, topping, and tailing swedes. Women work eight hours for 8*d.* Lad, 18, can read a little, gets 6*s.* a week in winter; lad, 15, has 4*s.* 6*d.* a week in winter.

16h. *Mr. Hutt* states the wages of farm labourers to be from 11*s.* a week for ordinary labourers to 16*s.* a week for cattle men, with additions in harvest.

17. Rousham - Pop., 131 - Acr., 920.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. C. S. Peel says, "The cottages are of a good "size, all with two bedrooms; most have a pantry "and a back kitchen. The water and drainage are "both good. A good garden is attached to each "cottage. The landowner is the landlord in all "cases, and the rent varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a year; "in a few cases I believe the rent is less."

17a. *C. C. Dormer, Esq., J.P.*, landowner, says, "The cottages have all gardens and generally allotments; in fact, no one wishing for an allotment and "capable of cultivating one would be long without "one."

17b. [There are 25 cottages for 920 acres, and are not sufficient to supply the labour of the parish. All the cottages are good and well cared for.—G. C.]

18. Sandford - Pop., 476 - Acr., 2,240.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. Thomas Curme says of the cottages, "Two-"thirds of them have two rooms below and three "bedrooms, these belong to landowners; one-third of "them have but two bedrooms, small and ill-ventilated, these belong to individuals (not tradesmen "as above), whose object is to make the most rent "possible with the least outlay. The water supply "is sufficient and the drainage good. Besides some "small gardens there are 20 acres of poor's allotments, allowing half or quarter acre to each. Rent "from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* per week."

18a. [One estate of about 700 acres is represented by 20 cottages, one of 500 acres by five cottages, another of 500 acres as well as one of 240 has no cottage.—G. C.]

19. Shipton on Cherwell - Pop., 131, - Acr., 1,060.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. George J. Brown says, "The cottages in this "parish belong partly to New College, in Oxford, and "partly the the Duke of Marlborough, who has only "within the last year come into possession of them. "The bedroom accommodation is for the most part "insufficient. Repairs have been made and new "privies erected lately. Each cottage has a garden, "and there are allotments granted by the rector and "a large farmer."

19a. [The chief landowner for about 900 acres of farm land has 24 cottages; most of these are very poor specimens, but as the estate has only recently changed hands, after being in the market for four or five years, some improvement will probably soon be made; each cottage has about 15 poles of garden; usual rent of cottage and garden 3*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

19b. 21 cottages occupied by farm labourers constitute the village proper. Of these,—

1 has 2 living and 2 bed rooms,
5 have 1 living and 2 bed rooms,
15 have 1 living and 1 bed room.

Of the latter, one is occupied by a father and mother and five children; one by a father and mother and four children; three by father and mother and three children; and the others by smaller families. In one of these cottages there has recently been, and in another there is typhoid fever, and fever of a typhoid character has been hanging about the village for some time; many of the children have sores about their faces. One well (dry during last summer) in a garden near a pigsty and sewer about 8 feet deep in

Oxfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

Stonebrash is used in common by the whole of these cottages. Eight women from this village were working out on the day of the Assistant Commissioner's visit. Of these, six were married, one a widow, and the other unmarried; they were picking tufts of grass off recently sown wheat, and receive 9*d.* a day for eight hours work. Their statement was that they could not make 1*d.* an hour at gloving, and they liked the farm work best. Seven of these women were dressed in men's coats.—G. C.]

19c. *Henry Stephens*, farm labourer, aged 23, single man:—"I get 11*s.* a week upstanding wages as carter; "I have charge of four horses. In hay time I get 15*s.* "a week for four weeks, and the same in harvest, and "3*l.* at Michaelmas. I have no opportunity of increasing this wage by piece work. I have a rood of "ground at Shipton belonging to the duke at 10*s.* "My brother here (James) is 12; he left school two "years ago, but he goes to night school; he can read "and write; he gets 5*s.* 6*d.* a week for driving the "team; I am teaching him to hold the plough."

[Value of Henry's wage, 12*s.* 9*d.* a week for the year.—G. C.]

19d. *Mr. Thos. Taylor*, occupier, says, "The majority of labourers live in the village, about a mile "from my premises, but this was such a constant "source of annoyance and inconvenience that I have "erected three large cottages (for carters and shepherd) near the farm buildings at a cost of over "500*l.*"

[Mr. Taylor holds his farm on a lease for 20 years. One of the cottages is a sort of lodging house for unmarried carters, looked after by the head carter's wife, who lives in adjoining cottage.—G. C.]

Mr. Taylor gives the following estimate of wages for a year:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Engine men, two - -	48	0	0
Head carter - - -	47	0	0
Shepherd - - - -	42	0	0
Herdsman - - -	40	0	0
Ordinary labourer - -	32	10	0

Women 9*d.* a day ordinarily, 1*s.* 3*d.* haymaking, and 1*s.* 4*d.* in harvest.

20. Stonesfield - Pop., 650 - Acr., 1,020.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. F. Robinson says of the cottages, "They "are built generally of stone and slate; most of them "have two bedrooms upstairs, with one sitting room "and a sort of pantry downstairs. The cottages "belong for the most part to different individuals, "not to any great landowner, scarcely any, if any, are "owned by tradesmen with whom the people are "obliged to deal; most cottages are pretty well venti"lated. The water supply is sometimes short, but "much better than in many places; the people for "the most part have not far to go for it. Most "of the cottages have gardens, and many have "allotments."

20a. [An open village finding labour for some parishes round, and for the stonepits or slatepits. There are 110 labourers' cottages or upwards for less than 1,000 acres of farm land. Stone and slate (what is called Stonesfield slate) being on the spot cottages are better than in most open villages. About 10 cottages belong to the landowners. The Duke of Marlborough provides 17 acres of allotment ground, the Rev. F. Robinson 8 acres, and Church land 6 acres; together, 31 acres, let to 137 tenants.—G. C.]

20b. *Mrs. Gardner*, sewing gloves: "A girl of 16 "could earn 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, working all day. "Girls begin to earn a little at glovemaking at 10 or "11 years of age. I get gloves from Mr. Money of "Woodstock; he pays in money and has no shop. Mr. "Dagget and Mr. Pritchett make us take out our "money in tea, or candles, or sugar, &c. within a "few pence of what we get. If I want 1*s.* 6*d.* they "make me spend 1*s.* 3*d.* in the shop, or they would "'sack' me, *i.e.*, give me no more work. They sell "sugar at 5½*d.* a pound when we could get it at 4½*d.* "if we had ready money. Candles they charge 6½*d.* "instead of 6*d.*, &c. My boy of 9 gets 2*s.* for "attending sheep and jobbing about. At school "above 10 they are taken to learn."

20c. There is no girl in regular attendance at school over 10 years of age; three boys working on the Duke of Marlborough's farm attend by school during alternate weeks.

20d. Of wages, *Mr. Gardiner*, occupier, says,—"I "pay an unmarried carter 10*s.* a week in winter, 11*s.* "a week in summer, 15*s.* a week for four weeks in "harvest, and give him 2*l.* at Michaelmas. I pay "day men 11*s.* a week."

21. Tackley - Pop., 626 - Acr., 2,850.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. L. A. Sharpe, says, "The present largest "resident landowner has built some *excellent* cottages. "The rent rather high. Small landlords the hardest."

21a. [One estate having about 600 acres in farms has 26 cottages.

One estate having about 600 acres in farms has no cottage.

One estate having about 500 acres in farms has 15 cottages.

One estate having about 400 acres in farms has no cottage.

Christ Church College has 350 acres with no cottage.

Cottage rents varying from 40*s.* to 80*s.*—G. C.]

22. Woodstock - Pop., 1,201 - Acr., 360.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. W. A. Plumptre says, "The house accommo"dation is in most cases inconvenient and insufficient, "but the rent is as much as the families with average "work can afford. It is reasonable to infer that with "only one room to sit and wash and do everything "in, the father and boys as they grow up are en"couraged, if not driven, to seek their comfort in "public houses."

22a. Some poor cottages at rents varying from 52*s.* to 100*s.* a year. The principal landowner has 12 cottages.

The following evidence was given by a glove manufacturer:—

22b. "A good sewer makes up one dozen gloves per week, and gets paid 5*s.* to 7*s.* An average woman will earn 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week when she can get constant work, which is rarely the case now. Women for seven or eight miles round Woodstock sew gloves. The Workshops Regulation Act is so troublesome that I do not employ any girls under 13. They, however, work in their own houses."

22c. Of five glove manufacturers about whose customs the Assistant Commissioner made inquiry, three keep stores and expect or compel their glove sewers to deal with them; the two principal manufacturers do not.

22d. *Mrs. John Hawkins*, husband a roadman: "My husband has 11*s.* for winter months, with no "chance of piecework. In summer he had 6*d.* a yard "for breaking stones, but was not allowed to earn "more than 2*s.* a day; he could have earned at least "2*s.* 6*d.* I have six children, eldest girl, 15, at ser"vice, next a girl of 11 at home. I had to take her "away to send the two younger ones to school. My "husband has a month at harvest, and in the spring "he dug stones by the great about 10 weeks, earning "15*s.* to 16*s.* a week. In harvest he earned about "24*s.* a week; I can't say exactly. He isn't any "better off than a farm labourer taking the year "through. If he earns more these long hours he "requires more food. We have never been so bad off "as now, and this tax and all. My girl's money, 2*s.*, "to-night must go to pay tax, and I can safely say I "haven't a penny. My husband has 11*s.*, but the "other roadmen have 10*s.*, and farm labourers have "11*s.* We pay 2*s.* a week for rent."

22e. *Mrs. Wm. Timms*: "My husband is a farm "labourer; he works for Mr. Newton, and has 11*s.* "a week for the winter months, hired by the week,

" Sometimes he hoes by the piece, and gets 2*s.* a day. " In hay time he has 2*s.* a day and a quart of beer. " Last harvest he had only seven days. I can't tell " what he earned. After the seven days' reaping he " went on carrying at 4*s.* a day and a quart of beer, " but they had to buy extra beer in that hot weather; " they stood in need of more. We pay 1*s.* 6*d.* rent " for this room and one bedroom and an attic, and 2*s.* " a quarter rates."

23. Woolvercott - Pop., 617 - Acr., 1,600.

Cultivation is mixed. 8 acres 39 poles of allotments let to 55 holders.

Rev. S. Edwardes says, "There are cottages of " every plan, some good and wholesome, others not " fit for habitation. The worst are those of which " the tenants themselves are owners. In many there " are three bedrooms, besides sitting room and scul- " lery; in others one bedroom for a large family. " Drainage is various. Water is supplied by wells, " some only used for washing. A garden is attached " to the cottage in a few cases. The owners are of " all kinds, large proprietors, college servants, livery " stable keepers, &c. The cottages are inhabited " some by agricultural labourers working in our own " and neighbouring parishes, some by shoemakers, " some by persons employed in the paper mill, some " by Oxford artisans, masons, &c., some by railway " plate layers. Rent from 1*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week. " One attraction of the village is the large quantity " of common ground, which enables the cottagers to " keep flocks of geese. The thin walls, damp floors, " draughty windows of the cottages foster consumption " and rheumatism. I am not clear to what extent we " suffer with low fever in consequence of the absence " of drainage. The health officer of the guardians " needs a good deal of stirring to make him act."

23a. Some very poor cottages in this village, and rents are high. *The best* cottages are occupied by persons living in Oxford. The village supplies some labour to Wytham, a close parish in Berks.

One estate has 18 cottages for about 400 acres. Christ Church, Merton, and St. John's Colleges have estates in this parish of respectively about 140, 70, and 85 acres.

24. Wootton - Pop., 1,238 - Acr., 3,720.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. W. B. Lee says, "The cottages are built of " stone. The sitting room is generally about 9 or 10 " feet square, and the bedroom much the same size. " Some of the cottages have gardens, but many are " without. The drainage and ventilation are fair, " but there is a great want of necessary conveniences " and outhouses. The pigsties are a very serious " nuisance, producing dirt and often disease. There " is a fair supply of water from the river and public " pumps. The cottages belong chiefly to landowners, " very few to tradesmen. Rent about 4*l.* a year."

24a. *Mr. Smith*, occupier and guardian, says, "I have " two cottages only on my farm, erected by the Lands " Improvement Company, for which I pay *interest* " and *principal* by the expiration of my lease. This " I have done twice since I took my farm. I think it " would be a very great blessing for the labourers if " there were a great many more cottages on farms. " I think there are sufficient gardens for the cottages. " I have heard nothing to the contrary."

24b. *Mr. Bulford*, occupier:—

" With the exception of having 19 men in summer instead of 18, my summer and winter staff are the same. I have four cottages on the farm, let with it. I don't know how I could get on without these cottages; I wish I had two more. My farm, to house the necessary staff, would require three cottages per 100 acres.

" My shepherd's wage is worth about 16*s.* a week for the year.

" My carters have 12*s.* a week, a house, and potato ground of 20 poles. In harvest this year they had 17*s.* a week for six weeks. Their wage is therefore at least worth 14*s.* a week, putting the cottage and potato ground at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Ordinary men I pay 11*s.* a week, and they do piecework nearly all the year through. I would put their total earnings a little under the carters.

" We don't want boys till they are fit to go with horses."

24c. [Assistant Commissioner's Note.—This is a large open parish with many very poor cottages, both in the village of Wootton and in Old Woodstock. A very small proportion of the cottages belong to the landowners. The largest estate has seven cottages for 1,570 acres let in farms; the rector has 10 for about 700 acres; another proprietor has two for 540 acres; and another has 400 acres without a cottage. Balliol College has one cottage for 320 acres; the church- wardens have 15 cottages. The Duke of Marlborough provides 40 acres of allotment ground. Rents vary from 52*s.* to 80*s.*—G. C.]

24d. *Mrs. Chas. Wood*, husband a farm labourer:—

" I have five children; eldest 11, a girl; next 9, a boy. The five are all at the day or infant school. I wish to send my children to school and give them an education as far as lies in my power. The girl could hardly find anything to do, and the eldest boy is too young yet for work. His father says he's not to go while he's 12. My husband has 11*s.* a week. When he's thrashing by the piece he generally gets 12*s.* He does harvesting by the piece. He got 10*s.* an acre last harvest for cutting, tieing, and shocking wheat. I do a little glove sewing, but I have only time to earn about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. We have one room down stairs and two upstairs. We pay 4*l.* 10*s.* a year for cottage and garden. A girl ought to be 14 or 15 before she is trusted with a glove."

24e. *Mrs. John Boswell*, husband a farm labourer. Has no place now. Carters and shepherds are hired by the year, and he lost his place last Michaelmas. He had 10*s.* a week, and 2*l.* at Michaelmas, paid by the week. House rent free, attached to the farm. He also had what he could earn for nine days in harvest. These people live in a wretched house in Wootton, and pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week rent, with *no* ground.

24f. *John Dorton*, holding a plough with three horses: " I have charge of four horses, and this boy " helps me. The horses work from 8 to 3 now, and 7 to " 3 in summer. We stop and eat a bit of bread at 12 " o'clock. I have to be in the stable at 5 in the morn- " ing. I send my boy to night school. He is 14 " years old, and has been six years at work come " March. He can't read much, nor yet write much."

24g. *Joseph Bricknell*, aged 15, driving team. Helps a man with four horses. " I can read, but I can't write " much. I was at school five years. I don't go to " night school."

24h. Of three boys picking switch two did not know their age; one was 14. They were getting 8*d.* a day.

24i. An old man in Wootton told the Assistant Commissioner that five or six young men out of work were making a disturbance last week, but that there was work if they liked to take it.

25. Yarnton - Pop., 294 - Acr., 1,613.

Cultivation chiefly pastoral.

Rev. P. Maurice, D.D., says of the cottages, " They are about 50 in number and are badly con- " structed, the greater portion having only two rooms, " a living room with sleeping room over it. Most of " the cottages are thatched, the size of rooms varying " from 12 feet by 9 to about 14 feet square, some " of them even larger, being originally parts of old " farm houses. The ventilation is but ordinary, and " drainage not very bad. The sleeping room is com- " monly under the thatch; no cottage has more than " two bedrooms, scarcely any of them have any out- " houses; they have some good garden ground and " many have an allotment. The water supply is for the " most part sufficient and near at hand. The greater " proportion of the cottages belong to Sir H. W.

Oxfordshire. Mr. Culley. B. j.

"Dashwood, Bart., four belong to a retired trades-man living on the spot, six to a respectable tenant farmer, and 10 are occupied on keyhold lease, paying a small quit rent to the lord of the manor. Rents vary from 9*d.* to 2*s.* a week, one or two being as high as 2*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* 8*d.*"

[A statement showing all particulars of each cottage in the parish was sent by Dr. Maurice to the Assistant Commissioner, of which the following is a summary :—

25a. There are 50 inhabited cottages in the parish, of which 30 belong to the chief landowner (who has about 800 acres let in farms, the other landowners having no cottages), 10 are held on keyhold lease at a quit rent, six belong to a tenant farmer, and four to small tenement holder. The rent of the landowner's cottages varies from 40*s.* to 52*s.*, of the others (except the keyhold) from 40*s.* to 100*s.* The size of living rooms varies from 12 feet by 9 feet to 14 feet by 14 feet. 23 cottages have two bedrooms, and 27 have only one. Most have thatched roofs, the thatch rising from within two or three feet of the floor of bedroom. 35 cottages have sheds, the rest have not.

25b. [Five cottages called "the college," with one bedroom each and in bad repair. In the best lives Mrs. Langford, who has two girls aged 12 and 9 at school; is receiving relief, 4*s.* and 4 loaves a week, has two daughters out at service who do not help her, she herself being too ill to work.—G. C.]

25c. *Mrs. S. Cox*, her husband, and six children live in a cottage with one small bedroom open to the thatch, eldest child at home 15 years.

Boy, 15, works on farm and gets 6*s.* a week.
„ 13 „ „ 3*s.* 6*d.* a week.
Girl, 11, at school.
Boy, 9, drives a plough, and has been at work for 12 months ; gets 2*s.* a week.
Two younger children at school.

"My husband gets labourer's pay, 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week, I don't know which; we pay 2*l.* a year rent for our cottage and small garden, and we pay 15*s.* for 40 poles of allotment."

WITNEY UNION.

26. Asthall - Pop., 424 - Acr., 1,180.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. H. Gregory says of the cottages, "They are "built of stone and slated, with means of ventilation "and drainage. Each cottage has a sitting room and "two bedrooms generally ; nearly all have gardens "and outhouses. The cottages belong to the land-"owners or tenant farmers. The rent varies from "2*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* There are four tenements owned by "a man of small means, objectionable in all ways; "they are now unoccupied, and are about to be "taken down and replaced by some of a better "description."

27. Bampton Aston - Pop., 968 - Acr., 3,760.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. G. S. Griffith gives the following evidence :—

"Bampton Aston, including the hamlets of Aston, Cote, Brighthampton, Chimney, and Shifford, formerly one of the three portions of the vicarage of Bampton, is now a separate ecclesiastical district having in it two churches, one at Aston and one at Shifford; I may also add Yelford, a small adjoining parish, which derives all its labour from Bampton and does nothing for education. (Yelford has only two houses in it, one a farm house the other the rectory, occupied by the clerk, and at the same time a licensed beer shop. Bampton Aston also supplies a good deal of labour to Hardwick parish.)

"There are in Aston - - 125 cottages
„ Cote - - 38 „
„ Shifford - 6 „
„ Brighthampton 18 „
„ Chimney - 2 „

Besides which there are 60 houses. The children of Brighthampton being three miles from this are permitted to attend school at Standlake. The children from Shifford, two miles hence, come here (Aston); those from Chimney (two miles off) and Cote come here. There are two schools, the British in the hands of the Baptists, taught by a mistress and supported by voluntary contributions derived I suppose from the sect in and around the neighbourhood ; the National or parish school, taught by a mistress, inspected by government but receiving no grant, also by diocesan inspector ; it is supported by one Horde's charity, from estate in parish, of value of 6*l.*, share of Bampton charities 3*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.*, a grant from Betton of 5*l.*, and the rest collected from owners and occupiers, towards which the following may be instructive as showing the *proportion* in which they severally contribute :—

"1. *Brighthampton*, 410 acres, rateable value 991*l.*; all owned by St. John's College, Oxford. From them nothing (save 5*l.* lately for heating Shifford Church) for the last *eleven* years; there is a small charity in the place of about 4*l.*, which is given away in sums of from 1*s.* to 10*s.*, *to some few of the inhabitants who have money out at interest.* It is hoped that some day this may be applied to *educational* purposes, and that St. John's College will assist in providing school house much needed there. The vicar and farmers give 5 cwt. of coal to each of the 13 cottagers.

"2. *Shifford*, 860 acres, rateable value 1,227*l.* Mr. Harcourt of Nunham, who, with the exception of a very few acres (these few acres are owned by Christ Church, which college has lately given 3*l.* 3*s.*, Mr. Harcourt giving 5*l.*, towards heating the church), owns all Shifford, last year gave a donation of 5*l.* towards Aston school, which is all that has been given for educational purposes for 11 years from Shifford.

"3. *Chimney.* Mr. M. Atkyns subscribes 2*l.* to Aston school. The property, leasehold (formerly of Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral, who are the patrons of living), will soon fall into hands of Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

"4. *Aston* and *Cote.* In the hands of 63 owners (including vicar, non-resident, receiver of tithes of gross estimated rental 430*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.*). Of these 63, 33 are non-resident 30 resident. Of the 33 non-residents, the whole amount received last year and for many years past for educational purposes has been from three of them, inclusive of the vicar's 5*l.*, the sum of 8*l.*, which represents the ownership of 262 A. 3 R. 37 P., a gross estimated rental of 432*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.* and rateable value of 391*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, of which the vicar's portion is in acres 15 A. 2 R. 7 P. Gross estimated rental 498*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*, rateable value 484*l.* 7*s.* 8*d.* Of the remaining 30 non-residents, two own respectively 1,869 A. 2 R. 33 P. and 356 A. 0 R. 2 P., with gross estimated rental of 2,788*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* and 566*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.*, and rateable value of 2,531*l.* 3*s.* 11*d.* and 506*l.* 0*s.* 11*d.*; the other 28 having in the main cottage property, and altogether 129 A. 1 R. 30 P., with gross estimated rental of 398*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.* and rateable value of 346*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* And as of the two former, I can with certainty say, so of the 28 (with perhaps a single exceptional supporter of the British school), I shall hardly be wrong in affirming that they do *nothing whatever for educational*, or indeed, so far as I know, for any other purpose whatever connected with the parish.

"With the above information it will hardly be a matter of surprise to you that with 30 resident owners, mostly little people, a good many either from disinclination or inability doing nothing, and the remainder divided between Church and Dissent, there should be a great difficulty in a financial point of view in keeping schools going at all. Speaking of our parish or national schools, the expenditure last year was as 58*l.* 10*s.* to receipts of 41*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.*, the numbers educated being, boys 42, girls 56, and the numbers at the British school would be about the same.

"Of the 30 *residents* (owners and occupiers) nine contributed something under 4*l.* 10*s.* towards our school; the remaining 21 (beyond our annual sermon and collection of 1*l.* 1*s.* and their share in it) having contributed nothing.

"The *age* of the children in school attendance on a given day may be seen by the following table, which was recently made, and which, being winter time, gives a *higher* age than we are able to keep up when the weather is better and there is any field work for the women and boys, when the bigger girls are kept at home:—

	Girls.	Boys.	Total.
Over 12 yrs. and under 13 yrs.	2	0	2
„ 11 „ „ 12 „	3	0	3
„ 10 „ „ 11 „	2	0	2
„ 9 „ „ 10 „	3	4	7
„ 8 „ „ 9 „	3	3	6
„ 7 „ „ 8 „	9	6	15
„ 6 „ „ 7 „	7	6	13
„ 5 „ „ 6 „	6	4	10
„ 4 „ „ 5 „	4	2	6
„ 3 „ „ 4 „	2	0	2
	41	25	66

"Out of 17 children absent during greatest part of the year:—

Of girls, 10 in number:

7 from 11 years down to 6 were nursing.
1 aged 12 shepherding.
1 „ 8 in service.
1 „ 12 turf-burning.

Of boys, 7 in number:

3 from 9 years to 7 were ploughing or leading horses.
1 aged 8 straw-tying.
1 „ 9 hoeing.
1 „ 8 corn-minding.
1 „ 9 nursing.

"It will be perceived by you from the figures first of all given of the whole number under education, and the numbers last given of those in attendance on a particular day, that a very great irregularity exists in respect to attendance. I beg leave to point out that this most unfortunate hindrance to all progress is caused not only by the demands made on the services of young children for bean setting, bird watching, and the like, but more particularly by reason of the poverty of the parents and their inability when out of work, as with the *irregular* system of hire they so many of them often are, to pay even the weekly penny for each child. For instance, owing to the rapid and early harvest, we have lately frequently had 20 to 50 able-bodied men out of work. The labourers might be divided into three classes.

"1st. Those of regular employment who hold their cottages on the farm under the farmer, the best class, with whom, though the education of their children might be with advantage prolonged, there is as a rule no difficulty.

"2nd. Those who, though of weekly hire, are yet by reason of character able to keep regular work; these do their very utmost in many a noble struggle to hold their own and send their children to school, but too often in the evil day of adversity and failing health sink into the

"3rd class, out of which comes misery of every kind. They are formed out of those whose parents for want of *some better system of hire* have left them to grow up without education of any kind.

"A few years ago I picked up two dozen of such children, persuaded the parents to send them to the school, and paid for them myself all the winter months, but the very week, work having become plentiful, I ceased doing so, they were almost to a child removed —not for work—but because the parents either really could not or else grudged to afford the penny for that on which they set no kind of value at all.

"The employment of *boys* in field work removes them at once from all training or kindly influence; they become but lodgers in their own homes, and if restrained hire themselves out elsewhere, the effect being that the parents knowing this, and that until they marry they are valuable acquisitions to the domestic board, leave them do as they please. The evil of such a state is incalculable; they are men in miniature, and give way to every indulgence of their passions. The *regular* employment of the female parent in the fields adds to the disaster; the home is neglected, the elder girls are kept to mind the baby, and at a very early age going themselves to the field their ruin is most certain. It is hard without a shudder to speak of the morals of this place.

"You will understand that the education is at a lamentably low ebb, when you hear that very few of my male candidates for confirmation (and some also of the female candidates are in the same sad case) can when they come to me say the Lord's Prayer. With three services on my hands each Sunday (four indeed alternately) I am unable to attend the Sunday School; but it is impossible in either Sunday or day school with the infants only that we can master to do any real educational work. And I take it that it is quite impossible, even with those parents who are most desirous to forward their children's interests, to expect it should be otherwise, so long as there is a payment of the school pence on the one side, to be balanced or rather overbalanced by the receipt of a child's food or wage, however small, on the other. I have spoken to a large number of the labourers and the farmers here, and though the latter would resent any excessive interference, neither side, so far as I can learn, wishes for a continuance of the present sad state of things. I believe that they would be pretty generally agreed as to the prevention of all labour under 10 years of age. Some slight restriction as to the employment of women, and especially young women, in the fields, they *might* not object to; but I think they would be strongly opposed to any half-and-half system, by which, as has been suggested, a boy would be one part of the day in the field and another part of it in school."

27a. Mr. Griffith then enters at some length into the evils of a weekly hiring and variable wage, giving instances of very high earnings of day labourers in harvest, and the little good they derived from these earnings, which in some instances have reached 22*s.* an acre for cutting and binding wheat, contrasting the position of day men renting their own cottages with that of yearly hired men living in cottages attached to farms and in the hands of the farmer. He says, "a "regular wage, even if lower and regular work, "would do much to prevent the evils of the present "system, and would greatly assist education. The "only objection I have heard made to it (yearly "hiring by farmers) is, that they might be called "upon to provide medical attendance for their sick "labourers, and at the same time be obliged to pay "them as if at work and supply their places with "men who would have to be paid also."

27b. The following is extracted from a letter addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by the Rev. G. Sandham Griffith, on the 25th of January 1869:—

"Mr. Gillett paid 12*s.* an acre for cutting some wheat last harvest; for barley, scythe cut, he paid 3*s.*; for oats he paid 10*s.*

"Mr. Jefferys put the price of cutting and tying wheat at from 8*s.* to 18*s.* an acre. Round Bampton last harvest he thought most people paid 18*s.*

"Mr. Baker (another farmer) put the price for cutting and tying wheat at from 10*s.* to 18*s.* (he had known 22*s.*).

"Mr. Cudden, of Bampton, put it at from 7*s.* to 16*s.* The 22*s.* mentioned was for cutting and tying an unusually heavy crop, and under perhaps exceptional circumstances, but only tending to prove that the irregularly employed men who are out of work a good part of the winter command very much what they like to ask in a quick harvest. One of our largest employers of men told me to-day that he paid for harvest work less than anyone in the parish, because he kept a larger number of men, but kept them the year through."

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

B.
j.

27c. In the register of Shifford Church I find that out of 126 marriages that have been solemnized since 1838, and at which 511 names were entered, 256 of them could not sign for themselves ; and that at Aston Church from 1858 to the present time, out of 68 marriages, at which 242 were present, 121, or exactly one-half, could not sign their names. The numbers stand thus :—

	No. of Marriages.	Names entered.	Not Signed by Selves.
Shifford Church 1838–1847	35	140	60
" " 1847–1858	79	316	176
" " 1858–1868	12	55	20
	126	511	256
Aston Church - 1858-1868	60	242	121
	186	753	377

27d. POPULATION, AREA, and VALUE of Bampton Aston Parish.

Hamlets.	Population in 1861.	Area in Acres.	Rateable Value.
			£
Aston and Cote - -	811	1870	5,069
Brighthampton - -	89	410	991
Chimney - - - -	27	620	791
Shifford - - - -	41	860	1,227
Total - -	968	3760	8,078

28. Black Bourton - Pop., 260 - Acr., 2,300.

Mr. H. Akers, occupier and guardian, says, " Cottages generally good, but a few in a bad condition. " All the cottages in this parish have neither good " gardens or facilities for procuring an allotment conveniently situated ; very many have both. Most " of the families, if not all, in this neighbourhood " have a piece of ground set out for allotments conveniently situated."

" There is an efficient school conducted by a competent mistress at a cost of 1*d.* per week for each " child."

29. Brightwell-Baldwin - Pop., 277 - Acr., 1,660. Cultivation mixed.

Rev. G. Day says, " The cottages are old, ventilation not according to modern requirements. " Drainage bad in many cases. Garden ground generally small ; plenty of good water. The whole " parish in possession of the landowner. Rents " reasonable."

30. Eynsham - Pop., 2,096 - Acr., 5,060. Cultivation mixed.

Mr. Joseph Druce gives evidence as follows:—" The " cottages on my farm are good, and have gardens. " Those in the village have also gardens and allotments ; have been let for the last 20 years in this " parish."

" There is a national and an endowed school."

30a. *Mr. S. Druce*, occupier and guardian, says, " I " would give anything to have eight or nine cottages " attached to my farm, and I must have two ; I believe " many more persons would borrow money under the " Enclosure Commissioners to build cottages if the " process was less expensive. Instead of beer I give " malt and hops to my men, and they brew for themselves ; the men like it better, and I have never " any trouble about it."

30b. LIST of the EARNINGS of the STAFF of LABOUR, comprising 24 men, from October 1867 to October 1868, including beer, on Mr. Joseph Druce's farm at Eynsham.

No.	Age.	Length of Service.	Average Earnings per Week.	Remarks.
	Years.	Years.	*s.* *d.*	
1	60	3½	12 7¾	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
2	63	24	13 6¼	——
3	50	12	15 2½	——
4	39	14	14 2	——
5	40	7 months.	13 0	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
6	68	47	13 0½	——
7	47	18	14 7	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
8	67	25	13 5	——
9	64	32	12 9	——
10	58	48	12 10¾	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
11	38	Dairyman with wife.	18 0	" "
12	45	30	17 9	——
13	40	6	10 10½	——
14	53	15	12 7¾	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
15	24	1½	17 2	——
16	30	12	15 5½	——
17	29	15	14 6½	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
18	41	5	14 9¾	——
19	40	3	13 0	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
20	41	14	14 11	——
21	57	16	13 6	With a cottage and garden, rent free.
22	48	1	8 8½	——
23	23	10	11 1¾	——
24	19	9	7 3	——

31. Handborough - Pop., 1,059 - Acr., 2,820. Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. R. W. Higgs, D.C.L., says, " As a rule here " the cottage accommodation is not what could be " desired either as to number or size of rooms, nor in " many cases the *ventilation ;* but the last three or " four years have shown a MARKED tendency to improvement in the above respects. Landowners " are chiefly the proprietors. I do not know of any " instance of ownership by tradesmen with whom the " dealing of tenants is compulsory."

32. Minster Lovell - Pop., 86 - Acr., 1,938. Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. John Freer, landowner, says, " We have in " this parish 85 allotments of land, with a cottage on " each built by O'Connor, and most of the other cottages have convenient gardens. The allotments are " of two, three, and four acres each, and are all occupied. These allotments are let at 2*l.* 10*s.* an acre, " with 3*l.* additional for the cottage. Many of the " occupiers work for wages as well with the neighbouring farmers in the parish.

" We have two dame's schools in the parish for " little children up to about 7 or 8. There are about " 12 children at each school. There is a school for " older boys with an attendance of about 12 boys, " who pay 6*d.* a week. A school is wanted in a " central position for boys of the poor at 2*d.* a " week."

32a. The following evidence as to the O'Connor allotment ground was given by Mr. Freer, who now owns about one-third of the estate purchased by O'Connor, including 26 of the original allotment lands with the cottages built on them :—

" A farm in this parish (Minster Lovell) was purchased by Fergus O'Connor about the year 1847 with money raised by the subscription of shareholders to his land scheme. There are or were something short of 300 acres in the estate, which he divided into 85

allotments of two, three, and four acres, building a three-roomed cottage on each allotment. For the estate he paid about 9,500*l.*, leaving about 5,000*l.* on mortgage. The cottages cost about 90*l.* a piece, and great deal of money was spent in levelling, making roads, and otherwise improving the land. Besides the expenditure in purchasing, improving the land, and building, each allottee received a sum varying up to 30*l.* as head money to start him on his little farm. As long as the head money lasted all went well, but the charge for interest on the debt was a fair rent for the land, and the whole scheme broke down, and was wound up by Act of Parliament four or five years after its commencement. There are now only two of the original allottees left who hold as freeholders, subject to a rent-charge, and one of these has, I believe, just been sold up. The maximum subscription of the shareholders to the land scheme was 5*l.*, and as each man completed his subscription he was put down next on the list for an allotment. When the company was wound up all the subscriptions were lost. This is only one of three or four estates O'Connor purchased, and there are said to have been 70,000 shareholders. After about four years' experience the allottees began to leave their allotments, and for several years many of them were unoccupied. I have purchased 26 allotments, and put three or four together, letting them to one man, who sublets the cottages. A man may get a living off 10 acres, let a fair rent, or he may get a living off, say, two acres, for which he pays no rent or rent-charge. None of those who have these allotments singly at a rent are able to live off them. I let four acre allotments with the house at 13*l.*, *i.e.*, 50*s.* an acre for the land and 3*l.* for the house. Some of the cottages are empty where the allotments are put together and let to one man. A man whom I know purchased an allotment of four acres for 160*l.* 17 years ago (at the first sale), soon paid off 100*l.* of his debt, and has made a living since. He wants 350*l.* for his allotment now, and he could easily get 300*l.*" [The land is a good deal of it on cornbrash, and worth, say, 2*l.* an acre.—G. C.]

32b. The following letter for the use of the Assistant Commissioner was written by Mr. J. S. Price, solicitor, Burford, to Mr. Jas. Napier of Blenheim :—

Dear Sir,

The estate at Minster Lovel was purchased by Fergus O'Connor by auction of Messrs. Wearing, of Oxford, and Pinnock, of Chinnery, I think, for 9,359*l.* or thereabouts, as trustees of the will of Mr. Walker of that place about 1847, and it was agreed that 5,000*l.* of the purchase money should remain on it as a first mortgage. The solicitor of the trustees then informed me that he intended to introduce the Flemish system of farming.

He built a school and laid out the land in allotments of one, two, three, and four acres or thereabouts, erecting thereon long detached rows of cottages with one floor, in number nearly 100.

He soon named it O'Connerville, and introduced principally artisans from the north, who did not like hard agricultural work, so that in most instances a succession of tenants and great dissatisfaction followed.

At this period he was returned for Nottingham in opposition to Mr. Walter, and O'Connerville became the subject of discussion in the House, and I was requested by the Government to get evidence of the state of things and did so. The Government, however, instead of taking evidence in London, sent down authorized persons, who made inquiries on the spot and reported the result.

The interest on the 5,000*l.* being in arrear, the mortgagees offered the farm premises, 297 acres of the land and 82 newly built cottages, for sale by auction, and repeated the endeavour to sell again in June 1851 (of which attempted sale I send you the particulars). Both auctions were in the main abortions. Matters got worse, and I see by a conveyance now before me, dated December 11th, 1858, and made between "Mr. Goodchap the official manager (duly "appointed under an Act passed in the Session held "the 14th & 15th years of Her present Majesty, "entitled, 'An Act to dissolve the National Land "'Company, and to dispose of the Land and Pro-"'perty belonging to the Company, and to wind up "'the Undertaking') of the one part, and Worley "and Major of the other part," that the manager had impeached the title to the property of the latter, and took 30*l.* to confer a good one. O'Connor made two other purchases of considerable quantities of land at Snigsend and Sowland, about 8 or 10 miles north-west of Gloucester, which formed, I believe, part of the same company.

[In the conveyance quoted by Mr. Price, dated 11th December 1858, the Act of 1851 is referred to as providing that all lands, &c. purchased by Fergus O'Connor with the monies of the shareholders of the "National "Land Company" should be considered as bought by him and conveyed to him in trust for the company; and as further providing that the affairs of the company should be wound up by the Court of Chancery, as if it came under the provisions of the "Joint Stock "Companies' Winding up Commencement Act, 1848;" and as further providing that all the estates, effects, credit, &c. of the company should be vested in the official manager appointed by the Master in Chancery. The conveyance also states that Mr. William Goodchap was appointed by the Court of Chancery interim official manager on the 6th of October 1851, and confirmed in the office on the 22nd of the same month.

32c. The order for winding up the National Land Company was made by the Court of Chancery on the 9th of August 1851.—G. C.]

The cottages are built each on its own allotment facing one of the roads which intersect the estate, but standing some distance, say from 50 to 60 yards, back from the road; about 12 of them face to the south, 20 to the north, 20 to the east, and 30 to the west, according to the direction of the roads which they face. They are built of stone and slated, with three rooms in the ground floor each 12 feet square, a piggery, and shed (the pattern being the same throughout, and anything more dreary or devoid of all the picturesque features of a country village I never saw). About 36 of the allotments are of four acres, about 12 of three acres, and only one of the remainder under two acres. Great complaint was made by several of the dwellers on the Charterville that there was no school worth the name. It appears by the advertisement of sale, dated June 14th, 1851, that of 82 allotments of from two to four acres each eight had been sold at a previous sale (whose title was probably that disputed by the official manager (see Mr. Price's letter)), and 20 were already unoccupied.

The following is an approximation to the cost of the scheme :—

	£
Purchase of estate -	- 9,500
Cost of 82 cottages at 90*l.*	- 7,380
Road making, levelling, and fencing - -	- 3,000
Legal expenses - -	- 120
	20,000

[It is, however, said to have cost 22,000*l.*—G. C.]*

32d. Evidence of *John Bennett*, one of the original allottees, whose allotment and cottage have just been sold :—

"Those that paid up a whole share got the first choice of an allotment. I paid up mine, 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* I got one in six months. I never would if I had known what I do now. It has taken me 20 years to learn how a man can live without victuals, and I've just about come to it. Thousands paid up part of their

* I have omitted the head money, which at 7*l.* 10*s.* per acre would increase my estimate to 22,250*l.*—G. C.

Oxfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

share and lost it all, and I believe they were best off. I got 30*l.* head money for four acres.
" They gave 30*l.* for four acres.
" 22*l.* 10*s.* for three acres.
" 15*l.* for two acres.

" My allotment has been sold for 106*l.*, but there is a rent-charge on it of 9*l.* 10*s.* a year."

33. Standlake - Pop., 822 - Acr., 2,495.

Cultivation is chiefly arable, farmed on the four course system.

Walter Strickland, Esq., J.P., gives the following evidence :—" There are some good cottages, some " fairly good, and some very bad. Many of the cot- " tages have gardens, and there are 10 acres of good " land in allotments conveniently situated.

" There is a good parish school for boys and " girls."

33a. [The children from Brighthampton are also permitted to attend Standlake school.—G. C.]

34. Stanton Harcourt - Pop., 661 - Acr., 3,120.

[The Assistant Commissioner did not see much to complain of in the cottages of this village ; many of them have been lately improved by the chief landowner. There is a dame school kept by Mrs. Molyneux and her daughter, where there are about 35 children who pay 2*d.* to 3*d.* a week according to age ; the children are most of them girls, and about 20 of them are over 12 years of age. Mrs. Molyneux and her daughter also teach an evening class five nights a week for four months ; to this school Mr. Harcourt, the chief landowner, pays 10*l.* a year, and gives the schoolroom and mistress's cottage free. At the evening school the pupils pay 3*d.* a week.

34a. There is also a school taught by Mr. William Burchell, with an endowment of 14*l.* 8*s.* a year. At this school one child is taken free from each poor family in the parish. After the children begin to write they pay 3*d.* a week. Mr. Burchell receives nothing beyond the 14*l.* 8*s.* and the children's pence ; he pays 2*l.* a year rent for his cottage, and makes up his living by acting as assistant overseer and postmaster, and measuring land. Neither of these schools appear to be under the care of the clergyman.—G. C.]

34b. Three women (two of them married), drawing and tying straw for thatching, gave the following evidence : " We work from 8 to 5, and have one hour's " rest ; they pay us 8*d.* a day ; we like it better than " slopping. Young women here generally get out to " service."

34c. *Mrs. Burden* (husband a farm labourer), doing slopping (sewing button holes and finishing trowsers for railway workers) : " I earn a tidy bit at it, and " it's better for me with six children than going out " to work ; two of my sons are grown up ; we have " two bed rooms."

34d. *Mrs. Sermon* (husband a shepherd) : " I sew " slops for Mr. Hyde of Abingdon, I can make 2*s.* a " week ; I don't know whether my husband has 11*s.* " or 12*s.* a week, he has 1*s.* more than ordinary men."

34e. [The cottages are thatched, and have back offices and a well about nine feet deep ; they have gardens of about 20 poles.—G. C.]

35. Chipping Norton Union.

Enstone - Pop., 1,198 - Acr., 6,177.

Rev. John Jordan says of the cottages : " They " belong to the lord of the manor, and some to other " parties, but none that compel dealing with them. " Rents vary from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.*"

35a. [There are some very poor old cottages both in Enstone village and the hamlets, some of them very badly placed.—G. C.]

35b. The following particulars of Ten Cottages in Enstone were obtained for the Assistant Commissioner by the District Superintendent of Police.

Name of Tenant.	No. of Family.	No. of Rooms.	Rent. £ s. d.	Owner.	With or without Land.	Situation.	General Description.	Remarks.
Hitchcocks, Thomas	8	3	2 0 0	Lord Dillon -	Nil.	On a bank -	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	—
Bondfields, Joseph -	7	2 and attic	4 0 0	„ „ -	With	On the level	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	—
Trinder, William -	6	3	4 0 0	„ „ -	„	„ „	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	—
Knight, Phillip -	6	2	2 3 4	Hy. Taylor, Esq.	Nil.	„ „	Stone cottage, thatch, quite unfit for habitation.	No back outlet.
West, Thomas -	5	2	2 3 4	„ „	„	„ „	Stone cottage, thatch, quite unfit for habitation.	No back outlet.
Mass, Sarah - -	1	2	2 3 4	„ „	„	„ „	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	No back outlet.
Waring, Henry -	5	3	2 0 0	Lord Dillon -	With	Very low -	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	No back outlet.
Pearce, William -	8	2 and attic.	2 10 0	„ „ -	Nil.	„ „	Stone cottage, slate, much out of repair.	No back outlet.
Waring James -	7	3	2 12 6	„ „ -	With	On the level	Stone cottage, thatch, much out of repair.	—
Thomas W. Bennett	6	4	5 0 0	„ „ -	„	On a bank -	Stone cottage, slate, much out of repair.	No back outlet.

36. Banbury Union.

Adderbury East - Pop., 895 - Acr., 1,900.

Mr. Wm. Chamberlin, occupier and guardian, says, " The cottages are not very good. Some have small " gardens, others none at all. There are about 25 " acres allotments let at about 5*l.* an acre. Many of " the labourers obtain land for growing potatoes on " the farms they work upon, some at no rent, others " at a nominal one.

" There is an endowed school for boys and adults, " at which the curate assists ; a girls' and infants' " schools supported by voluntary contributions, with " a full attendance of children."

36a. The following evidence was given to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Chamberlin :—" I have a " carter, 24 years of age, and an under carter, 18, hired " by the year. They live in the house of my farm bailiff, " and I pay him 8*s.* a week for their board, and they " receive respectively 10*l.* and 6*l.* wages at Michael- " mas. Doubtless they are bound to fulfil their con- " tract except in case of sickness, when most farmers " would remove them to their own homes. I believe " we are not compelled to support them during sick- " ness. A man and his wife and four children would " cost in the house an average of 3*s.* 4*d.* per week ; for " the family 1*l.* Out of the house this man would be " earning, say, 12*s.* I pay my men 11*s.* a week, but

" 10*s*. is the average wage of the district. Women " just now work from 8 till 4, and are paid 7*d*. for " seven hours' work. My shepherd, with his wife, " who works out, earns an average of 19*s*. a week. " He has 12*s*. a week, 3*d*. a lamb, and 3*s*. a score for " shearing.

" I let six cottages with one farm, three of them " attached to the farm. A farm of 500 or 600 acres " ought to have five or six cottages attached to it."

37. Alkerton - Pop., 194 - Acr., 704.

Mr. Davis, occupier and guardian, says, " Some of " the cottages are small and not well ventilated. " There is plenty of water in the village. Most of the " cottages have gardens and from one to two chains " of allotment land at 6*s*. a chain.

" There is a school at Shenington, to which children " are admitted free at six years old. The villages of " Alkerton and Shenington join. The rector of " Shenington has held the rectory of Alkerton for " many years, and there is only one school, which is " within half a mile of the cottages of Alkerton."

37a. As to wages, Mr. Davis says, " Average wage " for a year, 12*s*. to 13*s*. per week, with three pints of " beer daily in summer and four quarts in harvest."

38. Drayton - Pop., 186 - Acr., 1,260.

Mr. S. Berridge, occupier and guardian, says of the cottages, " They are very bad. The supply of water " is good. The ventilation of the cottages I need not " mention. Each poor man has a fair portion of " allotment ground at a moderate rent.

" Night schools are very excellent things in an " agricultural village, as boys can attend from 5 till " 8, and I am pleased to see they are attended with " great success in many villages. The provision of " schools is ample. There is a schoolmaster and " mistress. The latter teaches needlework."

39. Epwell - Pop., 358 - Acr., 1,270.

John Hervey, a labourer out of work, has a wife and six children; girl, 15, at service; boy, 14, driving plough, has 2*s*. 6*d*. a week, dropped 6*d*. lately; boy, 11, has 2*s*. a week, and has been two years at work; boy, 8, at school; children, 5 and 3, at home; the two elder boys can read and write: " I have been " getting 10*s*. a week since Michaelmas. I can get " no work now. Large farmers don't employ so much " work now as the small ones used to. In harvest we " fag and tie by the thrave (a thrave is 24 sheaves, " each should be three feet round the band, not " many of them are so much). I have cut a wheat " crop with 50 thraves to the acre, and 30 is a fair " crop. There was a good crop in most parts. We " were paid this harvest 4*d*. per thrave. We can " earn 5*s*. a day. I got about three weeks this year. " After reaping we get 2*s*. 6*d*. a day and three quarts " of beer, not worth more than 2*d*. a quart. Some " buy it at Banbury. I cannot read or write. Many " men can't."

40. Hempton (a chapelry) - Pop., 229.

The following evidence is extracted from a circular returned by the *Rev. P. R. Egerton*, too late to be inserted in Summary A.

" The hour's of work here for men are from 7 a.m. " to 5 p.m., with one hour's rest; for women from " 8 a.m., to 5 p.m., with an hour's rest.

" Hempton is a very poor uncared for place just a " mile distant from Deddington, with no gentlefolk at " all living in it, a few farmers not very well to do, " and a miserable set of cottagers who cannot live with " anything like comfort on their earnings, and in " time of sickness with little or no help except what " I myself am able to give them.

" I consider that the cottage accommodation is very " unsatisfactory, looking at it as a whole. Many of " the cottages are in miserable repair, indeed some " months ago one or two seemed likely to fall, but I " believe some repairs have been done since. It " would certainly seem difficult for a family to grow " up really respectable in most of them, but perhaps " if there were some one who cared for the poor living " among them and looking after them, things might " be better in spite of this. I myself live here at " Bloxham, three miles off, and can hardly ever get " over to them except on a Sunday, so what I can do " for them is but little. The people are badly off and " are very thankful for the little that the children can " earn, but as a rule I think they keep them at school " as well as can be expected, and there are hardly any " who are not either at school or work. My own " opinion about field work for girls or women is that " it is bad and demoralizing, and that girls had better " be out at service and the women at home, but I " don't know what to say about *legislation* on the " subject."

41. Wardington - Pop., 732 - Acr., 2,600.

Jas. Ward, labourer: " Cutting is done by the acre, " and also by the thrave or dozen. By the acre the " farmer *finds* beer (but not by the thrave), and pays " from 8*s*. to 10*s*. This year where I worked we cut " and tied up and set up by the shock (by the dozen, " 22 to 24 inches round the band); we made them 22 " inches by measure. The old measure, 36 inches, is " too big. I pay 1*s*. 2*d*. a week for my cottage, with- " out a hovel or a pigstye, and the cottage belongs to " a man who has a bit of land and about 18 or 20 cot- " tages. I have a bit of potato land belonging to " Col. North, about 20 poles. I don't know what I " should have done without it. The land is 3½ miles " from my house. I can't get any land near. No- " body lets land so cheap as Col. North. I have had " to pay 20*s*. a chain for potato ground, and I pay 2*s*. " to Col. North. Lots of people would pay 20*s*. a " chain. One of our farmers lets land at that rate. " If I had four acres I could get a living off it, paying " a farmer's rent of 50*s*. to 60*s*. without ever having " a horse upon it, except to draw dung. I have " known 2*l*. given for a chain of potato ground " planted."

42. Wroxton-cum-Balscott - Pop., 751 - Acr., 2,900.

Rev. D. G. Compton says, " The cottages in Col. " North's occupation are kept in good repair, and " their drainage, ventilation, &c. is cared for. The " remainder, *i.e.*, the chief part, are held on leases " and lives under Trinity College, Oxford; their " present ownership is in the hands of small farmers " and petty tradesmen, and their state is often very " bad. Trinity refuses to renew any of the holdings, " and this makes the owners the more sparing in " what they lay out. On their dropping into the " college I doubt not there will be an improve- " ment.

" Trinity College, Oxford, holds - 1,604 acres.
" Christ Church, Oxford „ - 328 „

" Trinity subscribes five guineas to the school at " Wroxton and five guineas to the school at Balscott. " Christ Church declines to give any annual sub- " scription, but both colleges subscribed to the re- " building of Balscott school."

42a. The following is extracted from a circular returned too late to be included in the summary of circular answers:—

Col. North, M.P., chairman of Banbury Union: " Wroxton parish is chiefly arable, cultivated on a " five course system. A large quantity of sheep are " kept, and fed on turnips in the winter. Farmers " employ boys from 10 years of age as plough boys; " on my own farm there is no boy under 12. No " girls are employed in farm labour in the parish. " Women are only employed in haymaking and har- " vest, and occasionally in taking up potatoes and " mangel, which latter occupies about 14 days in " the year. Boys work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., women " from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. . . . . The cottages in " the village are generally too small, and are in- " sufficient for the supply of labour; they are con- " veniently situated and well supplied with water.

Oxfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

" No evil results to morality from overcrowding have " come to my knowledge. Few of the cottages have " gardens, but I give allotments of a quarter of an " acre each to all married people. . . . . Except " in a few cases of wilful negligence on the part of " the parents, the children of the labourers take " advantage of the village school, where they can " attend for 1*d.* per week. . . . . It would be " better that boys should not be employed under 12, " but at any rate not under 10, and not then, unless " they can read and write."

BICESTER UNION.

43. Bucknell - Pop., 296 - Acr., 1,670.
Cultivation mixed.

F. D. Hibbert, Esq., J.P., and landowner, says, " It " is well to state that all the cottages, except two " belonging to the rectory farm, are my property. " The supply of water is good. Cases of immorality " are very *rare*. Every cottage has a garden.

" The village school is under the superintendence " of the rector, and is well attended. There is, be- " sides, a night school. It was held 51 nights last " winter; the average attendance was 28."

44. Cottisford - Pop., 269 - Acr., 1,520.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. Joseph Waters, occupier and guardian, says, " The cottages are of two or three descriptions, from " very bad to very good; some of them are not fit " for human habitation. The cottages have all allot- " ments and gardens.

" We have a very good school provided by private " subscriptions among the landed proprietors, the " rector, and the farmers."

45. Kirtlington - Pop., 725 - Acr., 3,500.
Cultivation mixed.

Capt. F. L. Dashwood says of the cottages, " Many " of the oldest cottages are large and roomy but " badly arranged. On the farms in my occupation " are cottages built on the modern plan, the one " generally advocated, with three bedrooms upstairs; " this plan of cottage does not give satisfaction to the " inmates. My landlord has built his new ones (I " have two on my farm) with one bedroom on the " ground floor and two bedrooms upstairs. The " inmates thoroughly approve of this plan of cottage " in every respect; in this plan the ventilation is " good, and no drainage required. Nearly every " cottage has a garden. The water supply is good. " Most of the cottages belong to the landlord, a few " to small proprietors. I never heard of the tenants " being obliged to deal with a tradesman who hap- " pened to be the owner of the cottage. The rents " vary from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. On my farm I " charge 1*s.* 6*d.* a week."

45a. *Sir H. W. Dashwood* says, " There is a national " school (mixed) with a certificated master, and two " infant schools, one in the village and the other in " the hamlet of Northbrooke, for the children of " labourers of two outlying parishes."

45b. As to wages, &c., *Mr. James Scott*, bailiff to Sir Henry Dashwood, says, " I herewith send you a " statement of wages paid to two labourers in the " employ of Sir Henry Dashwood, from Michaelmas " 1867 to Michaelmas 1868.

" No. 1. (Always employed on the farm.)

	£	*s.*	*d.*
" Had 153 days, at 1*s.* 10*d.* a day -	14	0	6
" „ 7 days in haytime, at 2*s.* 4*d.*	0	16	4
" „ 7½ days in harvest, at 3*s.* 4*d.*	1	5	0
" For piecework, winnowing corn, " filling dung, hoeing, mowing, " and fagging corn - - -	20	19	2
" Total earnings -	£37	1	0

" Average for 52 weeks, 14*s.* 3*d.*

" No. 2. (One of our best men employed on the " farm, and sometimes on the estate.)

	£	*s.*	*d.*
" Had 158 days, at 2*s.* - - -	15	16	0
" Piecework for stone digging, hoe- " ing, mowing, and fagging corn -	24	0	0
" Total earnings -	£39	16	0

" Average for 52 weeks (he was two weeks absent), " 15*s.* 10¼*d.*

" No beer is allowed. Any extra job that farmers " in this neighbourhood give beer for we give money, " and I find labourers much easier managed without " it. Neither of the labourers referred to had any " assistance in their piecework."

45c. [Mrs. Simmons (wife of farm labourer), with her daughter, aged 19, and two sons of 12 and 6, gathering acorns by the bushel. None of these children can either read or write or has ever been at school, although the father is regularly employed.—G. C.]

45d. Of wages, *Capt. Dashwood* says, " The labour " on my farms average 35*s.* per acre, but nearly three- " fourths of the arable land is in corn, and no beer or " harvest money is given. The system of giving " beer is, I consider, injurious, and for several years " it has been given up entirely on my farms. Money " is given instead, which gives greater satisfaction to " the employed, and in the long run is much better " for the employer."

46. Launton - Pop., 711 - Acr., 3,550.

Mr. Thomas Barford, occupier and guardian, says, " The cottages are about the average of agricultural " districts; most of them have small gardens, and " most have allotments in addition.

" Two schools are open daily."

47. Weston-on-the-Green - Pop., 459 - Acr., 2,215.
Cultivation mixed, ⅔ arable, ⅓ grass.

Rev. W. J. Dry says of the cottages, " There " are a sufficient number of good and commodious " cottages for the labour required *in* the parish, but " although with one single outlying cottage all the rest " belong to one single proprietor, this parish is yet " the most open one in the district. I believe there " are nearly 40 men and young persons employed on " five or six adjoining farms belonging to Bletching- " don, Oddington, and Chesterton; the consequence " is that some of the cottages are somewhat crowded. " The gardens are good, and each cottage has an allot- " ment of two chains of ground. Most cottages have " outhouses, and all privies; the drainage is good; " rent from 3*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a week."

THAME UNION.

48. Aston Rowant - Pop., 884 - Acr., 2,980.
Cultivation mixed.

Arthur Brown, Esq., owner and occupier, chairman of Thame Union, says (in a circular returned too late for insertion in Summary):—

" The condition of the cottages is fair; they are more than sufficient for the supply of labour, and are not so conveniently situated as they might be; one or two are overcrowded, but no evil has come to my knowledge from it; they are well supplied with water and well ventilated. Most of them have a garden attached to them, and all the parish have an allotment garden. There is a very good school under Government inspection, Sunday and night school. There is not so much advantage taken of the opportunities for education as there might be, but I do not consider that early labour has so much effect on the non-attendance as carelessness on the part of the parents. . . . . Boys are employed at all times of the year to assist in team work, and generally after 11 years of age. Girls are not employed in agricultural work, except for a few weeks in the spring weeding corn, hay-making in summer, and cleaning roots in autumn; in harvest time they work with their families. Women are employed in weeding spring corn for a few weeks, but not to any great extent. . . . If boys are taken to work a very early age it would be desirable to restrict

it to 12 years of age, but in this parish scarcely any go to work at so early an age. The employment of women in this parish is so small that no restriction is required."

49. Little Milton - Pop., 411 - Acr., 1,660.

Mr. G. L. Franklin, occupier and land agent, says, "The cottages are old but are pretty well off for "room and are clean. We have a pretty good supply "of water. The cottages have all very good gardens. "In most parishes in this neighbourhood the poor "have allotments varying in size from 10 to 30 poles. "I find 20 poles to be quite sufficient, and as much "as a labourer can well manage with a garden. We "have some parishes without allotments, but the "labourers in these parishes are mostly supplied with "ground by their employers. There is a national "school."

50. Shirburn - Pop., 292 - Acr., 2,411.

Rev. Wm. Nuttall says of the cottages, "They "have fair sized rooms, ventilation and drainage good. "I could wish in mixed families for three bed rooms. "There is spring water, except on the hill, where "however a well is being sunk. A garden to each "cottage, and allotments besides for which rent is "paid. The outhouse accommodation is fair; they "are owned by landowner; 1*s.* a week is the usual "rent."

50a. [Lord Macclesfield has recently sunk a well in the chalk ridge in this parish for the use of the inhabitants, who were sadly in want of water during the dry weather of last summer; the well is 396 feet deep. —G. C.]

51. Waterpery - Pop., 231 - Acr., 2,620.
Cultivation mixed.

Right Hon. J. W. Henley, M.P., says, "Cottages "are fair; all have gardens and most allotments "besides. There is a mixed school. The boys have "set up an evening school for themselves in the "winter months."

Wycombe Union.

52. Stoken Church - Pop., 1,508 - Acr., 3,037.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. H. T. Young, landowner and J.P., says, "The condition of some of our cottages is very fair, "but of the generality bad. The ventilation is better "in some than in others, and as to water unless "there is a tank attached to the house there is "nothing but the pond for people to go to. Some of "the cottages have no gardens, but they all have "allotments let out under the enclosure of the waste "which took place some few years ago. The hill "people are not so large in build and frame as the "people in the vales, but they are, I think, quite as "hardy and enduring; as to intellect and morality "I take it they are much upon *a par*.

"There are schools here in connexion with the "church establishment and the nonconformists, and "I think these schools are attended by more than 300 "children."

Headington Union.

53. Headington.

The following is a statement of the wages on Mr. F. A. Davenport's farm kindly given to the Assistant Commissioner :—

	£	*s.*
1. Foreman : 13*s.* a week, 30*s.* at Michaelmas, and 3*s.* extra for eight weeks in haytime and harvest, total - - -	34	10
2. A carter, single man : 12*s.* a week, 20*s.* at Michaelmas, and 3*s.* extra for eight weeks in summer	33	8
3. A married labourer earned - -	36	11
4. Ditto ditto (assisted by his wife and boy he earned 4*l.* 13*s.* in harvest)	33	18
5. A single labourer earned (of which 3*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* was in harvest, assisted by a girl) - - - -	32	0

[This is the whole permanent staff on a farm of 129 acres, of 69 are arable of good sandy loam and clay, upon which the labour cost 36*s.* an acre.—G. C.]

Abingdon Union.

54. Clifton Hampden - Pop., 355 - Acr., 1,240.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. J. Gibbs : "The condition of the cottages in "the parish is fair; there is every desire on the part "of the principal owner that it should be good, and "improvements are made yearly. The water is just "now under examination. In all the new cottages "ventilation is good. Good gardens to most of the "cottages, and allotments also to some of the la- "bourers for potato ground.

"There is a mixed village school with a certificated "master."

54a. Assistant Commissioner's Notes.

Several poor cottages very badly placed in a hollow, down which runs an open ditch, which carries off the sewage of a school (70 boys) and several cottages. Below, where this ditch has been recently closed in, are two thatched and three brick cottages all using a well in front of one of the cottages almost under the sewer or ditch, having another drain passing close to it from some privies placed at the end of one of the cottages. Towards the end of July this year (1868) a typhoid fever broke out in one of these five cottages, and out of 23 inhabitants of these five there have been up to now (December 1868) 13 cases, four fatal; two cases occured at the boarding school, and the boys were sent home; there were five other cases in the village, and two of these occurred in a house near the river, where the well is very shallow (water when I saw it within four feet of the surface), and just over the well a hole into which soap suds, &c. are thrown, and a few yards behind and further up the hill an open cesspool of a privy.

The five badly placed cottages which were most seriously attacked by fever do not belong to the landowner; two other cottages which do belong to him have had the nuisances which were the probable cause of the mischief removed since the Assistant Commissioner's visit. The boarding school is now shut up.

[The village is a very pretty one, and bears signs of the landowner doing his best for the comfort of the people. The difficulty to contend with is evidently the porous nature of the soil above the clay on which the well water rests, and the proximity of nuisances to these shallow wells.—G. C.]

54b. The following evidence was given by *Mr. Harrison*, occupier and land agent :—

"I do not hire men by the year, and I pay my men different wages as I think them worth it, endeavouring to keep up the wage in winter when the families need money most, rather than to pay a high wage in summer, when there is a great temptation to spend it in beer, and reduce it in winter, as is generally the case."

55. Culham - Pop., 474 - Acr., 1,680.

Several blocks of good cottages built lately by Miss Morrell, chief landowner, some with two bedrooms, and some with three; rents 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week.

55a. *William Moore :* "I am a carter for Mr. Harris. "I have nothing to do with looking after horses. I "have 10*s.* a week, and 4*l.* at Michaelmas, and "nothing more. I am hired by the year. I would a "deal sooner have two horses with reins than these "three in line, and I would get on much faster. This "boy has 4*s.* a week and 30*s.* at Michaelmas. He is "14 years old, and can read and write."

55b. One of three women spudding thistles at Culham dressed in men's coats with shawls over and guano sacks as aprons :—"We get 8*d.* a day; we work from "8 to 5. A woman working 8 hours at slopping "wouldn't get 8*d.* worth done, and then they can't "always get work. It costs less in clothes though "to work at slopping, and particularly shoes, but I

Oxfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
J.

" ain't much of a hand at it, no more ain't these " others. .I would a deal sooner earn my living at " field work."

All these women married, and between 30 and 40.

56. Nuneham - Pop., 314 - Acr., 2,079.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev W. Harcourt, landowner, says, "The children " of this parish have schooling and clothes, paying at " an average of 2*d.* a week. Children between the " ages of 4 and 12½ attend."

Mr. Harcourt employs 15 boys, 12 on his farm and three in the garden, but will employ no boy under 12 years.

56a. [A very good school which children attend from neighbouring parishes, chiefly Marsh Baldon, where there is no school; the school shut up at present (Nov. 27) on account of fever at Clifton and Baldon. All the cottages old but nicely kept, with a rood of garden behind them. Labourers are employed from Baldon, &c.—G. C.]

57. Toot Baldon - Pop., 260 - Acr., 2,010.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. E. Peel: "The condition of the cottages is " greatly improved of late, and Queen's College, " Oxford, to whom they mostly belong, does not " allow them to take lodgers. They are well supplied " with water, and have powers of ventilation if the " inhabitants like to make use of them. With the " exception of four cottages all in my parish have " excellent gardens; these four cottages have no " allotments. We have a very good school."

Sir John Willoughby, a minor, whose estate is in Chancery, owns the cottages at Little Baldon:—"Little " Baldon is in my parish, but being rather more than " two miles from their own parish school the children " go to Nuneham school, which is less than a mile " distant, and also between Little Baldon and their " parish school."

57a. [Assistant Commissioner's note.—At Little Baldon there are a number of straggling old cottages built round a village green, with ponds and manure heaps close to their doors; no great wonder that there is fever in the village. The cottages and estate belong to a minor who is a ward of Chancery.]

58. Sandford-on-Thames - Pop., 376 - Acr., 1680.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. C. E. Ranken says, "The state of the cot- " tages is generally unsatisfactory. A fair supply of " water, but ventilation and drainage are defective. " Most have small gardens and allotments.

" There is a mixed school under Government with " about 40 in attendance, also an infant school with " about 30. A paper mill in the neighbourhood " employs most of the children and young persons."

Henley Union.

59. Caversham - Pop., 1,783 - Acr., 4,772.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. Joshua Bennett says, "A very great improve- " ment has taken place in the condition of the cottages " in this parish within the last few years, but in many " of the new cottages lately built the rents are so " high that it necessitates their being taken by two " families. In the more rural districts of the parish " the cottagers have good gardens attached to their " dwellings. We have also allotments of land in " different localities especially set apart, and con- " veniently situated for the use of the labourers and " their families. We have found that giving prizes " for the best kept cottage, and best cultivated gar- " dens, as well as for the different vegetable produc- " tions, has had a most beneficial effect, and has been " attended with most satisfactory results.

" We have schools specially provided for the educa- " tion of the labouring classes."

60. Hambledon (in Bucks) - Pop., 1,464 - Acr., 6,615
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. W. H. Ridley says, "The condition of the " cottages varies much. In some parts of the parish " they are very insufficiently supplied with water. " The doors and windows generally fit so badly that " ventilation is better secured than warmth.

" There are good schools within reach of all, but " they are not so well attended as they might be.

" It seems very hard that while boys go to work so " young (and they must go by 10 or 11 years of age), " yet the Government practically discourages their " attendance at evening schools by not allowing any " grant for those who are under 12. I have several " at evening school this winter who are younger than " this."

60a. Earnings of families.

Thos. Deane, farm labourer. Man 37, wife 34. Seven children; eldest, a girl, 12. Eldest boy, 8. No child earning anything. Man has 12*s.* a week.

61. Henley - Pop., 3,676 - Acr. 1,737.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Edward Mackenzie, Esq., landowner, &c., J. P., says, "The cottages are very good, well ventilated, and " have water from ponds; they have all gardens.

" There is a parish school."

61a. *Mr. Thomas Hills*, occupier, says of the wages:—Women are paid 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day. Ordinary day-men, 12*s.* a week.

62. Pyrton - Pop., 705 - Acr., 5,140.
Cultivation mixed. About 500 acres in beechwood.

Hugh Hammersley, Esq., landowner, says, "The " cottages on this estate are old, but in good repair, " well supplied with water, and have plenty of fresh " air round them. They have all gardens and allot- " ments in addition, conveniently situated.

" We have a good school for boys and girls, open " to all comers. There is also a Sunday school, at " which the boys who are at work attend. There " is also an evening school in winter for men and " boys."

63. Swyncombe Pop., 445 - Acr., 2,610.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. G. Dixon, occupier, says, "The cottages are " good. All have gardens, and when wished for " waste land can be had on application to the lord of " the manor.

" There are two schools, and they are more than " equal to the requirement of the parish. The benefit " of one (the Rev. C. E. R. Keene's) is extended to " the district."

63a. [The following is an account of the industrial school maintained by the Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene, landowner, and accompanying a balance sheet of the garden department, which applies to the labour of about 12 boys.—G. C.]

" The Swyncombe Industrial School was founded in the year 1846, and was placed under Government inspection. Land has been set apart in connexion with the school, to be cultivated by the boys when not under mental tuition. Employment is also found for the boys in the gardens connected with the mansion, in the stables, in the plantations, and until recently in the carpenters' shop. It is also intended that a workshop should be kept for rainy days, where other employments may be given to them. A small quantity of stock is kept upon the school farm, and a man is entirely employed in directing and working with the boys, and is responsible for their conduct during the hours dedicated to manual labour.

" The time appropriated to school learning is the half of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Friday and Saturday and the remainder of the four days is dedicated to field or other employments which may qualify the boys for the active business of life.

" When at work the boys are paid by the hour in proportion to their ages and capacities.

"On the other hand, the boys pay 4*d.* per week, viz., 2*d.* for their school instruction; 1*d.* for books, of which all surplus beyond the cost is credited to them; 1*d.* to accumulate in a savings bank, and to be given to them, with the addition of 25 per cent., when they leave the school.

"This being a mixed school, the girls are classed with the boys, and the day is divided between the usual courses of reading, writing, and arithmetic, with religious, geographical, and historical instruction, and the employments suited to their sex, including house work, so as to fit them for service.

"They are credited with the value of their work, which enables them to pay 3*d.* per week until they arrive at the age of 13, when the whole payment is reduced to 1*d.* for the endowments fund, from which they receive on leaving what they have deposited, with the like addition as that given to the boys."

BALANCE of ACCOUNT for Swyncombe Industrial School, Garden Department, Michaelmas 1867 to Michaelmas 1868.

Receipts.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Trees and shrubs sent to Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	8	7	0
Shrubs and forest trees to estate at Swyncombe	16	11	4
Labour to do., planting	2	10	0
Farm—4 tons of mangold	2	10	0
15 quarters of oats, crop of 1867	15	0	0
6 pigs, 10*s.* each	3	0	0
Labour in harvest	0	10	0
Gardens—Potatoes and other vegetables	19	6	0
Shrubs and plants	5	4	6
Labour by boys	5	12	6
House—Gathering elderberries	0	4	6
Assisting to fill icehouse	0	6	0
By sale of pigs	6	0	0
Vegetables supplied to the school	1	10	0
Crop on field at Seymour Green let to William Trauter	6	0	0
	£92	11	10

Expenditure.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Labour for man and boys	73	14	0
Meal and pollard for pigs	8	15	0
Artificial manure for land	3	12	7
3 bushels of seed oats	0	9	6
Bills for seeds and tools	1	4	0
Rent and rates on land	9	15	0
	£97	10	1

[This refers to the work of 12 boys.—G. C.]

64. Watlington - Pop., 1,938 - Acr., 3,440.
Cultivation chiefly arable. 560 acres of beechwood.

Rev. A. R. Hogan says of the cottages, "In Watlington they are two stories high, and mostly thatched. The rooms very variable in size, but generally well ventilated. The drainage is not good. The accommodation generally consists of one good sized sitting room, with a scullery or other smaller sized room off it. The bedrooms are seldom more than two or three in number, and when the family is large this number is of course insufficient. The water supply from wells is good and abundant. Gardens are attached to a good many cottages, and outhouses likewise. The ownership is much divided, but not for the most part that of landowners or tradesmen. Rent varies from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week."

64a. *F. E. S. Viret, Esq., J.P.*, gives further evidence as to cottages as follows:—

Cottage accommodation.

The town is principally composed of small tenements and cottages, the latter chiefly belonging to private individuals. There is abundant accommodation (such as it is) for the labourers belonging to the parish, and a considerable number of the labouring poor. Between 200 and 300 men, women, and children of some adjoining parishes find shelter at Watlington, cottage accommodation being insufficient in their own proper parishes! Until the passing of the Union Chargeability Act this was oppressive on Watlington, now the burden is no longer felt.

There is a good supply of water generally, except in extreme seasons of drought, by means of wells of no great depth, say about 15 feet, and the parish not being extensive, the labourers have no unfair distance to go to their daily work. Those of the working classes who find employment in their own proper parishes have of course further to go, probably from one to two miles. Some of the smaller cottage tenements cannot be said to afford sufficient room for families of children or to be in suitable repair. This however is a very difficult question, and there is nothing excessive in the mortality of the town as far as my knowledge goes.

With respect to the ventilation of cottage dwellings I scarcely know what to say, as there is often a disinclination to open windows, and though so much accustomed to be out in the air during the day, the closeness of their rooms at other times seems hardly to be noticed by the generality of the labouring poor.

64b. Training School, Watlington, Tetsworth, Oxfordshire.

Built by the Earl of Macclesfield in 1864, and opened in January 1865.

Managed and maintained by the Countess of Macclesfied for the purpose of training young girls for domestic service.

Their ages on entrance have varied from 12 to 16 but 14 is considered the most desirable age, and the period of their remaining in the school varies from one to three years, according to their age, strength and proficiency. It is expected that they should be able to read and write on admission.

The school building consists of a sitting room for the matron, large kitchen fitted with Flavel's Leamington kitchener and a large brick oven, pantry, with store cupboards, scullery.

Washhouse, with a copper and wringing machine. No other machinery. Laundry, with ironing stove and mangle. No rooms over the washhouse and laundry, which are at the back of the dwelling house. Upstairs in the dwelling house two large bedrooms and one smaller one for 10 or 12 girls, and a bedroom for the matron.

The whole of the Institution is superintended by the matron (salary 25*l.* per annum), who instructs the girls in all the industrial work and regulates the distribution of it, so that all may practice laundry work, cooking, and housework in rotation. Any spare time in the afternoon and evening is devoted to needlework, and to reading, writing, and arithmetic. They receive an hour's instruction from a clergyman once in the

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week, and on Sunday the ladies at Shirburn Castle give them religious instruction.

The girls keep the whole building clean and in order. They bake their own bread, cook their food, and cure their bacon, make and mend their clothes.

Laundrywork is the chief occupation. Washing is supplied from the castle, valued and paid for at the usual rate. Ladies' and gentlemen's washing is also taken in, and charged at the prices usual in the country. This is the only source of income to the school.

The girls are expected to come decently provided with clothing according to a printed list given to them, and unless very poor the parents supply anything they may require while they remain in the school. On their leaving for service, Lady Macclesfield gives them an outfit, worth about 5*l.* 10*s.*, unless (which is rarely the case) they have friends whose circumstances render the gift unnecessary.

In the course of each year the girls are allowed a fortnight's holiday, generally a week at a time, and special leave is given for any particular occasion. Eight of the girls, orphans or children of poor parents, are selected by Lady Macclesfield from the neighbourhood. They are only required to pay 6*s.* a quarter in advance. If she is requested to take in any girls above that number she admits them on receipt of 4*s.* a week, which nearly clears the expense of their maintenance.

In 1866 the cost per head for the matron and eight girls was 4*s.* 2*d.* In 1867, provisions being dearer, it amounted to 4*s.* 6*d.* per head *per week*.

During the last two and a half years 12 girls have been sent to service, four as under laundrymaids, two as housemaids, two as nurserymaids, and four as scullerymaids; each receiving 8*l.* a year, with tea and sugar, &c.

In 1867, the expenditure, everything included, for the matron and nine girls, amounted to 234*l.* The receipts for washing and payments for girls came to about 80*l.* The balance of expenditure was therefore about 154*l.*

In 1867 the expenditure was as follows for the whole year:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Weekly bills, flour and grocery	116	0	0
Coal and wood	33	16	0
Gas	3	2	0
Soap, starch, candles, &c.	11	15	0
Furniture, brushes, &c.	7	12	6
Clothing, including four outfits (nearly 6*l.* each)	33	10	6
Miscellaneous articles	3	10	0
Matron's salary	25	0	0
	£234	6	0

OXFORDSHIRE EVIDENCE.

C.

APPENDIX C.

CONTAINING EVIDENCE APPLICABLE TO AREAS LARGER THAN PARISHES.

RESOLUTIONS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

Woodstock Union.

65. Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Guardians held the 3rd day of November 1868.

Employment of children, &c. Pursuant to notice, Mr. Culley is present and this subject is discussed.

Resolved as follows:—

"In the opinion of this board it is not customary in this union, nor is it to the advantage of the employer or the employed, that children under 10 years of age should be employed in field labour except during the period of the harvest of hay and corn.

"Legislative interference with a view to the restraint of such employment is not desirable.

"It is desirable that the State should afford increased assistance towards the education (not compulsory) of children under 10 years of age, but not of children of a more advanced age."

Witney Union.

November 5, 1868.

66. At a meeting of the board of guardians of the Witney Union held this day.

The Rev. Dacres Adams, chairman, and 12 other guardians.

The following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"That the board of guardians of the Witney union is of opinion that the Factory Acts should be applied to this union so far as that children shall not be employed under 10 years of age."

(Signed) Dacres Adams, Chairman.

Banbury Union.

67. Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Guardians of the Banbury Union held 10th December 1868.

It was moved by the Rev. W. S. Miller and seconded by Mr. Godson:—"That in the opinion of "this board legislative interference is not required in "the education of children employed in agriculture."

There appeared,—

For the motion	10
Against	6
Majority	4

It was moved by Col. North, M.P., and seconded by Mr. Brazier:—

"That the board of guardians of the Banbury union are of opinion that it is desirable children should not be employed under 10 years of age unless it can be shown that each child is physically able and can read and write fairly, in which case they may be allowed to work at 9 years of age."

There appeared,—

For the motion	6
Against it	10
Majority against	4

Bicester Union.

November 6, 1868.

68. At a meeting of the board of guardians of the Bicester Union held this day.

The Rev. W. J. Dry, chairman, and 13 other guardians being present, Mr. Culley, Assistant Commissioner on the Commission appointed to inquire into

the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, with a view to ascertain with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts may be applied to such employment, having explained to the Board the different modes by which protection from physical injury and school attendance are provided for under the Factory Acts, and what is meant by modifications of those principles, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"That the board of guardians of the Bicester union is of opinion that the principles of the Factory Acts should be applied to this union, so far as that children shall not be employed under 10 years of age unless it can be shown that a child is physically able and can pass a certain school examination, *i.e.*, read and write fairly, in which case it may be allowed to work at 9 years of age."

(Signed) W. J. Dry,
Chairman.

Henley Union.

69. Extracts from the Minutes of the Board.

"November 10, 1868.

"Mr. Viret gave notice that he will, on Tuesday next, move that the board of guardians of this union is of opinion that the Factory Acts should be applied to this union, so far as that children shall not be employed under 10 years of age."

"November 17, 1868.

"Mr. Viret's motion, of which the clerk stated he had sent a notice to each of the guardians, was not carried."

(The Assistant Commissioner was present by appointment at the meeting of the board held on the 10th, but notice of his visit not having been sent to each of the guardians, the discussion was postponed till the 17th, when the Assistant Commissioner was not present.—G. C.)

MEDICAL EVIDENCE.

70. H. H. Parry, Esq., district medical officer of Woodstock Union, to Geo. Culley, Esq.

Kidlington,
Dear Sir, December 1, 1868.

I have much pleasure in replying to your inquiries concerning children employed in farm labour in this district. I think I may confidently state the health of such children can compare favourably with those otherwise employed. I find on inquiry that boys in this district are sent to work at about 7 or 8 years of age, and girls at 12 or 13, but it is rather a rare thing for girls to go to field labour at that age at all. In the summer time women are very generally employed making hay and in cutting wheat. The hours of labour for women and children are from 7 o'clock in the morning to 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Of course the employment of boys is very light, merely having to drive horses, &c. I cannot attribute any particular disease to farm labour, and the people in this district are as a rule very strong and healthy, living to a great age, frequently to between 80 and 90 years, and even older. The cottages are as a rule too small, with bad sleeping accommodation, but in this respect very superior to the lodgings of the poor in large towns, being generally detached, with, as a rule, good water and fair drainage, though there are exceptions to this of course.

The parish of Woolvercott in my district contrasts unfavourably with others; it lies low, and is very damp, and the women and children there are engaged in a paper mill.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) Henry H. Parry.

71. Extract from a Letter from J. G. White, Esq., M.D., District Medical Officer of Woodstock Union, to G. Culley, Esq.

"There is no reason to suppose that agricultural labour in this district is in any way injurious to the health of those engaged in it. The fact that farm labourers are not so healthy as they should be (leaving vice out of the question) is owing, first, to the low wages, which will not allow men with families to procure food in quantity or of quality sufficient to keep up the standard of health, and they are therefore more easily affected by outside influences inimical to health; and, secondly, the unwholesome state of many of the cottages. It is, moreover, hopeless to expect that this latter evil will be thoroughly remedied so long as the appointment of sanitary inspectors can in any way be influenced by the small owners of cottage property, who are the chief sinners.

"But few women are employed in the fields, neither are many young children. It is a rare event to find a sick child whose illness can be ascribed to its being employed in field labour at too tender an age.

"J. Gregory White, M.D.

"Woodstock,
"27th October 1868."

72. Evidence given to Assistant Commissioner by *A. Batt, Esq., M.D.*, Witney.

"I think that children are employed too young in heavy ploughed land; it tells on them later in life; when they get to be about 50 they go at the knees and are very much bent. Labourers suffer from bad dwellings and overcrowding more than from anything in the nature of their work. On the oolite, wells are often very near the surface, with privies and pigsties too near them; it is very difficult to keep pollution out of wells on the stonebrash, where houses and wells are near together."

RELIEVING OFFICERS' EVIDENCE.

Woodstock Union.

73. *J. Kirby*, relieving officer for Deddington District:—"The cottages are not bad in any parish in "my district; some of the worst cottages are in the "parishes of Steeple and Westcott Barton. None of "the bad cottages belong to the chief landowners, "they belong to small tenement holders, built most "of them many years back. In the two hamlets "of Deddington, Hampton and Clifton, there are "a few bad cottages belonging to small tenement "holders. There has been great improvement in "cottages during the last few years; for instance, in "North Aston, Dunstew, Kiddington, and Glympton, "and the Wortons, which are close parishes; in "Rousham and Middle Aston, also close parishes, the "cottages are very good. In Sandford also the cot-"tages are good, and have been improved lately. "There are barely enough cottages for the agricul-"tural labourers in Rousham and the Wortons. "Farm labourers' wages are from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week. "Some men are in the habit of going away to work "in summer in Middlesex, and come back in winter. "The smaller the farm the more labour employed, "and the more produced from it. Not many boys "are employed under 10. Girls are not employed "much in my district. A few adult women work "regularly in the fields at about 9*d.* a day. Some "women are glovers; women who work in the fields "do not compare unfavourably with women who are "glovers. Lace-making has died out. All the "tallymen I know are Scotchmen."

74. *Mr. Kent*, relieving officer and inspector of nuisances for Woodstock District:—"There is nothing "to complain of as to the state of cottages in my "district. The worst examples of cottages are in "Kidlington and Tackley. Labourers' wages are "from 10*s.* to 12*s.*; they earn 15*s.* by the piece, "hoeing and jobbing in the barn, &c. In harvest a "man and his wife will earn more than 5*l.* in a "month. Example of this:—Daniel Jolly, his boy of "10, and his daughter Dora, 12, earned 9*l.* during last "harvest. This is their own account, and was "confirmed by their employer at the board. John "Nichols in three years earned 2*l.*, 4*l.*, and 6*l.* in "harvest.

"Gloving.—A girl of 16 in a factory would earn

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" from 3*s.* to 5*s.* a week, and at home she might earn " 2*s.* 6*d.*, but the employment is precarious. A " woman earns about an average of 3*s.* It is the " ruin of families ; girls will not go to service, and " become demoralized."

WITNEY UNION.

75. *Mr. H. Staley*, relieving officer for Witney District, says,—" The cottages are pretty fair in my " district ; farm labourers have from 9*s.* to 12*s.* a " week. Carters have 12*s.* There is a good deal of " piece work done in summer. Some labourers' " families are very badly off."

76. *Mr. F. Green*, relieving officer for Bampton District, says,—" The cottages in Bampton are very " bad ; they belong to small tenement holders. The " labourers are badly off, and now not half of them are " employed for whole time, even at 9*s.* and 10*s.* a " week."

77. *Mr. Jas. Merchant*, relieving officer, Burford District,—" Labourers get from 8*s.* to 11*s.* a week, " and some are very badly off. A great many are out " of employment now ; some of them are men who " are away in summer ; others are industrious men " who always live in the district. The increase of " the size of farms lessens the quantity of labour " required. If all the farms were about 200 or 300 " acres there would be plenty of work."

BICESTER UNION.

78. *Mr. George Reynolds*, relieving officer, Bicester District, says,—" The cottages in Arncott are very " bad, built on the waste, and a good many belong to " the occupiers. They have one room above and " one downstairs. Some of the people keep their " cottages clean. The cottages are of wattle and " dab. Some are built on the waste in Black-" thorn, and are very dirty. The cottages on the " waste at Cottisford are of stone and thatch, and are " much more comfortable. There are a great many " men out of work at Launton and Bicester (grazing " parishes ; the small farms at Bicester are about " 200 acres). Some of these men go away in the " summer. There are some men out of work in " Arncott. Labourers' wages in my district are from " 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week. Labourers who have regular " employment are pretty well off. Children generally " go to work on farms at 10 years old ; some go at " 8. They earn at first from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a week. " Ploughboys get from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* at first, and as " soon as they can hold the plough they get from 4*s.* " to 6*s.* a week. In some parishes women work out " a great deal, in others they hardly go out at all. " Some girls are lace makers, but they mostly go to " service now."

79. *Mr. Jas. Collingridge*, relieving officer, Bletchingdon District,—" The charge for out-door relief has " very much diminished in my district, the people are " better employed. There are bad cottages built on " the waste in Fencott and Murcott. The wages are " from 10*s.* to 12*s.* for farm labourers. No girls " under 18 years of age are employed in this union. " I think putting farms together rather diminishes " the quantity of labour. There are a few parishes " with men out of work, but generally men who only " like work at extra wages. This is a very excep-" tional year."

HENLEY UNION.

80. *Mr. W. Harding*, relieving officer and inspector of nuisances, Henley District, says,—" The cottages in " part of Hambledon are very bad ; they belong to " the chief landowner. In the district generally the " cottages are fair, and many of them have been " improved lately (in Hambledon improvements are " going on). The rent of the bad cottages, with half " a chain of ground, is about 3*l.* 10*s.* The cottages in " the rural parishes vary from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* Most " of them have a garden included in the rent. An " ordinary labourer has from 11*s.* to 12*s.* a week ; " 12*s.* about Hambledon, 11*s.* elsewhere. Carters " have 12*s.* a week, with 50*s.* or 60*s.* at Michaelmas. " These men are hired by the year, from Michaelmas " to Michaelmas. There is no surplus labour in my " district ; any able-bodied man can get work. Some " women, usually married women, work out in spring " and summer, but very little in winter ; a *few* girls " also work out."

81. *Mr. W. Leach*, relieving officer, Caversham District,—" The cottages have been improving for many " years past. Rents near Reading are very high, 4*s.* " and 5*s.* a week. The people sublet part of their " houses to another family. Ordinary rents in rural " districts 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, with garden. Most of the " ordinary labourers in my district get 12*s.* a week, " and there are very few men who cannot get work ; " I don't know of any."

82. *Mr. B. Glass*, relieving officer, Watlington District,—" Ordinary farm labourers have 12*s.* a week. " Carters have their houses free or 1*s.* a week extra " and 2*l.* at Michaelmas. Some women, mostly married " women, work in the fields, and keep their houses as " well as those who do not ; they are industrious " women and get up in the morning, and they get " half a day to bake or wash when they want it. " Girls get out to service when they are big enough ; " at one time they were all lace makers, but they " seem as well off now. A few young men are out " of work, more than I have known for some years, " but these are not good men. Young men are " usually hired by the year, and get from 7*s.* to 10*s.* a " week, with from 30*s.* to 50*s.* at Christmas (*i.e.*, " young men from 16 to 21), and it is men of this " class who have not been hired who are out of work ; " married men are hired by the week. Day men in " harvest get 2*s.* 6*d.* a day and beer for five weeks. " They don't earn much in haytime, as we have not " much hay. Not many boys are employed in the " beech woods. The wood is generally brought out " on wood carts."

SCHOOL TEACHERS' EVIDENCE.

STEEPLE ASTON.

83. *Mr. John Neale*, certificated master for 6 years.

" There are three dames' schools, but the children come to me knowing next to nothing at about 8 years old. I get some at 6 and 7, say half ; those I get at 6 would read, write, and cipher easily at 10, but those I get at 8 would not. These small schools destroy the power of the National school. If I could get all children at 6 they would be able to get as far as the compound rules of arithmetic at 10. Night schools alone would not suffice to keep this up. The least attendance which would suffice to keep up this elementary education would be 200 hours per annum. There is no infant school, and the dames' schools are of no use. The parents who have most children attend best to their education, and I don't think that want of means keeps them away. Some of our boys come two or three miles to school."

STONESFIELD.

84. *Mr. Devonald Griffith*, certificated master teacher for 4 years.

" I think the children in Wales, my native country, are much cleverer than the children here, especially in arithmetic ; they can do reading, writing, and arithmetic easily at 10. I think these children would require half time up to 13. The parents live in Stonesfield, and work in parishes round. The work from here is in Fawler, Combe and Glympton, and Wootton. School attendance is increasing each year, but as soon as the children can earn anything they are taken away. There are 20 men out of work in the village now (October 26) ; they will be much out of work till hay harvest."

WOODSTOCK.

85. *Mr. J. Peck*, certificated master of boys' school, agrees that regular attendance from 5 to 10 would

secure elementary education (as before described, *i.e.*, reading, writing, and arithmetic).

"I think attendance for three winter months would secure this education, if the attendance was regular. One or two children from the Duke of Marlborough's farm attend alternate weeks; two of these are between 9 and 11 years old; they used to come half a week, and I think that was better for educational purposes. We have children of all denominations, and there are no other than the National schools in the town."

WOOLVERCOTT.

86. *Mr. C. Boult*, certificated master for 15 years, has been 12 years at Woolvercott.

Mr. Boult agrees with other teachers as to acquirements at 10 years of age. Does not think attendance during four winter months would be sufficient to secure this amount of education. Thinks regular attendance up to 12 years of age would be quite sufficient.

WOOTTON.

87. *Mr. William Chester*, teacher of boys' school for 18 years.

Mr. Chester thinks boys could read, write, and do first four rules of arithmetic with facility at 10, attending from the age of 5. "I think boys learn more "from 10 to 12 than from 6 to 10. After 10 regu- "lar attendance at winter evening school and Sunday "school would do for some boys, but could hardly be "depended on for all. During the last two years the "age of boys attending school has considerably di- "minished. I have only one first class boy out of "80 who were here last December (October 15, "1868). Children pay 2*d.* a week for schooling, "except 12 on the foundation, who also have cloth- "ing. Two of the same family pay 3*d.* for the "two."

BENEFIT SOCIETIES.

88. In the evidence on this subject from Bedfordshire the Assistant Commissioner quoted some extracts from an interesting paper read at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club (see the Club Journal, November 1867), by Mr. Charles Howard, of Biddenham. Towards the end of his paper Mr. Howard says, "I confess, after giving the subject some considera- "tion, that I shall prefer to see the Government "grapple with the question of friendly societies, "either by the Post Office or some other agency; "until however such is the case, and it may be "years about it, I incline to the principle of county "or district associations." After hearing this paper read, and the discussion which followed the reading, Captain Dashwood, a large occupier of land in Oxfordshire, who had taken considerable interest in the subject, addressed a letter to Mr. Howard, from which the following extracts are taken:—

"As a tenant farmer, occupying above 1,000 acres of arable land, I have many interests in common with agricultural labourers and tradespeople. Some years back I found the great want of a club founded on safe rules, but on working at it I found that owing to the old parish system of the Poor Law it was impossible for me (being so personally interested in keeping down the rates in my own parish) to join in working such a club, as the wage-receiving classes looked naturally on my efforts in the matter with great suspicion, thinking that I was working entirely to save my own pocket. Consequently I relinquished all interest in the club, with the exception of contributing annually to the funds. In my parish, for a population of about 800, there were two clubs, one established in 1809, the other in 1859 (the latter being a seven years' club). These were both public house clubs, but the old one was removed to the school house in 1863, when the rules were slightly revised. In 1866, the old club having got into a bad state, the committee asked me to assist them, and as the Union Chargeability Bill had been passed, and the parish system happily done away with I consented to try, and with the help of a neighbouring clergyman, who had had great experience in Berkshire with such clubs, and with the assistance of Mr. Finlayson, the Government actuary, and Mr. Tidd Pratt, and his office, I trust I have been able to start the club on a safe basis, and that it now only depends for its success on the good management of its members. The other club is still in a very fair state, but owing to some points in the rules being radically wrong, it will probably fail before many years, and I trust that there will then be only one club for this population of 800, which I believe to be quite sufficient to carry on one club, but perhaps not two, unless the payments were proportionally higher.

"I found the task I had undertaken a most difficult one, as I had both to learn my own work as well as to be able to view every point as the labouring man views it himself, and I must say that with a few exceptions (who were influenced by the old public house party) the members were very shrewd and fully capable of managing their own affairs (as we farmers invariably find), showing also great good sense, fairness, and good feeling, and I felt glad I had undertaken to assist them." . . . . "From the experience gained in revising the rules of this club, I find that club rules (like all other worldly matters) require revising according to the changes in the circumstances of the day, the rate of wages for instance; and that it is wiser to try to pull through, if possible, an old club than to start a fresh one.

"I believe the chief principles on which these societies ought to be founded are:—

"1st. They should not be held at public houses (other places of meeting can now generally be obtained).

"2nd. Clubs should be composed of about 150 members, say from one or more parishes (depending on the population of the district), so as to keep the management as local as possible, that members may be able to overlook one another.

"3rd. They should be entirely managed by the benefit members; the trustees and treasurer being men of substance, and only responsible for the cash placed in their hands.

"4th. There should be a revision of funds and a revision or division of surplus every five years (as this keeps up interest in the club), accompanied by power to raise an extra subscription if funds get too low.

"5th. The tables should include several classes, with different payments in quinquennial periods according to age of entry (worn out old age must practically be looked upon as sickness), few working men remain long quite past all labour, and the rules recommended by Mr. Tidd Pratt in his pamphlet of December 1865, as to the number of weeks of full pay, &c., prevent this charge ever becoming very high.

"6. The *Medical Fund* payment should be ample to cover the expense of making contracts with different medical men, as all members may not like to have the same, and women should be allowed to join this as well as the death fund.

"7. There should be a benevolent fund, to which all payments from honorary members should be carried (as the business funds of the club ought not to trust at all to such payments); to this fund also each member should pay yearly one day's sick pay, and the accumulation from other funds may be transferred to it at the end of every five years. This is a most important fund, as it meets the difficulty of the worn-out-by-old-age members and of cases of long sickness, and assists such without drawing too heavily on the sick fund.

"As to relief allowed by boards of guardians to members of benefit societies, I am sure the common sense of a board will, as a rule, always meet any special case with justice, but at the same time to prove how careful boards ought to be, I know a case (and such is not an uncommon one) where a member who was

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j.

paying into a class for 10*s.* 6*d.* a week for sickness, put himself down to an 8*s.* class, saying that the board would make up the difference. In the old parish poor relief days how many clubs have broken up and divided the funds when some old members became expensive, the reason given being that they saw no reason why they should save the parish rates.

"In the case mentioned in your paper of the single man who received 2*s.* 6*d.* a week from a board in Gloucestershire, he deserved only an order for the union house. If more of such cases of men not in clubs were ordered, when possible, *indoor relief* and not *outdoor*, many more of the labouring classes would join clubs; now the careless ones say I shall get (especially if having a family) as much from the board as I shall from a club, and save my payment. We must recollect we are treating with close calculators whom we have pauperized for years past, but I think in the course of a few years, when union rating has made the ratepayers look more carefully into the heavy payments, we shall see a great alteration in the number receiving outdoor relief, that curse of our labouring population, which is the chief cause that one in every 20 of the population of England is a pauper, and in a purely agricultural county as Wiltshire one in every 13. The average of, say, one in 16 of the purely agricultural districts assists much in pauperizing the whole population, as the able-bodied men go to the towns, leaving their parents in receipt of outdoor relief, and thus the spirit of pauperism never dies out. As a rule old people ought never to receive outdoor relief, as it pauperizes their children and grandchildren.

"My experience is, that the more the working man is left to take of himself the better for him and for all classes, and the better he likes it; he (as several members stated in the discussion) likes to be independent, and he has proved it by the carrying on for years these clubs, notwithstanding all the temptations to improvidence and pauperism which the Legislature and the other classes of society have placed before him. . . . . The difficulties in the way of starting large clubs are very great, and few really practical men can be found to give the time and trouble necessary. I know of two large clubs that are not now doing well. The honorary members and managers have died off, and there is no longer, though the funds are good, any life in the concern, as the members have not learnt to look to their own interests, having been taught to lean on others. . . . Another evil in starting new clubs is that all the members are of an age, and then all get old together, when no young ones will join them, this is the great evil of some seven-year clubs (which have the strong point of vitality for a certain number of years, say about 20), in which the balance left in the funds after a division is always the same, though the average age of the members may be much higher. I consider no club ever retains its vitality unless there is a system of *revision* and of *division*, if funds will allow of it, otherwise members are apt to try and get on the funds, and when on to try and keep on, so as to get all they can out, calculating the club will last their time; though Mr. Tidd Pratt's rule of December 1865 prevents this to a very great extent, it also makes other members keen as to getting members off the funds, as all parties will be looking to getting something out of the funds at the time of revision, and it is of no use a club accumulating large funds, as it makes all members careless.

"The having Post Office savings banks and Government annuities makes it unnecessary for the working man to meet anything but actual sickness through the machinery of such clubs. The agricultural labourer, as a rule, cannot pay for an annuity, but if he has a sickness club, and any savings in the Post Office, he is in a comfortable position, and if he has funds enough he might then buy an annuity. But the savings bank alone is of little use, as a few weeks' illness would soon eat away the savings of a considerable time. As to Government forming sickness societies, at present I do not see that such is possible, or indeed necessary. As to the tables, I should prefer adopting those that have been found to have stood the test of years in my own or a similar district. Actuaries in general are obliged to put their rates too high, and they really have few good guides for such clubs, as all the receipts hitherto have been so mixed up with subscriptions from honorary members, and the outgoings with extra payments. The actuaries frequently limit the tables to the age of 65. This is impracticable and unnecessary with an agricultural population."

89. The following Notes on Benefit Societies were also kindly given to the Assistant Commissioner by Captain Dashwood.

"Some clubs provide annuities for old age, but the labouring man, as a rule, cannot and will not pay for this, except under the 1*s.* 4*d.* system recommended in Mr. Tidd Pratt's rule of December 1865, and with the help of a benevolent fund, past labour being looked on as sickness, as in the Essex club rule, which says '*While incapacitated from labour by sickness, accident, old age, or otherwise.*' How can labourers be expected to pay in for annuities when their parents, if alive, are probably in receipt of from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* a week out-door relief, and doing as they like, working in their gardens and allotments, &c."

"The principle of the deposit class (on the savings bank plan) is very good indeed, but as all clubs have hitherto been on the insurance principle, this plan is so new to all parties that it is not worth adopting, as it also destroys the mutuality of the life system. The great advantage of the deposit system is that it is a great check on members trying to get as much sick pay out of the funds as possible, but this can be met otherwise to a great extent; if Government ever formed sick-pay societies, it could only be done on the deposit class, as each member is a check on himself, but I cannot think Government ever will or ought to interfere in such matters. The deposit system was adopted by the Abbot's Ann Club in Hampshire in 1831, and afterwards by the Wilts and Hants County Club, but, according to letters which I received in March last from the secretaries of the two last-mentioned clubs, it has received no support.

"In January 1868 I received a letter from Mr. Howard, enclosing one from Mr. Clutton about the Victoria Club, Reigate. Mr. Clutton in his letter stated that Mr. Tidd Pratt considered this club to be one of the best in England; at the same time he stated that the public house clubs were too powerful for them. I examined the rules and found them very faulty; half the management was in the hands of honorary members. The members were struck off at the age of 65. There were only 300 members; funds, however, very good, 5,000*l.*, the yearly subscriptions from honorary members being large.

"I believe as useful clubs as any in England are the Manchester Odd Fellows and the Foresters; both of these clubs are for life, and keep their tables and rules revised up to the experience of the day. The Manchester Odd Fellows recommends the system of revision every five years."

90. The following is the opinion of the *Bishop of Oxford* on the application of the principle of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour for educational purposes, as expressed to the Assistant Commissioner.

"I think that, if the Factory Act principle is to be applied to farm labour, a child should be allowed to work half time at 8, whole time at 9 (if it can produce a certificate that it can read and write well), and whole time at 10 under any circumstances. Such a modification of the principle of the Act would quicken the sense of parental responsibility, and tend less than merely fixing an age (such as 10 years) under which no child should work to make parents depend on State aid, and would cause less necessity for an educational rate, which I think would at once stop voluntary aid, and put an end to religious teaching in our schools. It would be a great pity to check the

active charity which is now doing so much good, and run the risk, by stopping religious teaching in the schools, of bringing such teaching to be considered by the parents as only a matter of concern to some parsons and women."

91. The following "Notes" on Popular Education were given to the Assistant Commissioner by the Rev. C. E. Ruck Keene, of Swyncombe, as explanatory of Mr. Keene's views upon a question in which he has taken a very active interest (the Assistant Commissioner holds himself responsible for any defect in the arrangement of the notes).

"The question of popular education seems to have attained, after many experiments and much theoretical discussion, spreading over many years, a point which promises to be followed by some effective action. The real difficulty of the subject, and the various opinions maintained in reference to it, have hitherto stood in the way of any simultaneous movement, though the important resolution of 1839, which had the sanction of the House of Commons, and which empowered the State to give its powerful aid to the movement, was so far of infinite use, inasmuch as the great establishments for training masters, which grew out of it, and the contributions which were afforded towards the building schools and the incomes of the officers belonging to them, cleared the way for the diffusion of education in a manner which private efforts could hardly have attained. The State measure was obviously experimental, and the necessity of altering its rules from time to time was no doubt contemplated, and in all probability has not yet ceased. And it is to be hoped that ere the Code has become quite perfect the State may be relieved, by general consent, from much of its heavy pecuniary charges and responsibilities, and its interference may be more satisfactorily supplied by the self-action of the different parts of the country, upon some well-defined system, and yet free from the Procrustean measure which cannot make adequate allowance for the varied circumstances of the different localities.

"The addresses which have been made to the constituencies generally, and more especially as pledges to the Parliament now elected, argue strongly in favour of a tendency towards some great measure of national progress in the direction here alluded to. We may reasonably suppose that there are good grounds on which the subject of education has been so frequently alluded to, either from the personal convictions of the candidates on this great subject, or from the anticipations that the question itself has the sympathy of the constituency. It appears that though there may be an infinite variety of thought (practicable or the reverse) which the subject may call forth, the principle and the more general character of such thought may be assumed to be as follows in their classification.

"The first is to continue the present system with such large modifications as may carry its operations deeper into the ranks of the uneducated, involving the questions of the denominational element, or of a more enlarged conscience clause.

"The next suggests the adoption of pure and simple secular education, aided, of necessity, by State assistance, and leaving the religious and moral training to the ministers of the various religious bodies.

"Another transfers all aid and consequent interference to the rates of each parish or district, coupling the new responsibility with restrictions upon the employment of children under certain ages, and requiring certificates of school attendance before employment may be given or accepted.

"There are, of course, strong reasons adduced by the promoters of these and other schemes in favour of each, and all deserving of attention; but there are questions of great difficulty equally applied to all, and there are peculiar difficulties involved in each, which would require much modification before they could be made acceptable.

"The first general difficulty which we have to meet and combat is the comparative indifference of parents in agricultural parishes upon the real end and objects of education, and the more than indifference of the employers of the labouring class, and the consequent limited extent of education to which those who even admit the abstract requirement would circumscribe it.

"In regard to the various schemes suggested, the first seems to have the advantage for the present, as we can hardly consider that the plan of a national education is sufficiently ripe to be able to run alone. The ideas on the main subject require more time for any welding together or compromise of such widely divergent views, and the aid and influence of Government is still wanting to keep the balance. The Government, for the time being, responsible as it is to Parliament, and having the command of the ability and experience of the country, is more likely to arrive at some safe conclusion; or if the plans of the moment are found upon trial to be defective, the remedy is more likely to be found and applied under its control, than where individual attempts are made, amidst the class of infinite divergence of opinion, backed by resolute prejudice. Whilst the State lends its aid, the control, more or less, of the working of any system must be allowed, which under any other circumstance would not be submitted to. Thus the opportunity of settling some general principle upon which education should be carried on would rest with the proper authority.

"The object, however, should always be kept in view, that as soon as possible the voluntary principle should be recognized, and reliance given to the unfettered energy of individuals, who may take the work in hand, subject to some general and well approved rules, but with power to adapt the education to the peculiarities of each locality.

"The secularization of education, backed by a State provision, though advocated by many intelligent persons, as much in despair of any adequate measure being adopted to meet the great want of the country as from any other cause, has met with favour in the cities and towns. But in rural districts this has found but little sympathy, and has rather added to the difficulties which surround the subject, by raising a feeling that the promoters attach but little importance to religious teaching. This feeling may pass away in time, and fresh adherents may be added to the secular system; but amongst the objections to be raised against it we must not forget the serious discouragements which the chief workers in education of the day, and more especially the clergy, would experience from its adoption, and in many cases the zealous co-operation hitherto given would fail. It has not been without a well-founded hope that a union with those whose divergence from us is not of a serious character in the process of education might be effected by an arrangement of the religious teaching on the week days, and by leaving Sunday open, if required, for domestic or other teaching, independently of the school, but this hope (so desirable to be realized) would fade away under the secular system.

"It may be observed also, that where the State grant is entirely relied upon there is a tendency, even now, to canvass for pupils, so as to get a larger share of public money. This would be greatly increased (with all its attendant evils, apart from the money question) when rivalry of sects, and the discouragement which those who have hitherto interested themselves as the advocates of combined religious and secular teaching had embittered the warfare.

"In the general management of the school supported by the Consolidated Fund, the trustees or committee men would find great difficulty in maintaining due discipline, where every person would claim a prescriptive right to participate in the public grant, and the authorities, in every exercise of the most legitimate discretion, if the result was distasteful to the parents, would be liable to some legal process.

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"In reference to the third scheme, which throws the charges upon the rates of the parish or district, and restricts the ages of those children who may be employed in work, and requires a certificate of school attendance, it would appear that if the objection to a State payment was supported on any valid ground, and security required that education had been enforced, coupled with it, the charge upon the local rates could not be expected to have other effect than that of raising a still greater difficulty in the way of a popular education with those who are as yet but faintly impressed with the necessity of such an undertaking. Any claim upon the general resources of the country is more easily submitted to and liable to less question than a direct charge upon the parish rates.

"Under this scheme, as well as the former one, it is apprehended that the voluntary system, on which so great dependence is placed at present, would fail to be supported; and in both cases, more especially in the latter, the scope of education would inevitably be reduced beyond even the present level, and beyond the limits which the Legislature would consider sufficient.

"The emoluments of the labourers in the rural districts do not appear generally to be adequate, or at all events sufficient, to admit of any practical abstraction from the wages of a family by withdrawing some of its members who now contribute to the general stock, whilst the diligence and practical results of a compulsory education, coupled with legal restriction from work, would bear but a scant reference and palliative to the ill feeling gendered by an apparently arbitrary enforcement of a measure which would abridge the comforts of a family without enlisting a full sympathy in the object of it.

"In all cases of popular education I am of opinion that there should be a mixture of manual employment with the mental training. It relieves the irksome sameness of elementary education through the day, and in so doing allows the mind during the shorter period of tension to be more capable of digesting its lessons, whilst the bodily exercise and the incipient fitness for the employment and trade to which the child may afterwards be called, will always be found most advantageous to its future career.

"In towns, where the wages of the parents may be more adequate for devoting a part to the training of their children, and where the great advantage of education may be more readily admitted, the compulsory system of the Factory Acts would probably meet with little general resistance or even disapproval. But in the majority of rural districts it could hardly be expected that such favourable circumstances could be met with to encourage any compulsory scheme of education, unless tempered by some plan of relief from the effects of loss of the child's earnings when at school. Whatever training may be deemed practicable beyond the early days of infancy, the same mixed employment, calling for the workman's aid as well as the schoolmaster's, seems at least, upon the same principle as that recommended for the urban population, to be required, and perhaps in a greater degree from their more laborious natural employments.

"If compulsory education is to be enforced upon them, the manual labour which may be made a part of the school business should be of a remunerative character, so that the child or its parents may participate in its results.

"There are not wanting examples to show that, under some favourable circumstances, the combination of work and mental learning may be adopted with advantage, and that children may be enabled, as a sort of apprentices, to fit themselves for their future work as comparatively skilled labourers when they leave school.

"There are of course great difficulties at present attending any scheme of this kind, and, if adopted at all, the sympathy of the farmers and others must be gained rather than turned in an opposite direction by any hasty legislation. Our condition, and the peculiar opinions which prevail, and which vary much in town and country, are circumstances not favourable for the general adoption of any compulsory system.

"The argument founded on the presumed analogy between our people and that of other countries who have long since adopted the compulsory measure, seems to fail from the real difference rather than the similarity of our relative positions and character.

"The wants of the people of a higher scale of intelligence are not denied by any thoughtful men, but the right way to remove the blot upon our national character is not yet so clear as to justify our adopting a step which may retard rather than advance the solution of the great problem of national education, and I cannot but think that it is safer to advance by some periodical improvement as our experience advances, than to take some insufficiently considered step which may retard the much desired object."

92. EXTRACT from a Letter from the Rev. L. A. Sharpe, of Tackley, to George Culley, Esq.

"The education question calls for immediate attention. Compulsory education, instigated by rewards, and only by implication by punishment, seems imperatively required.

"No child should be permitted to go to daily labour till it can read and write, that could be accomplished by eight years of age. A certain number of cubic feet of air ought to be required according to the occupants of a cottage, and a fine imposed for overcrowding.

"How to reconcile good cottage accommodation with low rents and small wages is a problem; the price of cottage building cannot be reduced without inferior accommodation."

The following letter was addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by Sir Henry W. Dashwood, Bart., late Chairman of the Woodstock Union, in answer to a letter in which the Assistant Commissioner had proposed certain questions touching the condition of agricultural labourers to Sir Henry as a landowner who has taken a more than usual interest in the condition of the labourers on his estate and in the working of the poor law. "

93. "Kirtlington Park, Oxford,

"DEAR SIR, January 7, 1869.

"I WILL endeavour to answer as concisely as possible the questions you have sent me."

93a. Question 1. *Do you admit that the condition of the agricultural labouring class is unsatisfactory; and if so, to what do you attribute the unsatisfactory state?*

"I know that on January 1st, 1868, in this (Bicester) union one person out of every 18 was receiving relief from the rates, and that in one union of this county one person out of 11 was thus relieved.

"I cannot say that the present state of the agricultural labouring class is satisfactory. The pauperized state of this class originated, I believe, from the old law of settlement, and the lax system of administering relief, which encouraged persons to trust to the parishes for relief instead of relying upon their own exertions, thus reducing the provident to the level of the improvident, and encouraging the improvident to continue their thriftless ways. I question whether the liberal system of out-door relief to old people advocated by many, is not entailing the evil upon future generations. It is becoming the means of granting pensions indiscriminately to *worthy* and *unworthy*, and places the worthy man, who has by good conduct earned assistance from his children or other sources of private charity, on a level with the *unworthy*, who has forfeited all such claims, and it will discourage the labourer from making any provision whatever for old age."

93b. Question 2. *How would you improve the condition of the agricultural labouring class? Do you think it can be improved by legislation?*

"Whatever improves the agriculture of a district must also improve the state of the people living in the district. Improved agriculture implies improved cultivation, expensive and often complicated machinery and implements, superior horses, valuable stock, &c.; all these require responsible and intelligent labourers, who can only be retained by fair wages and cottages within easy distance of their work. To no class of labourer is health more essential than to the agricultural; it is impossible that he should be equal to his work unless he is well paid and properly lodged, but his condition will not be lastingly improved, no matter how wages may rise, until he becomes more provident and self-reliant. Will this take place unless the poor law is more strictly carried out and out-door relief brought down to a minimum? That the agricultural labourer can and will help himself is proved by the number of benefit societies which have been established and exist in spite of too easy administration of the poor law. Moreover we find that as a rule the most skilled labourers, such as thatchers, drainers, stonemasons, &c., come from open parishes where they have had to rely upon their own exertions.

"The late modification of the law of settlement and the Union Assessment Act having made the labour market practically free, the only legislative alteration which I consider might now be beneficial to the agricultural classes is that all rates should be paid half by the owner of property and half by the occupier (as is the case with regard to the poor rate in Ireland), and this is, I believe, the key to the proper administration of the rates, as it would be the means of inducing the owner, who is permanently interested in the welfare of his property, to co-operate equally with the occupier and his more temporary interests. Under the present system the payment of rates falls directly on the occupier, indirectly on the owner, the onus and responsibility of administration almost entirely on the occupier, who thus is obliged to bear more than his share of the burthen, and the owner is but too apt to shirk the performance of one of the most important and perhaps the most disagreeable of his duties as a magistrate, viz., that of acting as a poor law guardian."

93c. Question 3.—*What can you suggest as to primary education?*

"1st. That good primary schools for children up to 12 years of age should be established throughout the kingdom, the expenses to be met by rate (as before suggested, half from owner and half by occupier). 2nd. By payments from the children. 3rd. By assistance from Government. If the school passed the requirements of the Government inspector, who should examine at least twice a year, a grant should be made from the Consolidated Fund of one-third of the expenses. Existing endowments might go toward assisting the education of the older pupils, night schools, &c. The area for each school and general management of extra endowments might be controlled by a district board, perhaps the board of guardians might undertake these duties. As Government would contribute to the maintenance of the schools, they would of course also have a voice through their inspectors.

"The present state of voluntary education is not satisfactory; the maintenance of a school (if there is one) falls upon the clergyman or principal resident, not necessarily on the proprietor, and if none of these persons choose to undertake the responsibility of maintaining a school, the labouring population must remain untaught. When clergyman and proprietor undertake the entire management of a school, it is seldom they are able to enlist any assistance in the management and supervision, even from the parents. Under a rating system it may be presumed that all classes being interested, they will watch over the management, and endeavour to obtain good results for their money. The more persons who can be interested in the supervision the better, as then errors of management or misconduct of the teachers could not long continue without being discovered.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient servant,
HENRY W. DASHWOOD."

To G. Culley, Esq.,
&c. &c.

94. EXTRACT from Letter from Lord Camoys, Chairman of the Henley Union.

"As far as I know the labouring class are not so badly off in the Henley Union as they are in other parts of the country; we have scarcely any able-bodied men in the house at the present moment. Wages are moderate, and I believe satisfactory, and at the same time wheat has sunk in price; the farmers also can give and do give ample employment.

"Children in general are sent to school, but of course there is a disposition to take them from school when the interests of the employers seems to require it.

"Cottage accommodation is good in my neighbourhood, but there are over the face of the union cottages much too inferior for the comfort, health, and morality of the inmates. Cottages are everywhere too few, hence crowding and long distance from work. The rents of some of these poor cottages are too high, but the scarcity of them has a tendency to keep up their rents."

95. EVIDENCE given by C. E. Thornhill, Esq., J.P., Chairman of the Woodstock Union, and Vice-chairman of Quarter Sessions.

95a. *Cottages.*—"The cottage accommodation in this union varies very much; in some parishes it is far above the average, in others it is very indifferent, but on the whole it improves; bad cases of overcrowding are not common, so far as I am able to ascertain from the relieving officers of the union; the amount and quality of accommodation is always an important matter of consideration when a question arises whether relief shall be given in or out of the workhouse."

95b. *Allotments.*—"There are some good allotment fields in the parishes round Woodstock on the Blenheim estate, and many of the tenant farmers allow the men regularly employed such pieces of ground to grow potatoes, &c., but in my opinion a systematic provision of good sized allotments would tend very greatly to the amelioration of the labourer's condition, and it has often occurred to me that it might work well if the Legislature would give to each board of guardians power to purchase land for this purpose, conferring on them the power of purchasing (otherwise than by compulsion) contained in the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act. If every family had a good allotment, the boys of the family would have profitable occupation, fitting them for their future life, compatible with their attendance at school. I don't know whether the public provision of allotments (of course at a proper rent) is bad political economy, but I have a great opinion of its practical value; the difficulty in handling it would be that farmers, at least the more ignorant sort, dislike the system as giving the men feelings of independence, and such a tendency on their part would make them as guardians lukewarm in carrying out the permissive provisions of an Act of Parliament if such an Act should ever be passed; still I think that it would work, and I don't think that the landowners would, as a rule, be adverse to selling land for this purpose."

95c. *Yearly Hiring.*—"I believe the Oxfordshire custom as to payment of labourers during sickness is as follows:—A purely agricultural labourer hired for a year would almost always be hired at *weekly* wages, and if he should fall sick, he would lose his wages during his absence from work. But a domestic labourer, if I may so call him, hired at *yearly* wages, and being in the house, would, if sick, be sent home

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during his sickness, receiving his wages, but losing his keep.

"The law applicable to the construction of such contracts would, I apprehend, be governed very much by the custom of the country as to matters of detail not clearly expressed in the contract itself."

96. The following opinion as to the treatment of resident and vagrant paupers was given by Mr. Thornhill at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club on the 1st February 1869, when an interesting discussion took place on pauperism and vagrancy.

Pauperism and Vagrancy.—Mr. Thornhill (Chairman of the Woodstock Board of Guardians) said,—"Vagrancy was attributable partly no doubt to indiscriminate charity, but partly also to the vagrant tastes of a large portion of the human race; and if they wanted to check it, they must not merely try to induce the charitable to button up their breeches pocket, but also endeavour to make the trade of the vagrant disagreeable to those who followed it. Perhaps there was no better way of arresting indiscriminate charity than to convince the public that there was a universal system throughout the country under which every man who was really destitute could obtain relief. That brought him to the present state of the law of settlement and removability. The system had, as they all knew, been gradually undergoing a change for some years past, and now no man was removable if he had lived in the union for a year. Supposing the law of settlement and removability to be abolished altogether, there would be two distinct classes of paupers to be dealt with. They might deal with the resident paupers as they did now; but the class of vagrants must clearly be dealt with in a different manner. The one class might be called the resident, the other the non-resident paupers. Dealing with the resident paupers as they did now, how were they to deal with the vagrant? His opinion was that, instead of giving him a night's lodging, they should receive him for not less than fourteen days, during which he should be kept steadily at work every day under regular taskmasters, and live separately from the other paupers. If at the end of the fourteen days he had earned enough to provide himself with clothes, or the means of travelling by railway, and wished to leave, the money might be so applied for such purposes; but if, on the other hand, he said at the expiration of the fortnight that he had nowhere to go, and wished to remain, he might be allowed to stay on the same conditions as before, for a further period, and his case should afterwards be brought before the board. That was treatment which would not be injurious to the man who really desired to earn an honest living. If such a man, after his probation, wished to try his chance in another part of the country, the board of guardians might give him what was called under Mr. Baker's system a ticket-of-way, and he would then have a night's lodging at any workhouse to which he came on the specified route, as he would now. If a man who had been relieved for fourteen days in the manner he had suggested should be found within six or eight months acting as a vagrant, let him be sent to prison, any act of begging being treated as vagrancy. Thus they might convince the public that there was one universal system of relief throughout the country, under which no one could starve, while at the same time relief would be administered in a form which would be unpalatable to the true vagrant."

Yearly Hiring.

97. Copy of Letter from R. B. B. Hawkins, Clerk to the Justices of the South Wootton Division.

Woodstock,
Dear Sir, December 21, 1868.

In the Woodstock Union farm servants hired by the year at weekly wages are not unfrequently taken before the magistrates for breach of contract in leaving service. But the question of maintenance has not arisen.

Believe me,
Geo. Culley, Esq., &c. &c. Yours very truly,
R. B. B. Hawkins.

South Wootton Division, Oxon.

98. Return of Summary Convictions for the Year ended 30th September 1868.

Vagrancy Act.	Game, Trespass, &c.	Larceny.	Master and Servant Act.	Bastardy.	Wilful Damage.	Drunkenness, &c.	Assault.
38	10	5	3	4	6	5	5

99. Letter from Capt. C. Mostyn Owen, Chief Constable of Oxfordshire.

Chief Constable's Office, Oxford,
My dear Sir, January 13, 1869.

In reply to yours, there are many statute or hiring fairs in this county, and I cannot see any objection to them. Farm servants must have their recreations as well as their betters, and those who attend such fairs are generally well conducted and as sober as persons of the country working class are when they can get beer. Girls will get sweethearts and occasionally have bastard children in spite of all Acts of Parliament.

Yours truly,
C. Mostyn Owen.

100. Evidence given by the Inspector of Police at Witney.

"There are some very poor and highly rented cottages in Witney; a very poor cottage will let at 1*s.* 9*d.* a week, the cottages in the country round are better and cheaper. I was stationed for seven years at Henley, where more women are employed in the fields than here. Women about here also do gloving and slopping. There are several men out of work at Filkins and Aston; they are a class of men who go away to work in summer and come back to their parishes in winter. There are no men out of work at Minster Lovell, they have bits of land, three or four acres each. The Local Board of Witney appoint the same man inspector of roads, nuisances, and lodging-houses, and the lodging-houses do not conform to the Act of Parliament. In Witney we have an average of 13 tramps daily, and they seem daily to be on the increase."

Pauperism.

101. Statement of the Proportion of In-door and Out-door Paupers and Population in the Unions of Oxfordshire, giving the Population and Acreage of the Unions and Number of Acres per Head of Population.

Union.	Population.	Acreage.	Acres per Head of Population.	Proportion of Paupers to Population.
Henley	18,200	61,662	3·38	1 in 11
Thame	15,305	54,997	3·59	1 in 15
Headington	17,107	24,637	1·44	1 in 17
Oxford	19,960	2,930	·14	1 in 20
Bicester	15,555	64,127	4·12	1 in 18
Woodstock	14,236	47,913	3·36	1 in 15
Witney	23,227	70,169	3·02	1 in 14
Chipping Norton	17,296	76,418	4·41	1 in 15
Banbury	30,171	75,324	2·49	1 in 13
County of Oxford	171,233	479,267	2·80	1 in 15
England	20,066,224	37,324,883	1·86	1 in 19

102. NUMBER of PAUPERS relieved on the 1st of January 1868.

	Proportion to whole Population.	Increase since January 1st, 1867.
England - -	1 in 19	8·0 per cent.
Oxfordshire - -	1 in 15	5·1 „
Berks - - -	1 in 16½	1·6 „
Bucks - - -	1 in 14	4·4 „
Beds - - -	1 in 14½	14·4 „

WOODSTOCK UNION.

103. Pop., 14,236. Acreage, 47,913.

Expenditure for Half-year ending Lady Day 1868.

	£	s.	d.
In maintenance - -	938	1	0
Out relief - - -	4,037	12	0
	£4,975	13	0

About 7*s.* per head of the population.

104. No non-resident relief is given.

The board have a byelaw to the effect that they will not relieve the paupers of another union nor repay the cost of relief to paupers settled in this union, but resident elsewhere. There is no special rule that if children are not sent to school relief to their parents is withheld. (Evidence of Mr. W. M. Duke, clerk to Mr. Hawkins, clerk of the Woodstock Union.)—G. C.

105. The following table shows the effect on rates in three close and two open parishes in Woodstock Union by the change from parish to union chargeability, by giving the charges for relief of the poor levied on these parishes for the two years before and after union rating was introduced (as given by Mr. W. Wing).

	Open Parishes.		Close Parishes.		
	Steeple Aston.	Stonesfield.	Rousham.	Glympton.	Over Worton.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
For two years before union rating - -	431 3 7	419 18 3	164 10 7	118 10 4	55 0 9
Ditto after ditto - -	473 7 8	191 2 7	266 11 9	233 4 6	163 10 9
Difference since union rating was introduced - - increase	42 4 1	—	102 1 2	114 14 2	108 9 4
Difference since union rating was introduced - - decrease	—	228 15 8	—	—	—

The effect of the change is therefore—

To *decrease* the rates in the two *open* parishes taken together from 851*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.* to 664*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*, *i.e.*, by about 20 per cent., and to *increase* the rates in the three *close* parishes taken together from 338*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.* to 663*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*, an increase of nearly 100 per cent.

Between the years 1864 and 1866 the rateable value of the two open parishes had increased from 4,305*l.* to 4,493*l.*, whereas that of the close parishes had decreased from 4,563*l.* to 4,534*l.* The rateable value of the groups compared may be taken as equal.

106. LETTER addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by the Rev. HENRY TUFNELL YOUNG.

Mallards Court, Stokenchurch,
Oxon, 16th March 1869.

Night-schools.

MY DEAR SIR,

ON the subject of education I would say I do not advocate the cause of "night schools," so strongly as some do, because I think they are apt to lead parents to neglect to send their children to school at what appears to be the most proper time, namely, when they are too young to work. They look forward to their son getting some education at the night school when he is earning wages, and can pay for himself, and consequently to save themselves expense they neglect to send him to school, and so the boy gets no education as a boy at the day school; and he may or may not get any education at the night school as he grows up. The matter will then rest entirely with himself, and I think it will be found that where one avails himself of the opportunities offered by the night school, many more do not. I think that the "Labour "Regulation Act," cap. 146 of 1867, might be applied with some modifications to the case of children and young persons employed in agriculture.

Cottages.

Next I would remark that the cottage accommodation for the labouring poor is generally speaking so bad that it cannot be sufficiently condemned. Horses and cattle are often provided with a more substantial dwelling than the labouring poor. I am well aware of the stereotyped answer made to every remark about cottages, viz. that it does not pay to build them. Nor does it pay to build farm buildings, but a landlord could not let his farm without them, they being so to speak the fixtures and furniture of the farm, he is obliged to build them, and I think there ought to be cottage accommodation on every farm sufficient for the labourers employed on it, just as there is sufficient stable room, &c. for the requisite number of horses and cattle, &c. I do not think the moral and physical condition of the labourer can be raised and improved until proper dwellings are provided for him. The over-crowded state of many of the present cottages is injurious to health and the constitution, and the intermixture of sex which it causes prevents the nurture of the proper feelings of decency, and where these are wanting chastity will be wanting too. I am satisfied from observations which I have made during a period of 35 years passed in the ministry of the church, that before our teaching and preaching can have the effect we look for we must house the labourer in a better manner.

Public-houses.

Another great source of evil to the labouring classes is the great number of public houses and beer shops. They are the hotbeds of crime, destitution, and poverty. The union and the police courts can bear stronger testimony to this than anything I can say. If it be said that the revenue would suffer if licensed houses were not numerous, my answer is (and I am no teetotaller or any thing of the kind), that the country had better give up all the revenue arising from licensed houses and the sale of spirits, &c., than have to pay as it now does for punishing the crime, and supporting the misery and destitution which they produce.

Oxfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

C.
j.

Illegitimate children.

There is one more point to which I would briefly refer, affecting the law as it now stands with regard to *illegitimate children*. The present law compels the father of an illegitimate child (when affiliated) to pay a certain sum weekly for its maintenance, but relieves him from this liability in the event of the mother of the child marrying, and transfers the responsibility from the real father to the woman's husband. This I think ought to be altered, and that the real father of the child should be obliged to pay for the child after the mother's marriage the same as he did before it.

A woman, if she has other illegitimate children by another man, frequently will not marry because if she does the husband becomes charged with the maintenance of a child not his own, and the man is content to live with the woman in an unmarried state, as it relieves him from the charges of the first illegitimate child, and entails upon him only a limited liability, or indeed no liability at all as regards any children (unless affiliated), which he himself may have by the woman. A woman as a rule does not like to affiliate children by a second man, and so he can and does sometimes leave her without the children having been affiliated; or she may die herself without having affiliated them. In this parish a short time ago a a woman died leaving nine illegitimate children, not one of them affiliated; and we have at this present time a man living here with a woman by whom he has five illegitimate children, and not one of them affiliated, and if anything is said to him he threatens to be off (he is a Gloucestershire man) and leave the woman and children chargeable to the parish. At our petty sessions at High Wycombe a short time ago, we had to send a poor industrious man to prison because he could not keep *three* illegitimate children which his wife had had before marriage, she having run away and left him with the children to support as he best could.

In the endeavour then to mitigate the evils arising from the circumstances alluded to, I would suggest that the father of an illegitimate child should not be relieved from his liability by the marriage of the mother of the child, but that he should be compelled to keep up his payments for the support of the child after the mother's marriage, the same as previously to it. I would moreover suggest that every woman should be compelled by law to affiliate every illegitimate child she gives birth to. If something of this kind is not done, I fear the practice of men living with women without being married to them will increase, as the man, so long as the children are not affiliated, is free from all pecuniary liability and he can desert them and the mother whenever he pleases.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

G. Culley, Esq. HENRY TUFNELL YOUNG.

BERKSHIRE EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX A.

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULARS OF INQUIRY.

The following answers are collected from 85 circulars of inquiry (39 long and 46 short circulars) returned from 61 parishes in Berks, of which—

51	circulars were returned from	30	parishes in Wantage Union.	
10	"	9	"	Faringdon "
4	"	4	"	Abingdon "
2	"	2	"	Wallingford "
8	"	7	"	Bradfield "
4	"	4	"	Newbury "
1	"	1	"	Hungerford "
4	"	4	"	Wokingham "
1	"	1	"	Windsor "

36 circulars being returned by clergymen for their respective parishes, 12 by landowners of whom four are also occupiers of land, 34 by occupiers of land of whom 30 are also guardians of the poor for their respective parishes, and 3 by schoolmasters.*

I. As to the Employment in Private Gangs.

The Assistant Commissioner received no return of children, young persons, or women employed in private gangs.

II. As to the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women not in Gangs, either "Public" or "Private," but individually or in company with a few other persons.

Longer circular questions, 22 *a.* and *b.*
Shorter " 1, 2, and 3.

The following summary will give the substance of answers to these questions from 85 circulars returned from 61 parishes, the tabulated labour returns being compiled from 2 returns for entire parishes, and 49 returns (showing the age and sex of all persons employed *at different seasons of the year*) made by as many occupiers of land, whose occupations altogether extend to 25,672 acres situate in seven different unions.

Table A. shows the number, age, and sex, of persons employed during the spring, summer, and winter quarters on 49 farms covering 25,672 acres. This table gives also the proportion of arable and pasture land to which each return applies as well as the nature of the soil and course of cropping where these particulars were stated by the person making the return. It will be observed that the total number of extra hands employed during hay and corn harvest is only given in 10 cases, the other returns for the summer quarter give only the number of persons employed regularly throughout that quarter.

Table B. shows how employment varies throughout the four seasons of the year (with the exception of the different manner in which the summer return is treated). The return for autumn includes only the hands regularly employed throughout that season.

Table C. represents the gross return of children, young persons, and women employed in agricultural labour as given by circulars for parishes and farm returns (taking the spring staff in the latter case as representing the usual staff of a farm).

* Another circular, returned by the Rev. John Blissard for Hampstead Norris parish in Wantage Union, arrived too late to be put in evidence.

Table A.

Return giving Age, Number, and Sex, of Labourers employed on 49 Farms in Berkshire, showing the Variation of is that given

Union.	Parish.	Extent of Farm in acres.			Nature of Soil.	Course of Husbandry.	Spring.												
							Males.						Females.						
		Arable.	Pasture.	Total.			Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Single.	Total Females.
Wantage	Aldworth	340	10	350	Clay and flint on chalk.	4 course	—	—	2	5	12	19	—	—	—	1	6	—	7
„ (*b*)	Beedon	1,080	9	1,089	On chalk	4 course	—	—	3	15	39	57	—	—	—	4	14	3	21
„	Blewbury	400	241	641	—	—	—	—	—	5	15	20	—	—	—	—	7	2	9
„	Bright Waltham.	680	20	700	Clay and flint on chalk.	4 course	—	—	3	6	21	30	occasionally.				6	1	7
„	Chaddleworth	200	200	400	Clay and flint on chalk.	—	—	—	—	3	6	9	—	—	—	1	2	1	4
„ (*b*)	Challow	102	38	140	—	—	—	2	1	1	9	13	—	2	—	2	4	—	8
„	„	70	100	170	Green sand and gault.	4 course	—	—	—	4	5	9	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
„	Childrey	380	150	530	Chalk, gravel, and clay.	3, 4, and 5 course.	—	—	3	5	11	19	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	Compton	1,000	400	1,400	Chalk subsoil	—	—	—	4	16	39	59	—	—	—	3	1	2	6
„ (*a*)	Farnborough	1,540	90	1,630	Clay, gravel, and chalk.	(3 farms)	—	—	14	15	40	69	—	—	—	2	14	—	16
„	Fawley	900	38	938	On chalk	4 and 5 course	—	—	2	9	19	30	—	—	—	—	2	3	5
„ (*b*)	Hampstead Norris.	600	40	640	Clay, gravel, and chalk.	4 course	—	—	3	15	22	40	—	—	1	—	15	1	17
„	Hanney	160	90	250	Gravelly clay	—	—	—	3	3	7	13	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	„	150	60	210	Strong loam	—	—	—	—	4	10	14	—	—	—	2	4	—	6
„	Letcome Basset.	610	130	740	Light land on chalk.	5 course	—	—	2	8	14	24	—	—	—	2	4	—	6
„	Wantage	120	80	200	Black, heavy land.	—	—	1	2	2	8	13	—	—	—	2	4	—	6
„ (*b*)	„	750	250	1,000	Mixed	4 course	—	—	7	8	27	42	—	—	2	3	18	—	23
„	„	32	192	224	—	—	—	—	1	—	5	6	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
Faringdon	Ashbury	600	580	1,180	Chalk and clay	4 and 5 course	—	—	2	11	20	33	—	—	—	—	9	2	11
„	„	280	236	516	„	4 course	—	1	3	5	9	18	—	1	1	—	7	—	9
„	Bourton	124	333	457	Strong loam and clay.	„	—	1	1	2	9	13	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
„ (*b*)	Coleshill	270	500	770	Coral rag and Oxford clay.	4 course, varied	—	—	2	9	15	26	—	—	—	—	5	1	6
„	Coxwell	112	54	166	Light sand and clay.	4 course	—	1	1	—	6	8	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	Eaton Hastings.	53	200	253	Loam and clay	„	—	—	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	Longworth	415	85	500	Clay, stone, brash, and light sand.	„	—	—	5	5	15	25	—	—	—	—	8	—	8
„	Uffington	66	100	166	—	—	—	—	2	1	5	8	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	Woolstone	500	140	640	—	—	—	—	—	8	14	22	—	—	—	—	13	—	13
Wallingford	Long Wittenham.	441	16	457	Sandy loam	4 course	—	1	2	5	17	25	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„	Long Wittenham.	247	76	323	„	„	—	—	2	1	12	15	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
„	South Moreton	47	12	59	Gravel and nibble on clay.	3 course	—	—	—	1	4	5	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	„	420	105	525	Rich loam	4 course	—	—	2	8	29	39	—	—	—	—	13	—	13
„	„	260	65	325	—	—	—	—	—	6	8	14	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Bradfield	Ashamstead	350	7	357	—	4 course	—	—	3	4	14	21	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
„	Bradfield	370	40	410	Clay and gravel	„	—	—	2	3	17	22	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
„	Burghfield	313	193	506	Flint and gravel	„	—	—	3	9	13	25	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
„ (*b*)	Pangbourne	490	65	555	Gravel, chalk, and clay.	„	—	—	3	2	11	16	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„ (*b*)	Ufton	356	50	406	Gravelly loam	„	—	—	5	2	18	25	—	—	—	1	5	1	7
„	Whitchurch	550	24	574	—	3 and 4 courses	—	—	3	2	16	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Newbury	Chievely	790	49	839	—	—	—	2	7	5	20	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
„	Thatcham	305	34	339	Gravel and chalk.	4 course	—	1	—	5	8	14	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
„	Welford	700	60	760	Various, on chalk.	„	—	—	4	5	23	32	—	—	—	—	8	—	8
„	Winterbourne	440	40	480	Strong loam on chalk.	„	—	—	2	2	19	23	—	occasionally weeding					0
Wokingham	Bearwood	600	300	900	Sand, gravel, and clay.	4 and 5 course	—	—	2	5	33	40	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
„	Finchampstead	187	10	197	Sand, gravel, and clay.	4 course	—	—	—	3	11	14	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Windsor (*b*)	Royal Farm, N.	200	500	700	Loam and sand	„	—	—	—	4	20	24	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
„ (*b*)	„ F.	200	200	400	Stiff loam on clay.	5 course	—	—	—	1	19	20	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
„ (*b*)	„ S.	120	630	750	Clay on gravel	„	—	—	—	4	25	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	18,920	6,842	25,762	—	—	—	10	107	245	747	1,109	—	3	4	23	257	17	304

(*a*) This return includes 3 farms.
(*b*) The summer returns for these farms includes extra hands in corn and hay harvest.

TABLE A.

Labour in SPRING, SUMMER, and WINTER, (the description of the nature of soil, and course of husbandry by the occupier).

SUMMER.													WINTER.											
Males.						Females.							Males.						Females.						
Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Single.	Total Females.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Single.	Total Females.
—	—	2	5	12	19	—	—	—	1	9	—	10	—	—	2	5	12	19	—	—	—	1	3	—	4
—	—	9	18	45	72	besides children			9	36	11	56	—	—	3	15	39	57	—	—	—	2	7	3	12
—	—	—	5	15	20	—	—	—	—	7	2	9	—	—	—	5	15	20	occasionally.				7	2	9
—	—	3	6	21	30	—	—	—	—	6	1	7	—	—	3	6	21	30	occasionally.				6	1	7
—	—	—	3	8	11	—	—	—	1	2	1	4	—	—	—	3	6	9	—	—	—	1	2	—	3
—	2	1	2	13	18	—	4	—	2	11	—	17	—	2	1	1	9	13	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	—	4	5	9	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	—	4	5	9	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
—	—	3	5	13	21	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	2	4	10	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	4	16	39	59	—	—	—	3	10	2	15	—	—	4	16	39	59	—	—	—	3	1	2	6
—	—	14	15	40	69	—	—	—	2	14	—	16	—	—	14	15	40	69	—	—	—	2	14	—	16
—	—	2	9	19	30	—	—	—	—	10	3	13	—	—	2	9	19	30	—	—	—	—	2	3	5
—	2	5	15	28	50	Besides children.		1	—	20	4	25	—	—	2	15	22	39	—	—	1	—	8	1	10
—	—	3	3	7	13	—	—	—	—	9	—	9	—	—	3	3	7	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	—	4	10	14	—	—	—	2	4	—	6	—	—	—	4	9	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	2	8	16	26	—	—	—	2	8	—	10	—	—	2	8	14	24	—	—	—	2	4	—	6
—	2	2	2	9	15	—	—	—	2	5	—	7	—	—	2	2	8	12	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
—	2	7	10	40	59	—	—	2	5	20	—	27	—	—	7	8	25	40	—	—	1	2	6	—	9
—	—	1	—	5	6	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	1	—	5	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	2	11	20	33	—	—	—	—	9	2	11	—	—	2	11	20	33	—	—	—	—	5	2	7
—	1	3	5	11	20	—	1	1	—	9	—	11	—	1	3	5	9	18	—	—	1	—	7	—	8
—	3	4	4	9	20	—	—	—	—	7	—	7	—	1	1	2	9	13	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
—	—	3	10	49	62	—	—	—	3	5	2	10	—	—	3	8	16	27	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
—	1	2	1	8	12	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	1	1	—	6	8	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	1	3	8	12	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
—	—	5	5	20	30	—	—	—	—	10	2	12	—	—	5	5	15	25	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
—	—	2	1	6	9	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	2	1	5	8	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	—	8	14	22	—	—	—	—	13	—	13	—	—	—	8	14	22	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
—	1	2	5	17	25	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	1	2	5	17	25	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
—	—	2	1	12	15	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	2	1	12	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	—	1	4	5	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	1	4	5	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	2	8	29	39	—	—	—	—	18	—	18	—	—	2	8	29	39	—	—	—	—	8	—	8
—	—	—	7	13	20	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	8	14	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
—	—	3	4	14	21	—	—	—	—	5	—	5	—	—	3	4	14	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	2	3	19	24	—	—	—	—	5	—	5	—	—	2	3	17	22	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
—	—	3	9	13	25	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	—	3	9	13	25	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
—	—	3	2	18	23	—	—	—	—	12	—	12	—	—	3	2	11	16	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
—	—	5	4	30	39	—	—	—	1	7	2	10	—	—	3	2	15	20	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
—	—	3	2	17	22	—	—	—	1	4	—	5	—	—	2	3	13	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	2	7	5	20	34	Females in harvest.						0	—	2	7	5	20	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	1	—	5	9	15	—	—	—	—	7	1	8	—	1	—	5	8	14	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	4	5	23	32	—	—	—	—	8	—	8	—	—	4	5	23	32	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
—	—	2	2	19	23	Females in harvest.						0	—	—	2	2	19	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	2	5	33	40	—	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	1	2	28	31	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
—	—	—	3	11	14	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	—	—	2	8	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	—	—	6	27	33	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	4	23	27	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
—	—	—	2	25	27	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	—	1	19	20	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
—	—	—	15	80	95	—	—	—	12	25	—	37	—	—	—	4	20	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
—	17	120	272	923	1,332	—	5	4	46	379	33	467	—	9	102	240	728	1,079	—	—	3	13	149	15	180

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TABLE B.

The following TABLE shows the VARIATION in the LABOUR RETURNS for the different Seasons of the Year on 49 Farms (given in detail for the Spring, Summer, and Winter Quarters in Table A).. The Summer Returns includes the extra hands employed in Hay and Corn Harvest in 10 cases, the other Return include only the staff employed throughout each quarter of the year. These 43 Farms extend over 25,762 acres, of which 18,920 acres are arable and 6,842 acres are pasture.

	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring -	—	10	107	245	747	1,109	—	3	4	23	257	17	304
„ Summer	—	17	120	272	923	1,332	—	5	4	46	379	33	467
„ Autumn	—	13	109	244	752	1,118	—	1	4	17	263	21	306
„ Winter -	—	9	102	240	728	1,079	—	—	3	13	149	15	180

TABLE C.

Showing the TOTAL NUMBER of MALES *under* 18 *years*, and FEMALES *of all ages*, returned as employed in Farm Labour in Circulars returned by *Clergymen* for Parishes and Occupiers of Land (taking the Return of Persons employed in the Spring Quarter, as given by Occupiers' Labour Returns).

Unions.	Males.					Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Total Males under 18.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Wantage Union -	—	3	60	142	205	—	2	3	22	135	23	185
Faringdon „ -	—	3	17	44	64	—	1	1	0	65	3	70
Abingdon „ -	—	—	5	5	10	—	—	—	—	4	1	5
Wallingford „ -	—	1	6	21	28	—	—	—	—	26	—	26
Bradfield „ -	—	1	29	32	62	—	—	—	4	37	4	45
Newbury „ -	—	3	13	17	33	—	—	—	—	10	—	10
Wokingham „ -	—	—	2	8	10	—	—	—	—	10	—	10
Windsor „ -	—	—	—	9	9	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Total - -	—	11	132	278	421	—	3	4	26	289	31	353

Longer Circular, 22 (*c.*) In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year ?

Shorter Circular. 1. At what ages, and at what times of the year, are boys employed in agriculture on your property or farm, and in your parish generally ?

2. Are girls so employed ? and if so, how many, at what ages, and in what occupation ?

3. To what extent are women so employed ?

The following is an epitome of answers to these circular questions :—

Boys under 10 are only occasionally employed in "field-keeping," "pig-minding," "sheep-minding," "cattle-minding," and helping their parents in hay and corn harvest.

Boys above 10 are generally employed as carters or ploughboys, helping shepherds and cattle men; they are usually hired by the year from Old Michaelmas day (Oct. 11th) ; they are employed on the downs as carter boys younger than in the vale country and towards the west of the county younger than towards the east. (The Assistant Commissioner found many boys hired by the year in Wantage Union at 10 years of age, but only one under 10.)

Girls under 13 are very little employed in farm labour except in helping their parents at piece work in harvest. Some few are employed on the down farms in Wantage Union, minding pigs and cattle, and doing the same work as boys under 10.

Unmarried women are not much employed, most of them going out to service ; when employed they do the same work as married women, who are very generally employed in light farm labour.

In spring—

In stone-picking, weeding, collecting twitch (or quitch or squitch), bean setting, thrashing and winnowing corn, &c.

In summer—

In hoeing corn and roots, hay-making, harvesting, &c.

In autumn—

In picking couch, stone-picking, pulling and cleaning roots, thrashing and winnowing corn, cutting chaff, spreading dung, &c.

In winter—

In spreading dung, thrashing, winnowing, cutting chaff, and

The following are examples of answers to these questions :

WANTAGE UNION.

P. Wroughton, Esq., landowner, Chaddleworth, says, "Boys are employed at the age of 13, rarely "under this age, though occasionally I hear of cases "in which a boy of 12 is employed, especially in "harvest time. Boys of 13 are employed all the "year round. Girls are not employed in agriculture "in this parish under the age of 13. A few girls "a year or two older occasionally find employment in "stone picking, and in harvest time, but as a rule "their labour is not in any demand. Women are "employed to a great extent, and can find employ-"ment the greater part of the year. Last year "has been a bad year for them, as there has been so "little turnip hoeing for them to do."

Mr. W. Athawes, occupier, Hanney, says, "Boys "from 13 are employed throughout the year, and in

" almost every case they are hired by the year from " Michaelmas to Michaelmas. Girls are seldom em- " ployed, and, when so, at very light work. Women " are largely employed in fine weather; some women " in this neighbourhood are capable of much work, " having been accustomed to farm work from their " youth, and such women are very useful in a farm, " in picking couch, haymaking, hoeing and weeding " corn, and in some cases spreading dung."

Mr. Luke Lowsley, Hampstead Norris, occupier, says, " Boys from 12 years old are hired by the year " from Old Michaelmas day (October 11th). A few " girls are employed at light work with the women, " whose character will not command a situation in " domestic service. Women are employed generally " to do light work. In the field picking stones, " spreading manure, picking squitch, pulling roots, " weeding, &c., and at piece-work with their husbands " hoeing, reaping, and forking and raking corn. In " the barn assisting thrashing, winnowing, &c., and " mending sacks."

C. J. Eyston, Esq., J.P., landowner, East Hendred, says, " Boys are employed in agriculture as soon as " they are capable of work and can earn anything; " the average age for commencing work is about 10. " The elder or stronger boys work throughout the " year, being employed as carter boys, the younger " and weaker boys are employed in 'minding' pigs " and 'bird-keeping.' Girls are not much employed " in the fields, except during the hay and corn har- " vests, and in this kind of work they seldom do " much until they have reached 16. Women are " employed in 'squitching' (*i.e.*, picking couch grass " off the land), in haymaking, in reaping, in supply- " ing the sheaves for machine thrashing, in preparing " the straw for thatching, and in turnip hoeing. In " reaping they only assist their husbands or fathers, " the farmers paying the latter only at a price agreed " upon per acre."

Mr. Kingham Reeves, occupier and guardian, West Hendred, says, " Boys from 9 or 10 are engaged in " the parish from March till October to frighten the " birds, mind sheep and pigs, make hay, and assist in " the lighter work; there are about 20 ploughboys, " hired by the year. Girls from 12 to 18 are en- " gaged from March till October weeding, squitching, " haymaking, harvesting, &c. The labourers' wives " generally go out to work the greater part of the " year, weather permitting."

H. D. De Vitre, Esq., guardian, Charlton, says, " According to the children's own account from 7 " years old, though I believe the farmers say not " before 10 years of age, my informants are boys " attending the night school in this village."

Faringdon Union.

Mr. Heber Humphrey, occupier and guardian, Ashbury, " Boys are employed at nothing except bird " keeping, and then only in spring and summer, till " they are over 9 years of age, when they drive " horses and help shepherding. Girls are not generally " employed, except bird-keeping in spring or summer, " and a little in haymaking, and help their friends at " the piecework in the harvest. But nearly all get " out to service, and as a rule stay at school till they " get a place at service. I should say about one " woman is employed to every 100 acres, but they are " not expected in bad weather, and are not supposed " to make full time as men, so they never ask per- " mission to stay away for their washing or other " household duties, except in hay time or so."

Henry Tucker, Esq., Bourton, high-sheriff, says, " Boys are not generally employed in this parish " under 10 years of age as ploughboys, but are " frequently taken from school at 8 or 9 for 'bird- " 'keeping' in autumn, spring, and summer; those " who go out as ploughboys are employed throughout " the year. Girls are never employed in driving " plough, and seldom at bird-keeping, nor do they go " out to field-work until about 16 years of age, and " then only when accompanied by their mothers or " other married women, for haymaking, tying up " sheaves, wheat hoeing, or picking couch off the " land. Women are very generally employed in field- " work during the whole year; their work is wheat " and bean hoeing, spreading manure, haymaking, " reaping, and steam-thrashing."

Abingdon Union.

The Rev. F. G. Henley, Cumnor, says, " Boys are " very seldom employed regularly all the year until " they are over 10; they sometimes go to 'crow- " 'keeping' and sheep-keeping as young as 9, which " occupies them about half the year. Girls are not " employed at all, except at haymaking and in harvest. " But few women are willing to work in the field; " those that are willing are employed all the year, " weather permitting, except about two months in " winter."

Wallingford Union.

Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck, Long Wittenham, says, " The employment of boys begins at 9 years of age. " Girls are very seldom so employed. The employ- " ment of women is confined to the wives of the men " who work on the respective farms."

Mr. S. Hart, occupier, South Moreton,—" Boys " over 13 years are employed all the year in agricul- " ture. Girls are not employed. Women are " employed in summer and when the weather is " fine in autumn."

Bradfield Union.

Mr. Chas. Witherington, occupier and guardian, Bradfield,—" Boys are hired from Michaelmas to " Michaelmas, and employed all the year; lodging is " found, and a woman employed to cook and care for " them; the boys in this parish are mostly above 12 " years of age. Girls are very seldom employed in " this parish, except to assist their parents cutting " corn. Women are employed constantly for three- " quarters of the year; in the winter quarter very few " are wanted, and very few care to work."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, " The boys are " either with sheep or horses all the year through. " Women's work is not constant; they are, however, " employed in spring in spreading manure and weed- " ing; summer, in haymaking and corn harvest; " autumn, in pulling roots and acorning; winter, in " spreading manure and serving thrashing machines."

Newbury Union.

G. White, Esq., landowner, Thatcham, says, " Some few boys are employed under 12 years in " 'bird staring,' as it is called here, older boys are " employed as much in winter as in summer; there " is a scarcity of boys for farm work at the present " time. I never employ girls. I have only heard or " two farmers in this union who employ girls fre- " quently; still I am no authority as to what others " do, never having taken an *active* part in farming, of " in inquiring into farming matters. I employ women " in couching, dock drawing, winnowing corn, &c., " but lately there has been more difficulty in getting " them into the fields, as they all find employment in " the paper mill."

Mr. Richard Fisher, Winterbourne, occupier and guardian, says, " The boys employed to drive the " teams are seldom under 12 years of age. A few " younger boys may be employed in guarding fields " recently sown, and in keeping pigs in the stubbles " after harvest. On some farms a few single women " may be employed, but young girls are seldom " employed. Women are not much employed in " agriculture, except in haytime and harvest."

Hungerford Union.

G. C. Cherry, Esq., J.P., Chairman of Union, says for the union, " Boys are employed sometimes at " 9, and generally at 10 years of age; at these ages " they are not at work throughout the year, but " occasionally at harvesting, bird-keeping, pig-tending,

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" &c., and after about 13 years of age they are employed throughout the year, being most frequently hired by the year. Girls under the age of 13 or 14 years are rarely employed in agriculture; when older they are much employed, harvesting, cleaning roots, and weeding corn in the fields and helping in the barn-work." "Women are generally employed in farm labour."

WOKINGHAM UNION.

Capt. Walter, occupier, Wokingham, says: — "Boys are employed all the year round, but not at heavy work. Except in cases of bird-keeping, they rarely commence before ten years of age. For my own part I consider the employment of boys very expensive, and think that they should always be placed, if possible under a respectable task-master. I hope the late Act may enable me after a time to establish a gang-master, under proper regulations." (Capt. Walter does not employ ploughboys.—G. C.) "Girls are not employed in any farm or anywhere in the neighbourhood as far as I am aware. Women are occasionally employed in weeding, haymaking, and harvesting, never at heavy work, nor during bad weather."

Longer Circular (*d.*). "Do they live on or near the farms on which they work?"

Shorter Circular, 4. To what distances do the children, young persons, and women employed on great farms and your parish generally go to work?

29 witnesses say the persons employed live near their work.
3 " " " up to 1½ miles.
5 " " " up to 2 miles.

Others answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

Mr. John Brown, Childrey, says:—"The utmost distance is 3 miles."

C. J. Eyston, Esq., J.P., East Hendred, says:—"The extremity of the parish lies about 3 miles from the village; occasionally, but not often, they have to go that distance. Average distance from 1 mile to 1½ miles."

Rev. J. F. Collins, J.P., Chairman of Board of Guardians, East Lockinge, says: — "The distance varies very much as the farms are long and narrow."

BRADFIELD UNION.

Rev. A. L. White, Mortimer West End, says:—"As there is no village, the houses being scattered about all over the parish, the people have no real distance to go for their work."

HUNGERFORD UNION.

G. C. Cherry, Esq., J.P., landowner, Kintbury.—"Generally children and women live within easy distance of their work, but some are obliged to go to and from their work distances varying from 1½ to 3 miles each way."

WINDSOR UNION.

Mr. Tait, occupier for Her Majesty, says:—"On this farm (Shaw Farm) not more than a mile in the parish, I should say from 1 to 4 miles."

Longer Circular, 22 (*c.*) What are the usual hours of work upon the land?

(*d.*) "What are the times allowed for meals?"

Shorter Circular, 5. "What are their hours of work?"

10 hours for men
" for boys
8 hours for women
} Are the usual working hours in Berks.

Women, however, in summer and when working with men, as in thrashing, work the same hours as men. Their hours of work are described by:—

17 witnesses as from 8 to 5 in summer and 8 to 4 in winter.
5 " " 8 to 4 in summer and 8 to 4 in winter.
5 " " 8 to 5½ in summer and 8 to 4 in winter.
5 " " 8 to 6 in summer and 8 to 5 in winter.
5 " " 7 to 6 in summer and 8 to 5 in winter.

Other witnesses say 9 hours in summer and 7½ to 8 hours in winter.

Boys who are not carter boys work the same hours as ordinary day-men usually. In summer from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 2 hours allowed for meals. Or from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with 1 hour allowed for dinner. In winter as long as light will permit.

From the returns the Assistant Commissioner received it would appear that there is an inclination to increase men's hours to 10½ hours in some farms and to reduce them to 9½ on others; 10 hours, however may be taken to be the working hours of the county for men and boys who are not carters (in charge of horses), shepherds, cattle men, or their assistant boys. The carter, who has charge of horses, should be in his stable at 5 a.m. is allowed from 6 to 7 a.m. for breakfast, works with his horses till 3 p.m. with half an hour allowed at 12 o'clock if he chooses to take it. At 3 p.m. he dines, and at 4 goes back to his stable for at least 2 hours' work; the carter's assistant boy works with his master. Carters or ploughmen who are not in charge of horses except when at work, and ordinary ploughboys, work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a rest for luncheon, and, having rested from 3 to 4 p.m., go to any odd jobs till 6 p.m. Where "Scotch" hours are worked each ploughman has charge of a pair of horses and works with them from 6 till 12, and from 2 to 6 p.m., or from 6 till 11½ and from 1½ to 6.

Mr. W. R. H. Barker, surgeon and occupier, Wantage, says,—"Women 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., out of which they take one hour for dinner. Carter boys bait their horses from 4 to 6 a.m., then have an hour for breakfast, are in the field from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. then have an hour for dinner and are in the stables again till 6 p.m."

John Blandy Jenkins, Esq., J.P., Kingston Bagpuze, says,—"Women work from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., with an hour allowed for dinner. Boys, who are employed chiefly under the carters and shepherds, work from 5½ or 6 a.m. till 6 p.m. or as long as the carter or shepherd likes to keep them."

G. C. Cherry, Esq., J.P., landowner, and Chairman of the Hungerford Board of Guardians, and speaking for the union says,—"Children and young persons, male, keep the general working hours of the district, viz.:—10 hours in summer and as many hours under 10 in the winter as the light will permit; those employed in the stables have to be at their places very early in the morning. The working hours of young persons, female, and women, are 9 hours in summer, and as many under 9 in winter as light will allow; the working hours in harvest are more."

Longer Circular, 22 (*h.*) — "Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?"

24 witnesses say "No."

1 witness says, "In a few cases."

Others answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

The Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton, says, "Yes, by exposure to weather their minds are affected more than their bodies."

The Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset, says, "There is scarcely one young man in the village reaching the height of 5 feet 6 inches. I entertain no doubt that, poor living also being taken into account, the physical frame is weakened and the

" growth stunted by the early period in life at which " field labour is commenced."

The Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, East Lockinge, says, "The " carter boys and plough boys are often very short, " and seldom are fine men, buying their own food, " which they eat in a cottage assigned to them."

BRADFIELD UNION.

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "I do not think " it does when they are prudent."

Longer Circular, 22 (*i.*)—"Are the young or the " females, whether young or grown up, subject " to any ill-treatment?"

29 witnesses say, "No."

BRADFIELD UNION.

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "Not from " their employers, though occasionally a young boy " may be knocked about by a rough shepherd or " carter."

Longer Circular, 22 (*j.*)—"Do any special em- " ployments injuriously affect females or the " young generally?"

23 witnesses say, "No."

1 witness says, "Not physically, but much " morally."

1 witness says, "It unfits them for domestic " service."

Other witnesses answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

The Rev. Thomas A. Houblon, Peasemore, says, " No, we have only field work."

BRADFIELD UNION.

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "I am not " aware of any, though a woman is not a fit person " to serve a thrashing machine."

Longer Circular, 22 (*k.*)—"Have you any obser- " vations to make as to the effect of the employ- " ment of females in agriculture on morals and " on their proper training for domestic duties?"

15 witnesses answer, that it "unfits" them for their domestic duties, and of these 12 also add that the " effect on morals is bad."

Other witnesses answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington.—"Married women " acquire rough habits and neglect their domestic " duties, and young women become disinclined for " the restraint of house service, and are inclined to " marry too young."

Rev. G. Purdue, Challow.—"'*Field-talk*' is a " common expression in this neighbourhood when " women talk loosely. Six or seven women working " together will talk of matters male labourers would " not mention."

Rev. Jas. Macdougall, Hanney.—"Working in " the fields makes the women more healthy and " vigorous, but it is objectionable on account of the " effect on their morality."

Rev. T. Luck, R.C.P., East Hendred.—"The " moral effect is undoubtedly bad, and I would never " recommend a girl for domestic service who had " been so employed."

Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset.—"A respect- " able unmarried female will very rarely seek em- " ployment in the fields, except from the necessity of " maintaining herself when unable temporarily to get " into domestic service. Those who are constantly " thus engaged are invariably the worst educated, " the roughest in manners, and the least reputable in " character. When they have ever taken to the " work they seldom care to go out to service, partly " as knowing they can only obtain inferior situations, " and partly because they do not like to be under " any restraint and to lose the freedom they have " been accustomed to in out-door work. The general " testimony of the more respectable married women " is that, though compelled at times to work in the " fields themselves, they would on no account permit " their children to be so employed, as they consider " the conversation which too often goes on, the free " intercourse with the men which it necessitates, and " the roughness of the work itself to be most injurious " to morals and character."

Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe Regis.—"Girls em- " ployed in the field do not, as far as I have observed, " make nearly such good housewives as those who " have been domestic servants. I should think their " employment in agriculture less injurious to their " morals than in the factory."

Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, Lockinge, says, "It is the cer- " tain ruin of the female character; farmers and " farmer's wives admit this; labourers' wives begin " to feel it. They become bold, impudent, scandal- " mongers, hardened against religion, careless of " their homes and children, most untidy, given to " drink, coarse minded, debased, depravers of any " virtuous girl who works with them; they have no " pride in their home or their children, few home " feelings. The children are ragged and quite un- " taught, and a dirty home often drives the husband " to a public house."

Rev. W. Butler, Wantage.—"It seems to be all but " universally agreed that the employment of females " in agriculture is very detrimental to their morals. " I have closely questioned the elder women on this " subject."

FARINGDON UNION.

Mr. E. W. Moore, land-agent and guardian.—"I " believe nothing more injurious to young females " than field employment, especially when the sexes " are mixed. Under proper care during the summer " months I have not found it injurious, especially " when under a mother's eye, but for some time it is " difficult to get them to submit to rules for their " benefit; after a time they are greatly appreciated."

BRADFIELD UNION.

Rev. T. H. Bushnell, Beenham.—"Our girls more " frequently go astray in domestic service than in " agricultural employment."

Rev. T. Stevens, Bradfield.—"The morality of " women engaged in farm labour is quite equal to " that of women in domestic service."

Longer Circular, 22 (*l.*)—"Taking into considera- " tion the demand for labour in your parish and " neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of " the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to " recommend that any restriction should be " placed on the employment of females in field " work? If so, would you limit the restriction " to females of a defined age, or would you pro- " hibit female labour in the fields altogether, " excepting at hay and corn harvest?"

Shorter Circular, 7.—"Is it desirable to place any " restriction on the employment of females, and " especially of the young in agriculture?"

Two witnesses say, "Yes."

Four witnesses say, "Young women should not be " employed."

Six say, "Employment should be restricted to " harvest."

Two say, "Females should not be employed under " 15."

Two say, "Females should not be employed under " 13."

Thirty-five say, "No legislative restriction is de- " sirable."

Other witnesses answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington.—"I do not consider " that any legal restrictions could be applied, the " labour is wanted, though the effect on the labourers " here is too obvious to be overlooked. If any limit " can be effectually carried out it should be between " the ages of 15 and 21."

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Rev. J. Macdougall, Blewbury.—"All females "should go to service. Those employed in the fields "remain in ignorance; they learn nothing, they "know nothing; when they are married they are "poor managers in every respect; the children feel "the effects, the husband escapes to the public house, "and so it gets worse and worse. If females must "go to field labour, it should be confined to the hay "and corn harvest—*better not there.* Nothing really "gained if kept from domestic service, it is in this "they have to see and learn everything, nothing in "the field."

Rev. T. G. Onslow, Catmore.—"I think the em- "ployment of females is beneficial in this parish."

Rev. E. Thompson, Chaddleworth.—"I am not "prepared to recommend any restriction on their em- "ployment, as the number so employed is gradually "diminishing, and I think that, with better cottage "accommodation and the good training which the "children are getting in our national schools, they "will soon cease to be employed at all in field-work."

Rev. G. Purdue, Challow.—"I cannot see how "female labour is to be done without. At the low "rate of wages an agricultural labourer receives, his "wife's or daughter's earnings are a great help. I "would limit girls to 16 years of age, excepting at "hay and corn harvest."

Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred.—"As the whole "question depends upon the moral injury to girls, I "am of opinion that restrictions should be placed on "the employment of females in field-work. I would, "if possible, prohibit female labour in the fields alto- "gether."

Rev. P. Longmore, Hermitage.—"Considering the "very limited pecuniary resources, I am not prepared "to recommend this at present; but for this difficulty "I should think some restriction desirable."

Rev. W. Chambers, West Ilsley.—"Here comes the "difficulty. Farmers need, and often *insist on* the "help of women labourers, and the women want the "money, besides often liking the rough freedom. I "should hardly be prepared to recommend any direct "legal interference."

Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset.—"We have "not many unmarried females so employed, and their "services, I am confident, could be dispensed with "altogether. They are employed because they are "idle at home and apply for work; but a farmer will "allow that one man can do the work of two women "and the wages paid will be the same."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage, rural dean.—"I have "no reason to recommend it. All that can be done "is to give them more self-respect and appreciation "of modesty, which, I think, is possible without lay- "ing restrictions on field labour."

Faringdon Union.

Mr. Heber Humphrey, Ashbury.—"Young girls, "as a rule, would not be affected by any such restric- "tion, as undoubtedly the rising generation on taking "their places as women in the world would almost "every one laugh at the idea of field work, just as "nearly all those who have been out in comfortable "service do now."

H. Tucker, Esq., landowner, Bourton.—"As a "question of morality and general well being I think "it desirable females should not be employed in agri- "culture. Yet it is difficult to justify any restrictive "measures which would deprive them of the wages "so earned without securing to them some other "equally remunerative occupation."

Rev. W. Jephson, Hinton.—"I would altogether "prohibit young unmarried women from being em- "ployed in agriculture. The evils of such employ- "ment are notorious. I would also, if it were "possible, prohibit women being so employed at all. "In other countries this is done, and it might be done "here. When they are so employed their home "duties are neglected, and the men's wages are always "lower in consequence."

Wallingford Union.

Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck, Long Wittenham.—"I "think not; in this parish young females with rare "exception are anxious to become domestic servants. "A few find *slop* work from Mr. Hyde's extensive "establishment at Abingdon."

Bradfield Union.

Mr. Charles Witherington, occupier, Bradfield.—"To women I do not think so; to children decidedly "so. But in our district I have never known young "girls under 17 employed, excepting where a man "has a large care of sheep or stock at so much per "week; here he enlists the help of his whole family. "But these cases are very rare."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Upton.—"I am not prepared to "recommend a restriction by *law*, because I don't "think it would or could be carried out; but I should "be glad if public opinion among farmers discounte- "nanced the employment of girls under 18. If there "were no openings for them on the land, they would "naturally seek more suitable employment in service "or elsewhere."

Hungerford Union.

G. C. Cherry, Esq., Chairman of Board of Guardians, says for the union, "I do not think it "desirable. Domestic service for their daughters is "sought by most parents, but all cannot be so em- "ployed; and in this district for the rest idleness or "farm-work only remains. I do not think that young "females employed in agriculture are more apt to "become bad than those of the same class otherwise "employed."

Wokingham Union.

Captain Walter, occupier, Wokingham.—"Girls "under 14 years should never be employed. Over "this age they might be occasionally under proper "restrictions, and especially if one of the parents is "able to be with them."

Windsor Union.

Mr. H. Tait, Shaw Farm.—"I don't think that "young females should be employed in agriculture, "but certainly not under 16 years, and then the hours "of labour to be restricted to not more than 8 hours "in the day. I don't think that married women "should be employed in the winter months, and when "employed in summer the time should not exceed 10 "hours per day."

Long Circular, 22. (*m.*)—Taking into considera- tion the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour? If so, please to state the age below which you would recom- mend that boys should not be so employed.

Shorter Circular, 6.—Is it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and if so, at what age would you place the limit?

Of 42 witnesses who answer this question, either simply negatively or affirmatively, 17 say that no legislative restriction is desirable.

Of the 25 who say that such restriction is desirable,

1	would restrict	labour to	boys over 8	years of age.
2	"	"	9	"
11	"	"	10	"
3	"	"	11	"
6	"	"	12	"
2	"	"	13	"

17 other witnesses answer as follows:—

Wantage Union.

Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton.—"For the boys' sake "I would like to see a restriction, but, taking into "consideration the pecuniary circumstances of the

" parents, I could not advocate it. Boys should not " be so employed under 13 years of age."

Mr. Luke Lowsley, occupier, Hampstead Norris.—" No; as by so doing a great hardship would be created " for the parents. Men with large families would not " be employed, on account of the difficulty of their " supporting them in idleness. Boys are more healthy " and sturdy when brought up in the open air. Boys " are more industrious, and as young men more " fitting for their work when trained young. For " instance, boys brought up in workhouses are puny " eye-servants, often thieving and cheating, although " having a good education."

Rev. J. C. Willis, Letcombe Basset.—" Looking at " the question from an educational point of view I " do not consider that any mere restriction of age " would be sufficient. Careless and indifferent " parents would take no more pains than at present " to send their children to school, and there would " be no power to compel them. But such a restric- " tion might work very beneficially alongside of some " enactment prohibiting the employment of any boy " who could not produce a certificate of having " attended school for a certain period, or of having " attained a certain amount of proficiency. This " would act as an incentive to parents to keep them " regular in attendance, by giving them a direct " pecuniary interest in their children's education."

Mr. W. D. Wasbrough, owner and occupier, Wantage.—" The boys mostly employed go with the " plough teams, dragging over the land from 8 to 3. " I think there should be a restriction. I would " place the limit from 11 to 12, according to size and " strength."

Mr. B. Castle, occupier, Wantage.—" For perma- " nent employment I should say 10 years, and for " temporary employment 9 years.

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage.—" I am inclined to " think that no boy should be allowed to work till " after 10."

Faringdon Union.

Rev. W. Jephson, Hinton.—" I think it is most " desirable, if boys are allowed to go to work so " young as 11, there ought to be some half-time " scheme devised, for they soon forget all that they " have learned at school; and if such is the case in " this parish where they do not leave school till " eleven, of course in others where they leave " younger it is much worse. I think a law should " be passed not allowing a child to be employed till " he could read and write, and I would punish " persons who did so employ children."

Mr. E. W. Moore, land agent and occupier, Coles- hill.—" Not under 10 years, and after that age not " until they can read and write."

Abingdon Union.

J. Aldworth, Esq., owner and occupier.—" Begin " at 10 years to go with horses or oxen; at 8 years " for light work," &c.

J. Blandy Jenkins, Esq., landowner, Kingston Bagpuze.—" I think it would be desirable to limit " the age at which boys should work, as they fre- " quently get injured and ruptured; and should say " that 13 or 14 years was early enough."

Bradfield Union.

Mr. Charles Witherington, occupier, Bradfield.— " Eleven years; and they should be able to read and " write, although without night schools they will soon " forget what they have learnt."

Rev. A. L. White, Mortimer West End.—" I think " that it would be well to prohibit boys under the " age of 10 years to work for wages, unless they can " produce a certificate of their being able to read " and write, when all restriction should be taken off. " As the school here is under Government inspection, " H.M.'s inspector could easily grant such certificate " to boys under 10."

Newbury Union.

Mr. T. Tanner, occupier, Welford.—" I would " restrict all boys from going to work until they can " produce a certificate of having attended school " regularly for 3 years, under 13, excepting harvest. " If they can have that, let them work as early as 9. " And they would be better at work after 13 even " if they have no schooling."

Mr. R. Fisher, occupier, Winterbourne.—" I would " have them restricted from work until they have " been some time at school, but the general feeling " is against restriction of any kind."

Hungerford Union.

G. C. Cherry, General Chairman of Hungerford Union.—" I think it desirable to prevent boys from " working at an earlier age than 10 years. Such a " rule will in many cases cause great difficulties, *e.g.*, " where there are large families, it may be of five, six, " or more children under that age, it is not easy to " say how, at the present rate of wages, a man can " support such a family, no one of the children con- " tributing to the family purse. Nevertheless, I " think the rule desirable, with the view of securing " some education. Perhaps exceptions to it might " be permitted in cases of boys proved to have " reached a certain standard of education."

Wokingham Union.

Capt. Walter, occupier, Wokingham.—" As a rule " boys should not be allowed to work under 12 years " of age, with the following exceptions:—Bird-keep- " ing, weeding, and such other light employment, *and* " *never* in these occupations unless they are in the " habit of attending school."

Windsor Union.

Mr. H. Tait, Shaw Farm.—" I don't think that " boys should be employed before they are 14 years."

Longer Circular, 22 (*o.*)—" Do you see reason for " recommending that any restriction should be " placed upon the hours of work of children and " young persons employed in agriculture; and if " so, what amount of restriction would you pro- " pose ?"

14 witnesses say, " No."

Others answer as follows:—

Wantage Union.

The Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton, says, " Small boys " in this parish have to be in stables by 5 a.m., and " constantly much earlier, 4 a.m.,—too long a day for " little boys, as they do not give over work till " 6 p.m."

The Rev. G. Purdue, Challow, says, " I would " restrict the hours of work of children under 13 to " 10 hours a day."

The Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred, says, " If chil- " dren are not sent to work at too early an age I do " not see sufficient reason for restriction as to time."

The Rev. W. Chambers, East Ilsley, says, " Not as " far as concerns this parish, unless in connexion " with a system of *half-time* education, which I should " like to see introduced, if practicable, from 10 to 13, " or thereabouts."

The Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset, says, " I " do not think, from the nature of agricultural work, " that such restriction would be possible, as a general " rule. It would be liable to interfere too much with " the work of the *men*, as in ploughing, &c., &c.; it " would cause great inconvenience on the farm gene- " rally. If they are employed at all they must be " employed full time."

The Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe Regis, says, " I " think that if the age of beginning work be not " below 10 years there need be no restriction on the " present hours."

The Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, East Lockinge, says, " The " hours depend upon the ploughing. The boys " mostly 'drive plough,' and the interval between

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" breakfast, about 7, and dinner, between 3 and 4, is " too long. Their dinner, as I have seen, is very " bad, a hunch of bread and cheese, or a little bacon, " or some onions, beer, no table nor drinking vessels, " little comfort, that is, *for the lads in the carter's* " *cottage*, compared with the good warm potatoes of " those who live at home."

The Rev. J. Butler, Wantage, says, "I do not think " that restriction could advantageously be placed on " the hours of field labour. Darkness there for eight " months in the year necessarily brings work to a " close, unlike factories, where gas can be lighted."

Bradfield Union.

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton.—"I think the long " hours imposed upon *young* stable boys and shepherd " lads ought to be restricted; 10 hours a day (in- " cluding meals) is as much as ought to be required " from a boy under 16."

Long Circular, 23 to 26.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications, the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, " especially with a view to the better education " of such children," your opinion is invited on the following points :—

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

    By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).
    1. By half day at school and half day at work.
    2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

    By the Print Works Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).
    3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

The following are all the answers given to these questions in 36 longer circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner :

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington.—"The parents being " generally the parties who force the children to work " at too early an age, if no boys were allowed to be " hired who could not read and write, the parents " would be inclined to pay more attention to their " education."

Rev. T. J. Heard, Beedon.—"All three modes are " inpracticable in the case of boys employed in farm " labour. An evening school seems the only means."

Rev. G. Purdue, Challow.—"In the two parishes " with which I am connected I feel certain that no " half time school would work. A good night school " from November 1st to March 1st seems to me to be " the only remedy. The rent, expense of firing and " lighting should be paid by Board of Guardians and " a capitation grant according to attendance."

Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton.—"I would prefer the " third mode."

Rev. Edmund Price, Farnborough.—"I think it " could not be enforced, nor would it be desirable " when once they had gone to work. I would retain " them at school as long as possible, and would do then " what might be done with Sunday and evening " schools, but think that no interruption of their daily " work would be at all desirable."

Rev. C. C. Luxmore, Fawley.—"Their attendance " at night school three times a week in winter months " and Sunday school throughout the year, is as much " as one can expect."

Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred.—"My own impression " is that neither 1 nor 2 would work here; I think " 3 might, or I should prefer some educational test, " without which none should be employed under a " given age."

Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred.—"I do not think that " the Factory Act could in any way be made to work " well in agricultural districts; all that is necessary is " to restrict the age at which children should be " allowed to go to work."

Rev. John Tucker, West Hendred.—"I am of " opinion that the last of the three modes might " answer, if 12 months were substituted for 6."

Rev. P. A. Longmore, Hermitage.—"The plan of " being required to obtain a certificate from some " government officer of ability equal, say, to standard " 4 of Revised Code, though not without difficulty, " seems preferable to these proposals." (24.)

Rev. E. H. Hansell, East Isley, No. 2.—"Satur- " day being free from school may always be devoted " to work."

Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe Regis.—"I do not " believe that any of the modes above suggested " would suit agriculture, I have witnessed attempts " to combine school and agriculture, both failed. If " the boys can be kept to school till they are 10, " instead of going to work at 8 or 9, it will be " enough."

Rev. T. A. Houblon, Peasemore.—"I think the " second mode is far the best."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage.—"I think that if no " boys were permitted to work till after 10, and if " school attendance for a certain number of hours " every twelve weeks (so as to give greater oppor- " tunity to make up the time in the winter), between " the ages of 10 and 12 were enforced, practically all " would be done which legislation can effect."

Rev. T. H. Bushnell, Beenham.—"I do not recom- " mend the adoption of either of the three specified " modes to enforce attendance at school. There is " among the agricultural population, with very few " exceptions, a strong desire to have their children " educated, and a readiness to send them where there " is a good school."

Rev. T. Stephens, Bradfield.—"If children under " 10 years of age, were not allowed to work, unless it " were proved that they could read and write, it " would be enough."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton.—"The third mode seems " the only practicable one; and even to work that, " with agricultural boys, the *night* school must be " the machinery employed."

Mr. Higgs, schoolmaster, Bearwood.—"During my " experience of 21 years, and 18 years schoolmaster " (mixed) of agricultural parishes, I am certain the " best mode is to enforce strictly punctuality of atten- " dance, for no child can make proper progress in " learning who does not attend school regularly and " in good time, as it is most desirable that those " whose lives are to be passed in business or service " should be early accustomed to punctuality, obedience, " order, neatness, and industry."

Rev. Thos. Mozley, Finchampstead.—"I have no " opinion to offer on the three modes described, " having never tried them or seen them tried. I can " only recommend night schools from Michaelmas to " Lady Day; I have one now in a parish under my " charge, and I have lead them in other parishes for " many years attending them myself for years to- " gether; I have always found them well attended, " much appreciated, and very successful in the " results."

Longer Circular, 27.—How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

The following answers are collected from 36 longer circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner :—

13 witnesses for as many parishes say "Not at all."
5 " " " "Very little."
2 " " " "In outlying "hamlets."
4 " " " "By weather "and bad "roads."
2 " " " "In some mea- "sure."

Others answer as follows:—

WANTAGE UNION.

Rev. F. L. Currie, Brightwaltham.—"Not appreciable at all; some of the most regular attendants "are from a distance."

Rev. Jas. Macdougall, Hanney.—"Very small "children cannot attend our National School during "the winter months as it is situated out of the village, "but there is a good dame school in East Hanney."

BRADFIELD UNION.

Rev. T. Stevens, Bradfield.—"In bad weather the "attendance is very much affected, as some of the "children have from one to two miles to come; this "in the case of the younger ones is a great draw-"back."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton.—"Very slightly in fine "weather; but occasionally, in winter, a whole lot of "our children are cut off from their school, sometimes "for a week, by the floods."

Mr. Higgs, schoolmaster, Bearwood.—"This school "is open for adjoining parishes, if parents think "proper to avail themselves of the privilege. At "present there are pupils from Huys, Barkham, "Arborfield, and Swallowfield. The principal part "of the children walk long distances, three scholars "walk 9 miles daily (4½ each way)."

Rev. Thos. Mozley, Finchampstead.—"I should "say that average parents will send their children to "an average school as much as a mile and a half. "Parents above the average will send their children "to a school at all above the average as much as "2½ and even three miles."

Longer Circular, 28.—How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

The following answers are given in 86 longer circulars returned from as many parishes:—

16 witnesses say "Not at all."
5 " "Not much."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. T. G. Onslow, Catmore, says, "The school is "free."

Rev. Jas. Macdougall, Hanney.—"We make the "payments so low that there can be no excuse for "parents neglecting to send their children."

Rev. E. Hansell East Ilsley.—"When a child can "earn 1*d.* that is generally considered sufficient "excuse for non-attendance."

Rev. W. Chambers, West Ilsley.—"Very decidedly, "and directly by their need of the children's wages, "especially in the case of large families. The school "fees are a comparatively trifling hindrance."

Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe Regis.—"If parents "cannot afford or believe they cannot to pay for their "children they do not send them, but such are greatly "in the minority."

Rev. H. A.Dodd, Sparsholt.—"No payment exceeds "one penny a week from any child. The vicar "makes up a certain sum to the mistress."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage.—"Not materially; "the poorest will often pay more cheerfully than "mechanics with high earnings."

Mr. E. W. Moore, Coleshill.—"Very little; too "often the money is supplied in cases where parents "are well able to pay."

Rev. T. H. Bushnell, Beenham.—"Those who are "unable to pay the school fee are generally assisted "by private charity."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton.—"Not to any great extent. "The school fee is either paid for, or not exacted "from, necessitous families. Occasionally a child is "absent from 'want of shoes.'"

Mr. Higgs, Bearwood.—"Leave of absence is not "permitted only in extreme cases such as illness of "scholars or parents, and as a *rule* parents appreciate "the discipline of the school."

Shorter Circular, 8.—What means of education are provided in your parish for the children of the agricultural labouring class? Do they take advantage of them? If not, are there any other causes besides early labour to which you attribute their non-attendance?

The following answers are given in 49 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner, omitting the first part of the answer in the case of parishes from which school returns have been received, and which are given elsewhere.

WANTAGE UNION.

**P. Wroughton, Esq.*, landowner, Chaddleworth, says, "The school is always well attended, the "parents fully comprehending the advantage of edu-"cation for their children."

Mr. John Burson, occupier, Childrey, says, "There are 3 day schools; 1 for boys, 1 for girls, "and 1 mixed. Some parents are careless, and do "not send their children to school; but on the whole "the attendance is pretty good."

**Mr. Thos. G. Wells*, occupier, Farnborough, says, "As a rule children attend school pretty well, but "some of the parents are too indulgent to enforce "attendance."

**Mr. Stephen Brown*, occupier and guardian, Fawley, says, "Both day and evening school are "well attended."

Mr. Luke Towsley, occupier and guardian, Hampstead Norris.—"There are two schools supported by "subscription; the children generally take advant-"age of them, but there are a few dissenters' chil-"dren and a few neglected ones about in all mischief, "but not at work."

Mr. H. Betteridge, occupier and guardian, East Hanney.—"We have a very good school, with a "certificated master. The girls generally attend "until they go to service, when about 12 years of "age; and the boys the same."

Mr. W. Athawes, occupier and guardian, West Hanney.—"We have a school under Government "inspection. Generally, children attend well; of "course there are exceptions. Some parents say "they *can't* send their children to school; some "*won't* send their children regularly, even if the "weekly payment is given. A night school lately "started will, if well conducted, much benefit the "whole parish."

**C. J. Eyston, Esq.*, landowner, East Hendred, says:—"There are two schools under Government "inspection in the parish; one in connexion with "the Church of England, the other in connexion "with the Roman Catholic Church. The children "attend these schools very regularly with a few "exceptions."

**Mr. Kingham Reeves*, occupier and guardian, West Hendred.—"The children do not reap the full "advantage of the school because of the indifference "of parents."

**Mr. W. Palmer*, occupier and guardian, Letcombe Regis.—"The children attend fairly till they go to "work."

**Rev. J. F. Collins*, landowner, East Lockinge.—"A good day school, of which all take advantage, "and a night school in winter, which is well "attended."

**Mr. W. D. Wasbrough*, landowner and occupier, Wantage, says:—"There are very first-class schools "for boys, girls, and infants, where the greatest atten-

* See School Returns.

Berkshire.
Mr. Culley.
A.
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" tion is paid to their education under the superinten-
" dence of the vicar, master, mistress, and a staff of
" teachers. There are also good schools belonging to
" dissenters. Advantage is taken of them very
" generally with the young children, till they can
" earn any money, and then education ceases irrespec-
" tive of age."

FARINGDON UNION.

Mr. Heber Humphrey, occupier and guardian, Ashbury.—" A very good school, well managed and fairly
" attended. No system of boys working part daytime
" and attending school part of day could be practically
" successful; but night schools more attractive, more
" general, and, if not compulsive, made very strongly
" suggestive to parents, would be of great service."

H. Tucker, Esq., landowner (High Sheriff) Bourton.—" There are endowed schools in the village since
" 1842. The infant school under a mistress from the
" Home and Colonial Training School. Children
" are moved into this school at 3 years of age, and
" drafted into the juvenile school, under a master, at
" 6 to 7 years, where they are taught reading, writing,
" arithmetic, a little geography, &c.; and the girls
" are taught plain needlework. Each child pays one
" halfpenny a week. The majority remain till 10
" years of age, some till 11 and 12, and some are
" removed as early as 8 or 9, chiefly for the sake of
" their little earnings. The greater number of
" parents value the education of their children; a
" few, however, are either too careless or too ignorant
" to appreciate it, and do not care to send them.
" During the winter months a night school has been
" held for several years past, and has been well
" attended; the results have been very satisfactory."

Mr. John Dyke, occupier and guardian, Little Coxwell.—" There are day and night schools, both tolerably attended."

**Mr. W. T. Kinch*, occupier and guardian, Eaton Hastings.—" A private school well attended."

Rev. W. Jephson, Hinton.—" A very good school,
" with a master and mistress, and the children are all
" obliged to come; the boys to 11, and the girls to
" 13 years of age."

Mr. Albert Edmonds, occupier and guardian, Longworth.—" There are two schools, to which they are
" admitted by payment of one penny per week. Most
" of the children are sent to school."

Mr. Jas. Lawrence, occupier and guardian, Wiffington.—" There is a boys' and girls' school in the parish.
" Generally speaking the children attend with a few
" exceptions, which is mostly owing to the negligence
" of the parents."

Mr. W. J. Butler, occupier and guardian, Woolstone.—" There is a good school here for the younger
" children, and another (endowed) school for boys at
" Uffington, open to the boys of this parish, which
" are at most times well attended."

ABINGDON UNION.

Rev. F. G. Henley, Cumnor.—" There is a day
" school under Government; the rate of payment is
" 2*d.* where there is only one of a family, where more
" than one 1*d.* a week. Also an evening school. The
" day school is fairly attended. The evening school
" a failure, I think from the boys being tired after
" work, and not reaching home till past 6."

J. Aldworth, Esq., landowner, Frilford.—" A good
" school kept up by subscription, and very well
" attended."

John Blandy Jenkins, Esq., landowner, Kingston Bagpuze.—" There is a school at which five boys are
" taken gratis, and this takes nearly all the boys who
" are able to attend, as they never hardly remain after
" 10 years old, and seldom after 9 years; in fact, just
" when they begin to know how to learn, they leave
" the school."

Mr. J. Fairthorne, occupier and guardian, Longcott.—" Two schools; one for boys, and one for girls,
and night school, all very well attended."

WALLINGFORD UNION.

Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck, Long Wittenham.—" There
" is a daily mixed and infant school, to which chil-
" dren are admitted on the payment of 2*d.* per week.
" Some parents are careless as to their children's
" education; early labour is the only real hindrance."

Mr. S. Hart, occupier, South Moreton.—" The
" school is very well attended by the agricultural
" class."

BRADFIELD UNION.

**Mr. C. Witherington*, occupier and guardian, Bradfield.—" Parish school. I think that it is only
" the lazy and idle boys and girls who do not go to
" school. I have found amongst the majority of
" parents a great desire and wish that their children
" should go to school for a few years, and I believe
" this feeling increases."

W. G. Mount, Esq., J.P., Grazeley.—" There is a
" very good school in this parish, and on the whole the
" attendance is good."

Mr. A. F. M. Druce, occupier and guardian, Burghfield.—" A national day-school; attendance
" not so good as could be wished, their homes being
" so far distant."

Rev. A. L. White, Mortimer-west-End.—" Excel-
" lent school buildings have been provided by
" Mr. Benyon, the chief landowner; this school is
" under Government inspection, and is large enough
" to provide for all the educational wants of the place.
" In addition one of the farmers' wives has kept a
" private school for many years, to which the children
" of men in the employ of her husband or his brothers
" generally go. The parents do not take as much
" advantage of these means of education as they might;
" their own ignorance (in many cases) making them
" indifferent to their children's learning. Want of
" shoes keeps a few away from school for a time. I
" have an evening school this winter attended by 22
" lads and men."

NEWBURY UNION.

Mr. R. Fisher, occupier and guardian, Winterbourne.—" There is a fair provision for education, and
" it is pretty well appreciated."

Mr. Thos. Tanner, occupier and guardian, Welford.—" The schools provided are well attended, and, as a
" rule, education in this parish is, I think, duly
" appreciated."

Mr. G. White, guardian, Thatcham.—" There are
" abundant and excellent means of education in this
" parish of Thatcham. There is an endowed school;
" also a National British Infant and Sunday School.
" The labourer is too poor to keep his child from
" work as soon as he can earn 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a week.
" I have resided here since Michaelmas 1859. I have
" never seen wages higher than 11*s.* or lower than
" 9*s.* a week."

HUNGERFORD UNION.

G. Cherry, Esq., landowner, says,—" There is a
" Sunday and day-school for children from 6 to 12
" or 13 years of age, and an infant school for those
" from 3 to 6 years old. They are in the village and
" are far better attended now than 10 years ago.
" The infant school is a great help to mothers by
" allowing them to go to work in the fields. Average
" attendance at infant school 70, at older school 112.
" These schools are maintained by subscriptions and
" are open to all. There is another school in the
" village attended by many. The children of a dis-
" tant part of the parish are received into the schools
" of a neighbouring parish. There is yet, I think,
" much apathy amongst parents as to the education
" of their children; this, as well as early labour,
" prevents the attendance or contracts attendance at
" school."

WOKINGHAM UNION.

Captain Walter, occupier, Wokingham.—" The
" means of education are remarkably good and the

* See School Returns.

* See School Returns.

" schools well attended; where children are neglected " the fault is more on the side of the parents than " the employers; I hope to see a system of com- " pulsory education established where parents neglect " their duty."

WINDSOR UNION.

Mr. H. Tait, Shaw Farm, Windsor Park.—" There " is a school in the park, where all the people em- " ployed in the park can send their children to; " where they are clothed and fed, and taught to " work, the boys in garden work, the girls sewing " and household work, and a grammatical education; " this school is well attended. We have a night- " school at this farm, kept at the expense of Her " Majesty, for the grown up people to attend, which " is also well attended. There is also plenty of " other schools where they can be either free or " cheaply educated, if they choose to take advantage " of it. I blame the parents more than anything " else for the children not going to school; they have " no wish for education."

Longer Circular, 29.—Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

The following answers are from 36 longer circulars returned from as many parishes:—

13 witnesses answer "No."
9 " " "Needlework."
2 " " "Knitting and sewing."

Two witnesses from Ardington and Sockinge say that some girls have been sent to a training school by the Honourable Mrs. Lloyd Lindsay. The only industrial school which the Assistant Commissioner saw in Berks was that in Windsor Park, supported entirely by Her Majesty, an account of which will be found in the evidence from Windsor.

Long Circular, 30.—Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education, or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

The following answers are those given in 36 circulars returned from as many parishes:—

Rev. F. H. Lloyd, Aldworth.—" The cottage accom- " modation is insufficient, but better than it was a few " years ago."

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington.—" The want of accom- " modation in cottages has been and is still a great " source of immorality in this neighbourhood; but this " remark applies less and less every day to this parish " by the increased accommodation beneficial both to " health and morals."

Rev. T. J. Heard, Beedon.—"I would prevent mar- " ried labourers, having families living at home, from " taking *lodgers*. Should like to see a law passed in " reference to cottage building for the labouring " classes. It ought to require at least two bedrooms " to every cottage, and insist on a minimum amount " of cubic space for living and bedrooms; proper " ventilation, drainage, water supply, and privies."

Rev. J. Macdonald, Blewbury.—" By no means " satisfactory; in several cottages a whole family " live in one room below and one *little bedroom* " above, and no notice taken of it. Some of the " children grown up."

Rev. G. Purdue, East Challow.—" The cottage " accommodation in East Challow is very bad. In one " bedroom, 17 by about 17, there are 11 persons sleep- " ing. Father, mother, two grown up daughters " (who have both illegitimate children), a grown up " son, and the rest children. I know that incest " has been committed. We want some authority to " prevent overcrowding. 15 years ago the cottages " in this parish were very bad. The landowner, " C. C. Ferard, Esq., has now so improved them that " we have not a bad cottage left. The effect of the " better accommodation has been that the labourers " have taken a pride in their homes and have im- " proved in morals and in comforts."

Rev. E. Thompson, Chaddleworth.—" Cottage ac- " commodation is the crying evil in this parish."

Rev. C. M. Chaplin, Chilton.—" Most of the cot- " tages are now being improved by Colonel Lloyd " Lindsay, who has bought a great part of the " parish."

Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton.—" It is very difficult " for health and morality to exist in a parish where " many of the cottages have only one bedroom and " are inhabited by whole families."

Rev. E. Price, Farnborough.—" Nothing beyond " the general complaint that where families are herded " together, as is so frequently the case in agricultural " districts, all feelings of decency and morality are " blunted and the worst results too often follow."

Rev. C. C. Luxmore, Fawley.—" For the most part " the cottages are good; *fire-places* in bedrooms are " desirable in sickness, and by not keeping the young " women at home to work in the fields, the bedrooms " would not be overcrowded."

Rev. J. Macdougall, Hanney.—" Most of the cot- " tages are small and require better accommodation. " How far these things have an immoral effect I can- " not say."

Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred.—" Where the cot- " tage accommodation is insufficient I generally find " a total want of moral perception and general apathy " with regard to the advantages derived from moral " training and education."

Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred.—" Our cottages are " many of them very bad; health and morals greatly " suffer."

Rev. J. Tucker, West Hendred.—" Where there is " insufficient accommodation in a cottage, so that the " bedrooms are overcrowded, *the effect on morality* " *and education is most injurious*, and (though of " less importance) on the health and comfort of the " labouring poor."

Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset.—" Insufficient " accommodation is without doubt one of the prin- " cipal causes of the low tone of morality among the " poor. It occurs not unfrequently that the father " and mother, girls and boys, are crowded into the " same sleeping room."

Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, East Lockinge.—" Immorality " is of course increased where there is only one bed- " room for a married man and a large family of all " ages up to 14 or 15. They are entirely ignorant " of the rules of health, but imbibe so much pure air " in the day; they rather like close fusty rooms at " night, stop chimnies and ventilators in bedrooms " *on principle*. Children are very often too crowded " at night in large families."

Rev. T. A. Houblon, Peasemore.—" I think there " ought to be two bedrooms with a fire-place in one " of them in every cottage."

Rev. H. A. Dodd, Sparsholt.—" Many of the cot- " tages are small, and in the case of large families " are certainly overcrowded."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage.—" Cottage accommo- " dation is of all importance. Wretched pigsties of " hovels destroy decency, self-respect, and the love " of home. Nothing is more needful than that some " measures should be taken to prevent small capital- " ists from running up utterly unfit dwellings and " reaping a large per-centage at the expense of " health, life, and morality. I could mention frightful " results of the present system of dwelling-houses."

Mr. E. W. Moore, Coleshill.—" The greatest hin- " drance, but one, to the welfare of the labouring poor. " There are many happy exceptions, but through- " out this district there is an immense deal to be done " in this direction; the morals and health, &c. of the " cottagers are in many instances seriously affected, " and especially in times of sickness."

Rev. T. H. Bushnell, Beenham.—" The effect of " overcrowding *has been* very injurious to morality, " but there has latterly been a great improvement in " this respect. In some instances one decent cottage

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" has been made of two old cottages with single " bedrooms being thrown into one."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton.—" I have the very strongest " opinion upon its effect on the condition of the " labouring poor in *all these respects*."

Rev. A. Roberts, Barkham.—" The accommodation " in the way of sleeping apartments is in some " instances defective, and, in cases where there is a " family, the effect cannot but be injurious."

Long Circular, 31.—" How many cottages per 100 " acres are considered sufficient for the accom- " modation of the persons employed on the land " in your parish ?"

Only four out of 36 circulars answer this question, which is, however, sufficiently answered by the labour returns, which give the proportion of arable and pasture land and the number of adult labourers employed.

Hermitage.—Chiefly arable with a good deal of woodland, three cottages.

Letcomb.—Mixed with some down land, two cottages.

Coleshill—Ditto, larger proportion grass, three to four cottages.

Ufton—Ditto, one-third in wood and coppice, three cottages.

Long Circular, 32.*—" Is there that proportion of " cottages in the parish ?" 33. If not, what is " the proportion ?"

The following are the answers given in 36 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner :—

Three witnesses say, " The cottages are sufficient " in number."

Other witnesses answer that,—

" In West Challow there are five cottages per " 100 acres."

" Chilton, there are not enough cottages."

" Fawley, there are 44 cottages for 2,110 acres."

" Ufton, there are 64 cottages for 1,500 acres of " land let in farms, being more than enough."

Long Circular, *34.—Are the cottages conveniently situated with respect to (*i.e.* not more than a mile from) the farms on which the work is to be done ?

The following are the answers given in 36 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner:—

13 witnesses say " Yes."

3 witnesses say " Most of them."

Others answer as follows :—

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington.—" The parish is long " and narrow, and the village nearly in the middle, " but on the whole they are conveniently situated."

Rev. Jas. Macdougall, Hanney.—" In most cases, " but some of our people work in other parishes, one " and a half, three, and four miles off."

Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset.—" All of " the cottages with the exception of two lie together " in the village, and the parish extends about two " miles in one direction and one mile in the other."

Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe Regis.—" I think so; " three or four cottages are on the larger farms nearer " the work ; men prefer living in those in the village, " though they are farther from their work."

Mr. E. W. Moore, agent to Lord Radnor, Coleshill.—" Pretty well ; we build them for outlying farms " near the homestead."

Rev. J. Fraser, Utton.—" There is not much to " complain of in this respect, though in a few cases " labourers go two miles to their work."

Long Circular, *35.—Is there a sufficient number of cottages with two bedrooms, or three bedrooms, and a sitting room, for the larger families ?

The following are the answers given in 35 longer circulars returned by clergyman for their respective parishes.

6 witnesses say " Yes."

3 witnesses say " Nearly," or " With few exceptions.

14 witnesses say " No," or " Certainly not."

12 witnesses give no answer.

The names of the parishes for which " Yes " is said, are—

Catmore, West Challow, Fawley, Hermitage, East Lockinge, and Wantage (proper).

The names of those for which the answer " nearly " or " with few exceptions " is given, are—

Beedon, Blewbury, Brightwaltham, Chaddleworth, Chilton, East Challow, Compton, Hanney, East Ilsley, West Hendred, East Hendred, Letcombe Basset, Letcombe Regis, and Ufton.

Of Ufton, *The Rev. Jas. Fraser*, says, " Of 64 cot- " tages in the parish, only two have three bedrooms, " and at least 12 have only one bedroom."

Long Circular, 36.—Are the cottages crowded, either with members of the family, or with lodgers ?

The following answers are taken from 35 circulars returned by clergymen for their respective parishes :—

For four parishes, viz., Catmore, West Challow, East Lockinge, and Wantage (proper), it is said they are not crowded.

For four parishes, viz., Farnborough, Fawley, Hermitage, Letcombe Basset, is it said that, only a few are crowded with members of the families, but not with lodgers.

For five parishes, viz., Aldworth, Beedon, Blewbury, Hanney, and East Ilsley, it is said the same cottages are overcrowded.

For two parishes, viz., Chilton and East Hendred, the answer " Yes " is given.

For Letcombe Basset, it is said, " Most of the cot- " tages have two bedrooms and one sitting, but many " families require three bedrooms."

For Ufton, it is said, " Not much with lodgers, but " some of the families are very crowded."

Long Circular, 37.—Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.) 3. Ownership ; *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.

Short Circular, 9.—What is the condition of the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood ? Are they sufficient for the supply of the labour required ? Are they conveniently situated with respect to the farms ? Are they overcrowded, and have any evil results to morality come under your notice in consequence ? Are they well supplied with water, and well ventilated ?

10. Have all the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood good gardens, or, in default of gardens, have all the cottages allotments of land conveniently situated for the use of the labourers and their families ?

The answers to these questions will be found at the head of the general evidence from the respective parishes (being answered for 58 parishes); the following summary will, however, indicate the general bearing of the evidence.

The cottages are described as " good " in eight cases, as " fair " in 10 cases, as mixed " good and " bad," or " various " in 10 cases, as " bad " in 12 cases.

There are said to be a sufficient number of cottages for the supply of labour in 10 parishes, and an insufficient number in eight cases (*see also* answers to Longer Circular, question 32).

The cottages are said to be well situated for the

* The answers given to question 9 of the Shorter Circular, which includes questions 32 to 37 of the Longer Circular, will be found with question 37 of the Longer Circular at the beginning of the evidence from the parish to which it applies in Appendix B.—G. C.

farms in 11 parishes, and badly in five parishes (*see also* Longer Circular, question 34); they are said to be overcrowded in nine cases, and not overcrowded in as many (*see also* Longer Circular, question 36).

The ventilation is described about equally often as "good" and "bad."

The drainage is described in the majority of cases as bad.

The water supply is described as good in 23 parishes; fair in 6 parishes; bad in 11 parishes.

In only two cases the cottages are said to be badly supplied with gardens or allotment ground.

Outhouses are seldom mentioned, in four cases they are described as insufficient and badly placed.

The cottages generally belong to the landowners (especially in close parishes); in some cases they are said to belong to tradesmen, farmers, and the occupiers themselves. No instance is mentioned of a tradesman compelling his tenant to deal with him. Rents vary from 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, 1*s.* 4*d.* a week being an ordinary landowner's rent, with or without a garden, and 1*s.* 6*d.* a week the most usual rent charged by a small owner for a cottage without garden. Rents are highest in small towns and crowded open villages, and lowest in close parishes.

Long Circular, 38.—If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

Answers extracted from circulars returned for 36 parishes:—

3 witnesses say "No."
3 witnesses say "Yes."

Others answer as follows:—

The Rev. F. H. Lloyd, Aldworth, says, "Progress "is being made."

The Rev. G. Purdue, Challow, says, "There is "sufficient accommodation."

The Rev. S. Wasey, Compton, says, "Cottage "accommodation deficient, and for the last few years "I am not aware of any increase."

The Rev. Jas. Macdougal, East and West Hanney, says, "A few more cottages have lately been built at "West Hanney."

The Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred, says, "Fairly "sufficient."

The Rev H. Hansell, East Ilsley, says, "Not "enough, complaints are made."

The Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, East Lockinge, says, "Yes, "one or two at Ginge Hamlet are to be rebuilt by "Col. Lindsay."

The Rev. H. A. Dodd, Sparsholt, says, "Several "cottages have been lately built."

The Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage, says, "Some-"thing has been done, and I think that people are "beginning to feel a craving for better houses."

Mr. E. W. Moore, Coleshill, says, "Necessary "increased attention, but not sufficient; it is an urgent "question."

The Rev. T. Stevens, Bradfield, says, "There are "a few better cottages being built as the old ones are "pulled down."

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "Nothing is "being done at present to improve the cottages; but "I hope something will be done before very long."

Longer Circular, 39.—Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79., March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

Answers extracted from 36 circulars:—

12 witnesses say "No."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. G. Purdue, Challow, says, "Yes, it induced "one of the landowners to build two cottages."

Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred, says, "There has been "hardly time to test its effect."

Mr. E. W. Moore, land agent, Coleshill, says, "I "can hardly say (the county should be the parish)."

Longer Circular, 40.—By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864) the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including, by s. 9, "The "erection of labourers' cottages, * * and "the improvement of and addition to labourers' "cottages."

Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

Answers extracted from 36 longer circulars:—

4 witnesses say "No."

Others answer as follows:—

The Rev. J. Macdonald, Blewbury, says, "Cottages "do not pay as a rule, no one would like to go to the "expense of building."

Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred says, "I think the "Act should be more generally known to small pro-"prietors, many of whom would be glad to avail "themselves of it if they were acquainted with it, "for people of this class are the only ones who ever "make a profitable investment of their money."

Mr. E. W. Moore, land agent, Coleshill, says, "Government should take measures to render the "cost more reasonable."

Longer Circular, 41.—Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

Answers extracted from 36 circulars:—

2 witnesses say "No."

Others answer as follows:—

The Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington, says, "Some more "stringent powers should be given either to enforce "the improvement, pull down, or forbid the occupa-"tion of some wretched hovels unfit for human "occupation, of which there are some examples close "at hand."

Rev. G. Purdue, Challow, says, "I do not think "that really good cottages can be built in this neigh-"bourhood on self supporting terms. A labourer "with wages at 11*s.* per week cannot afford to pay "more than 1*s.* per week for a cottage."

Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton, says, "It would be "well if landlords would look upon cottages for "human beings as being as necessary and even more "so than stables and comfortable sheltering for cattle "and other animals. Human beings with souls "should be cared for certainly equally if not before "horses, herds, and swine."

The Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred, says, "I doubt "any money laid out in cottages being a good invest-"ment *directly*. The condition of the labourer must "be improved simultaneously. I think there should "be great and stringent extension of sanitary laws, "and power to close or remove improper buildings."

The Rev. W. Chambers, West Ilsley, says, "No; "I don't think the poor, with their present amount "of wages, are disposed to pay such a rent (or able "to do so) as would make the building of a really "satisfactory cottage a *remunerative* investment."

The Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset, says, "I do not think, considering the price of materials "and labour, that cottage building could be made "remunerative, unless a rent were put on incom-"patible with the present rate of wages."

The Rev. T. Landfear, Letcombe Regis, says, "Only by raising the wages of the labourer, which "would enable him to pay for better cottages, and "then better would be provided."

The Rev. H. A. Dodd, Sparsholt, says, "I know of "no such plan. In my experience as the owner of a "few cottages, the necessary repairs swallow up more "than the rent."

The Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage, says, "I have "myself built six cottages at a cost of 710*l.*, including "the land on which they stand. The tenants pay "2*s.* 3*d.* weekly, and thus yield a per-centage of

Berkshire.
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"nearly 5*l.* per annum on the cost. I believe that "this can be done in most neighbourhoods. My "cottages are large enough for comfort; have three "bedrooms, a boarded parlour, and a small bricked "kitchen. Each has a small piece of garden "ground."

Mr. E. W. Moore, land agent, Coleshill, says, "A "difficult point. I think the lodging of the labourer "a more important question than that of live stock; "it should, as a rule, be provided by landowners."

The Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "Building is "very expensive here, owing to the cost of labour "and materials. In this parish, where all the cottages "belong to the landowners, they ought not to be "expected to pay an interest on the outlay of "erection *directly*, but should be considered as part "and parcel of the plant of the farm, as much as "barns or stables or the farmhouse itself."

Circular Question N., 43.—It would be of great assistance towards forming a correct judgment upon the question of requiring some amount of school attendance in the case of children earning wages by employment in farm labour if you could furnish the Commissioners with precise information, or with an approximate estimate, relating to the points embodied in the following tables.

43. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class in attendance at elementary schools in the parish of .

The following tables will give a summary of the information given to the Assistant Commissioner in answer to this question.

Table A. gives the number, age, and sexes of all children of the agricultural labouring classes attending elementary schools in 21 parishes of Wantage union.

Table B. gives the average attendance in four parishes, two of which are in Bradfield and two in Wokingham unions.

Table C. gives returns from six parishes which were not given in such a manner as to enable the Assistant Commissioner to use them in Tables A. and B.

Table D. is a summary of Tables A. and B.

TABLE A.

SCHOOL RETURNS for PARISHES in WANTAGE UNION for which all particulars were given.

Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	In Summer.								In Winter.							
			On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.				On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
			Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
*Aldworth	275	2,000	22	3	27	14	16	2	20	11	22	3	27	14	15	2	18	10
Beedon	317	2,004	13	0	20	5	11	0	14	3	15	0	21	4	10	0	13	3
†Blewbury	639	4,115	52	22	55	18	41	22	42	18	52	22	55	18	41	22	42	18
*Bright Waltham	450	2,038	22	5	28	14	11	3	14	8	22	5	28	14	13	4	14	9
*Catmore	121	696	3	1	7	8	3	1	7	8	3	1	7	8	3	1	7	8
*Chaddleworth	539	3,322	30	10	25	17	27	7	23	10	30	10	25	17	27	7	23	10
*Challow, East	391	1,289	15	0	21	0	15	0	17	0	19	0	24	0	17	0	19	0
*Challow, West	192	697	8	0	10	2	5	0	7	1	6	0	10	2	5	0	7	2
*Chilton	315	1,500	22	3	17	12	18	3	12	8	22	3	17	12	18	3	12	8
Compton	590	3,795	25	12	32	8	20	4	11	5	25	12	32	8	20	4	11	5
*Fawley	243	2,870	22	2	25	10	21	1	16	7	22	2	25	10	21	1	16	7
*Hendred, East	889	3,400	65	24	66	26	45	12	51	14	65	23	64	28	47	13	48	15
*Hendred, West	351	1,974	31	5	27	12	19	3	17	6	34	4	27	12	21	3	15	7
*Ilsley, East	746	2,845	32	3	30	6	32	3	30	6	32	5	30	6	32	5	30	6
*Ilsley, West	432	3,200	32	4	13	7	18	2	10	3	32	4	13	7	18	2	10	3
*Letcombe Basset	283	1,562	21	0	17	10	15	0	15	8	24	2	15	13	17	2	8	10
Letcombe Regis	431	3,720	25	4	16	7	18	4	14	5	24	3	17	3	17	3	13	2
*Lockinge, East	318	2,822	29	2	30	13	20	2	21	11	28	3	28	19	22	3	22	16
*Peasemore	332	2,055	27	5	52	17	18	3	34	12	27	5	52	17	18	3	34	12
*Sparsholt	493	3,693	18	0	20	5	15	0	12	4	18	0	20	5	15	0	12	4
*Wantage	3,927	8,000	122	49	111	61	100	31	83	38	127	51	100	47	103	32	77	26
	12,274	57,597	636	154	559	272	488	103	470	176	549	158	637	264	510	110	451	181

* These 17 parishes also have night schools.

† There are 30 boys and girls clothed and educated in these schools; they are admitted from the infant schools when vacancies occur, as they attain the age of 7 or 8, the preference being given to the most regular, and as the charity boys and girls cannot be absent unless for sickness or some urgent cause, and others are anxious to gain admission, the attendance is pretty regular in all the schools.

Table B.

Giving the School Returns from Unions other than Wantage, with the Names of the Parishes, Population, and Acreage, from which such Returns were made, where the Returns were made in such a manner as to allow of being tabulated.

Name of Union.	Name of Parish.	Population, 1861.	Acreage.	In average Attendance.								Remarks.
				Summer.				Winter.				
				Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		
				Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	
Bradfield -	Beenham -	505	1,728	31	3	18	11	28	3	16	11	Night school.
Bradfield -	Englefield -	392	1,500	20	2	34	6	20	3	32	10	„ „
Wokingham -	Bearwood -	750	—	23	4	16	8	22	4	16	8	„ „
Wokingham -	Finchampstead	637	3,926	30	13	22	7	27	12	19	6	„ „
		2,284	—	104	22	90	32	97	22	83	35	

Table C.

School Returns which were not given in such a manner as to allow the Assistant Commissioner to include them in Tables A. or B.

Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	In Summer.								In Winter.							
			On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.				On the Register of some School.				In average Attendance.			
			Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.		Boys.		Girls.	
			Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10 Years of Age.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
*Ardington - -	354	1,775	20		25		20		25		20		25		20		25	
*Farnborough - -	232	1,844	—	—	—	—	9	0	21	5	—	—	—	—	9	0	21	5
†Hermitage - -	Not given.		32	8	35	13	21	0	16	9	32	8	35	13	16	5	16	9
Bradfield - -	1,167	4,020	—	—	—	—	38	13	13	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Ufton - -	367	2,080	24	4	23	12	20		27		24	4	23	12	20		27	
Barkham - -	280	1,050	12	0	16	0	12	0	16	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

* Ardington, Farnborough, and Ufton also have night schools.
† Hermitage is a hamlet of Hampstead Norris, for which the return arrived too late to be tabulated.

Table D.

Total number of children under 10 years of age and between 10 and 13 years of age (of the labouring class) in average attendance in summer and winter at all the schools for which returns separating the ages and sexes were made to the Assistant Commissioner (except Hermitage, for which hamlet the Assistant Commissioner could not ascertain the population and acreage). These returns are from 25 parishes with a population in 1861 of 14,558, and an acreage of 66,751 (allowing 2,000 acres for Bearwood, for which no acreage was returned).

In summer—

Boys under 10 - 592 } 717
„ 10 to 13 - 125 }
Girls under 10 - 560 } 768
„ 10 to 13 - 208 } } 1,485.

In winter—

Boys under 10 - 607 } 739
„ 10 to 13 - 132 }
Girls under 10 - 534 } 750
„ 10 to 13 - 216 } } 1,489.

Long Circular, 44.—Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work.

The following answers are all that are given to this question in 36 Longer Circulars returned from as many parishes:—

Aldworth. Population, 275. One boy and three girls in winter, all between 8 and 10 years of age.

Ardington. "Very few. Some girls kept at home "to look after the younger children."

Beedon. Population, 317. "None."

East Challow. Population, 391.

In summer—
Boys between 8 and 10 - 8 } 13.
„ „ 10 „ 13 - 5 }
Girls „ 8 „ 10 - 13 } 20.
„ „ 10 „ 13 - 7 }

In winter—
Boys between 8 and 10 - 5 } 10.
„ „ 10 „ 13 - 5 }
Girls „ 8 „ 10 - 11 } 17.
„ „ 10 „ 13 - 6 }

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West Challow. Population, 192.

In summer } 2 girls between 8 and 10.
and winter } 3 „ „ 10 „ 13.

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage, says, "There are so "few of any neither at work nor at school that it is "scarcely worth while to fill up this table (I am "speaking of Wantage only); it is however by dint "of very hard work that this state of things is "maintained."

Ufton. Population, 367. One boy between 10 and 13 years of age.

Long Circular, 45.—"Approximate number of "young persons of the agricultural labouring "class growing up with insufficient education."

The following answers are all that are given in 36 Longer Circulars returned from as many parishes.

Aldworth.—Pop. 275. 30.

Ardington.—"Carter boys are hired so early that "they soon forget almost all they have learnt."

Blewbury.—Pop. 639. "From 10 to 20, perhaps."

East Challow.—Pop. 391. "Males 13, females 12."

West Challow.—Pop. 192. "4 males and 3 females. "Can read and write imperfectly."

Compton.—Pop. 590. "The state of the education "of the bulk of the young persons of both sexes "is very bad."

Hanney.—Pop. 947. "About one-third of the "males and one-fifth of the females. We find "our girls stay at school longer than the boys, "who go out to work at a very early age."

East Hendred.—Pop. 889. *Rev. A. Potts*, says, "I should think fully two-thirds are *insuffi-* "*ciently* educated. This is a social question, "there can be no sufficient education in the pre- "sent state of things."

West Hendred.—"There are three or four girls who "carry infants about because the mother is busy; "there are several who come to school very irre- "gularly and do not go to work."

East Lockinge.—Pop. 318. *Rev. B. Tyrwhitt*, says, —"All the males, about 40, I believe; they are "imperfect readers and ignorant of grammar."

Wantage.—"There are very few of our young "people who cannot read and write and do a "simple sum more or less accurately. We endea- "vour to keep the children at school till 12; "this gives them a sufficient grounding."

Beenham.—Pop. 505. Males, 5; females, 3; "not "including farm lads hired for the year from "other parishes."

Ufton.—Pop. 367. "7 can't write, and can only "read very imperfectly."

Long Circular, 46.—"Is there an evening school "in your parish?"

47. How many weeks in the year is it open? At "what periods of the year?"

48. How many nights per week?"

49. How many hours per night?"

50. What is the number of scholars?"

51. What are the subjects of instruction?"

Table E. shows all the night school returns for the 21 parishes for which the day-school returns are given in school table A.

Night school returns were received from the following parishes besides those given in Table E.:—

Ardington, Farnborough, Beenham, Englefield, Ufton, and Bearwood.

No return of an evening school was made from the following parishes for which day school returns were made:—Beedon, Blewbury, Compton, Hermitage, Letcombe Regis, Bradfield, Barkham, and Finchampstead.

Table E.

Wantage Union.—Night School Returns.

Name of Parish.	On the Register.		In average Attendance.						Subjects of Instruction.
	Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.	Weeks in the Year.	Periods of the Year.	Nights per Week.	Hours per Night.	
Aldworth	1	21	1	8	12	Winter	3	1	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.
Ardington	20		—	—	—	„	4	—	„ „ „
Brightwaltham	20		—	—	13	„	2	2	„ „ „
Catmore	—	10	—	—	20	„	2	1½	„ „ „
Chaddleworth	Attendance very irregular.				20	„	2	2	„ „ „
Challow, East	4	13	2	11	20	„	3	2	„ „ and Scripture.
Challow, West	1	3	1	3	20	„	3	2	„ „ „
Chilton	30		20		12	„	2	2	„ „
Farnborough	—	—	6		12	„	2	2	„ „
Fawley	6	24	6	24	20	„	3	1½	„ „
Hanney	9	36	2	11	20	„	5	1½	„ „
Hendred, East	40		—	—	12	„	2	1½	„ „ and Scripture.
Hendred, West	2	10	—	—	18	„	3	1½	„ „
Ilsley, East	—	—	6		20	„	2	1½	„ „
Ilsley, West	—	27	—	17	16	„	4	1½	„ „
Letcombe Basset	5	18	18		14	„	3	2	„ „ and dictation.
Lockinge, East	—	—	11		15	„	2	1½	„ „
Peasemore	22		—	—	16	„	2	1½	„ „
Sparsholt	—	—	12		20	„	2	2	„ „
Wantage	20		—	—	All the year round.		3	1½	„ „ and Scripture.

Long Circular, 52.—"Do you consider that the "evening school adequately supplies the deficien- "cies of the day school?"

The following answers are extracted from 36 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner:—

11 witnesses say, "No."
6 witnesses say "Yes."

Others answer as follows:—

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington, says "It does some- "thing to cure the mischief."

Rev. F. L. Currie, Brightwaltham, says, "Certainly "not, since attendance is left in most cases to the "will of the boys, especially carter boys."

Rev. T. G. Onslow, Catmore, says, "It is a great "help to it."

Rev. W. Chambers, West Ilsley, says, "Not at "present; but I think it an instrument of great "power if put on a more thorough and permanent "basis."

Rev. T. Lanfear, Letcombe, says, "No; but it is "useful in keeping up the knowledge previously "acquired."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage, says, "The whole "answer depends on what are considered to be defi- "ciencies in the day-school, the meaning of educa- "tion, &c."

Mr. E. W. Moore, land-agent, Coleshill, says, "Yes, to those well grounded before going to work."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "It is a very useful "supplementaty institution."

Mr. Higgs, schoolmaster, Bearwood, says, "Yes, "provided scholars reach to standard 4 before they "leave the day-school."

Rev. Thomas Mozley, Finchampstead, says, "I think "a good evening school will go a great way to supply "the deficiencies of the day school."

Long Circular, 53.—"What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

The following answers are extracted from 36 circulars returned to the Assistant Commissioner:—

Rev. F. Ll. Lloyd, Aldworth, says, 1. "The evil "effects of the public house. 2. The indifference of "parents. 3. After a day's labour the boys them- "selves are very often too tired and indifferent to "attend the evening class."

Rev. R. Barnes, Ardington, says, "Boys being "hired so young. Some limit in age for boys who "are hired too young in this neighbourhood."

Rev. T. J. Heard, Beedon, says, "Want of room to "hold one in."

Rev. F. S. Currie, Brightwaltham, says, "The "indifference of parents and the want of power in "employers to compel attendance."

Rev. E. Thompson, Chaddleworth, says, "Having "a good, endowed school, an evening school, is not "so much required in this parish as in the surround- "ing parishes."

Rev. G. Purdue, East Challow, says, "That the "whole burden of the school falls upon the clergy- "man. He has not only to be teacher, but generally "to bear all the expense of books, firing, lighting."

Rev. G. Purdue, West Challow, says, "Providing "the funds so as to obtain a competent teacher. I "am obliged to go to East Challow 1½ miles from my "house for 4 months in the worst part of the year "three nights a week because I cannot raise sufficient "funds to pay a man to take the management of the "night school."

Rev. E. M. Chaplin, Chilton, says, "(1.) Sufficient "and able teacher. (2.) The indisposition of boys "to apply after a hard day's work. (3.) The severe "weather which we often have in winter."

Rev. J. S. Wasey, Compton, says, "Lack of "teachers. Lack of disposition on part of scholars to "attend after day's work. Distance some have to "walk."

Rev. E. Price, Farnborough, says, "The frequent "disinclination of the boys themselves after their "day's work, and, as the days lengthen, their working "in their own gardens."

Rev. Jas. Macdougall, Hanney, says, "1. The "distance of the school from the two villages. 2. "Inability to pay the school fees. 3. Indifference to "self improvement."

Rev. A. Pott, East Hendred, says, "The weariness "and stunted intelligence of the children."

Rev. T. Luck, East Hendred, says, "My night "school is not yet in proper working order, as I "have a difficulty about getting a master, my school, "St. Mary's Roman Catholic School, being a mixed "school and under a mistress."

Rev. J. Tucker, West Hendred, says, "Indolence "and indifference, over fatigue, distance."

Rev. P. A. Longmore, Hermitage, says, "After a "long day's work, often in the wet, the labourer, "after having his supper, is not inclined to make the "effort, especially if the evening school be not close "to his door."

Rev. E. H. Hansell, East Ilsley, says, "Indifference "to education."

Rev. W. Chambers, West Ilsley, says, "If night "schools are to prove of lasting and material benefit, "they *must* be under *regular paid* and *trained* "instruction. At present such work usually falls on "the clergyman in the main; but it costs him far "more in wear and tear than is the benefit derived. "He does not teach the drudgery of spelling, pot "hooks, and addition any better than (if so well as) "less highly cultivated instructors. I believe that "some time night schools will be found as important "an engine of education as day schools. But before "this comes to pass, they will have to be *thoroughly* "remodelled, and the burden of teaching the mere "elements will have to be altogether removed from "the clergyman, leaving for him only the general "management, and occasional teaching of the most "advanced pupils, as is the case at present with day "schools."

Rev. C. F. Willis, Letcombe Basset, says, "1. The "term is too short. 2. The subjects taught cannot "be so various. 3. The same punctuality, order, and "discipline cannot be so rigidly enforced. 4. Boys "are then often learning for the first time what they "ought to have learnt years before, or recovering "painfully what they have once learnt and forgotten, "instead of going on to new and higher subjects. "No doubt the true principle of a night school is, "that it should be a continuation of the day school; "that as soon as a boy has left the one for field labour "he should be admitted to the other; thus there "would be no great break in his education. But "this cannot be always done; for young boys are "tired after a day's work, and besides have too "recently left school to care to come again imme- "diately. Thus they wait a few years until they "begin to discover their ignorance and desire further "instruction, and then they have to begin nearly over "again. It is the elder boys, from about 15 to 20, "who are the most regular and attentive scholars, and "many of them make satisfactory progress. I may "mention, here, that there is growing up among the "more intelligent youths a strong distaste for field "work; and they are desirous of obtaining instruc- "tion with a view to secure what they consider "superior situations,—in the police force, or as rail- "way porters, and such like. Farmers for the most "part are quite alive to this, and it may help to "account for the little interest which they take, as a "rule, in the education of the poor. On their side, "it would seem that the difficulty can only be met by "a higher rate of wages, or the more general use of "machinery in agricultural operations."

Rev. B. Tyrwhitt, East Lockinge, says, "The want "of efficient teachers, able to read well and possessed "of the great gift of teaching. The indifference of "plough-boys to that which costs money and brings "no immediate gain; even a halfpenny a night is "something out of their wages. This is what I "charge at *Lockinge*, finding them everything, as "pens, &c., but copy-books. Bad example of older "lads. Our carter boys take their meals together "in a cottage kept for that purpose, sleeping over "the stables. If the oldest is ignorant and careless "about school, all the rest follow his advice. An "under carter is an oracle to small plough-boys. "The facility of staying out till late at night and "returning to the stables to sleep unperceived. "Entire ignorance of reading, and parental indiffer- "ence to learning."

Rev. H. A. Dodd, Sparsholt, says, "Boys and "young men after a hard day's labour in the field, "prefer their liberty to close confinement in a "night-school."

Rev. Thos. A. Houblon, Peasemore, says, "There "not being sufficient inducement for the boys to be "regular."

Rev. W. J. Butler, Wantage.—"In Wantage we "have never been satisfied with the evening school "results. The lads come for a few weeks; then "become irregular, and finally the school generally "consists of those who least require instruction. It "is very difficult to find anyone to take efficient

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" charge of it. The stereotyped subjects are reading, " writing, and summing, and any attempt to pass " from these to some more advanced subject, as " drawing, history, music, or the like, is disapproved " by the lads themselves. They are phlegmatic, and " have no enthusiasm or taste. Of course there are " exceptions to these, but the rank and file, who " make up the school, are as I have described them. " Our national schoolmaster, who is a good draughts- " man and teacher, and has gained the certificates in " the subjects prescribed by the Society of Arts, " tried to get up a class of drawing pupils, but it " very quickly fell to pieces. Mind in a district " seems like a soil, it requires many years of regular " working to bring it to fertility."

Mr. E. W. Moore, Coleshill, says, "All persons " needing it take advantage of it here."

Rev. T. H. Bushnell, Beenham, says, "A good " staff of teachers."

Rev. T. Stevens, Bradfield, says, "The want of " teachers, as in a night-school I think a master or " teacher cannot attend to as many scholars as in a " day-school."

Rev. Jas. Fraser, Ufton, says, "There would " probably—almost certainly—be no night school in " the parish, if the clergyman did not take an interest " in it; and it would probably become a scene of dis- " order if he did not actually superintend and teach " it. There has been an evening school in Ufton " every winter but two for the last 12 or 14 years. " It has always been conducted by the rector. The " attendance, which is stimulated by the promise of " a prize to every scholar who attends 40 nights out " of the 48, is remarkably regular. Some of the " scholars come from a distance of nearly two miles. " Even this wet season has hardly diminished the " attendance at all. The scholars pay 2*s.* for the " whole course, *i.e.*, at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per night."

Mr. Higgs, schoolmaster, Bearwood, says: — " Reluctance of those to attend who are very igno- " rant; and lads who leave the day school before 10 " years of age are generally too tired for instruction " after a hard day's work. What is wanted is Govern- " ment aid to all poor country schools (providing they " produce the results); education will then spread " rapidly through the length and breadth of Eng- " land."

Rev. Thos. Mozley, Finchampstead, says:—"The " difficulty of finding a master. I think the school- " master has done enough, and ought not to undertake " an evening school. The want of a proper room if " there be a school. The want of, say, 12*l.* 12*s.* for " the six winter months."

BERKSHIRE EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX B.

Berkshire.
B.

Nos. 1 to 65.

CONTAINING answers given in 85 circulars of inquiry to Longer Circular question.

37. Give a general description of the cottages in your parish in respect of,—1. Construction (including size of rooms, ventilation, and drainage). 2. Accommodation (including number of rooms in proportion to the family, water supply, garden, outhouses, &c.). 3. Ownership; *i.e.*, whether by landowner, or by tradesmen with whom the tenants are obliged to deal, or by other person or persons. 4. Rent.

And Shorter Circular questions 9 and 10. What is the condition of the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood? Are they sufficient for the supply of the labour required? Are they conveniently situated with respect to the farms? Are they overcrowded, and have any evil results to morality come under your notice in consequence? Are they well supplied with water, and well ventilated?

Have all the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood good gardens, or, in default of gardens, have all the cottages allotments of land conveniently situated for the use of the labourers and their families?

Evidence as to the wages and earnings of agricultural labourers and their families. Evidence given by the labouring class themselves and such other evidence as is peculiar to the parish from which it comes.

WANTAGE UNION.

1. Aldworth - Pop., 275 - Acr. 2,000.
The cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. F. Ll. Lloyd, says of the cottages, "They vary " very much; some are owned by landlords, some by " tradesmen, others by the occupiers."

1*a*. *Mr. Dewe*, occupier, says, "I have employed two " boys from Wantage workhouse, they were 13 years " old when they came to me. I paid two of my carters " 1*s.* a week each to teach the boys; they came to me " in June, and at the Michaelmas hiring one of the " carters objected to be hired again if I gave him the " same boy as a driver. I was obliged to keep these " boys doing the work of boys two or three years " younger; one of them is still with me and at 16 can- " not hold a plough. Of the five lads between 13 and 18 " whom I employ, two are under-carters, two are team " drivers, and one shepherd's assistant. Of 12 men, " two are carters, and three others are hired by the " year. The cost of labour on my farm is from 32*s.* " to 34*s.* per acre (34*s.* last year)."

2. Ardington - Pop., 354 - Acr. 1,775.
Cultivation arable chiefly.

Rev. R. Barnes, says, "Most of the cottages have " been lately rebuilt or repaired, with ample accom- " modation for families; all have two or three bedrooms " and needful offices, allotments for almost every cot- " tage, with gardens also in many cases. Three-fifths " of the cottages belong to the landed proprietor, who " is removing all his old and insufficient cottages. " The rent below that of the cottages held by small " owners in neighbouring villages. There is no lack " of cottages for the agricultural population."

3. Beedon - Pop. 317 - Acr. 2,004.
Cultivation arable chiefly.

Rev. T. J. Heard, says "The 66 cottages in the " parish, I should describe as 38 good, 12 middling, " 6 bad, 10 very bad. The good cottages have for the " most part tolerable sized rooms and are fairly ven- " tilated and drained. The middling and bad ones " are the reverse, and some have only one bedroom. " In some cases the largest families have the smallest " and worst cottages. In this district water is scarce " and hard to get at; there are only seven wells for " the use of the poor of the parish. I should like to " see a law passed in reference to cottage building for " the working classes. It ought to require at least two " bedrooms to every cottage, and insist on a minimum

" amount of cubic space for living and bedrooms, " proper ventilation, drainage, water supply, and " privies. Nearly all the cottages are owned by the " landowner, Col. R. L. Lindsay, M.P. The highest " rent is 2*l.*, lowest, 1*l.*, average 1*l.* 10*s.*"

3*a*. *Mr. John G. King*, occupier and guardian (occupying the whole parish, of which he rents 1,170 acres). "I think boys should not be employed under 10 years " of age; they begin with us as carter-boys after doing " a little pig-minding or bird-keeping. I never em- " ploy them under 10; but I think any restriction after " that age would be injurious both to parents and " employers, for as soon as they become plough-boys " they are employed throughout the year. Nearly all " the labourers' wives work in the fields, some of them " all the year round. If a man has a large family and " one child is big enough to look after the others we " employ the mother all through the year. Since " Lord Overstone bought his estate in Beedon parish " in 1856, a great improvement has been made in the " cottages, and is still going on; before he bought it " the cottages were in a very bad condition. Queen's " College, Oxford, owns about 150 acres, and has " one cottage besides the old farm house which is let " as cottages. Cottage rents with a garden of about " 20 poles, sometimes more, vary from 25*s.* to 40*s.* a " year; and besides the garden each cottage has an " allotment of 16 poles at 2*s.* a year. They are better " off than if the cottages and land belonged to them. " We have a night school taught by the parish clerk, " (Mr. King pays him, G.C.) and the boys attend well. " The day school is kept by subscription; the parents " pay 1*d.* each for one child and ½*d.* each for all " others. Our men are as well off as cheap cottages, " good allotments, and the absence of a public house " can make them; they are better off than in the " adjoining parish of Hampstead Norris, the only " difference in our favour being that there is no public " house here. An able-bodied man ought to and does " earn on my farm about 17*s.* a week for the year. " My labour bill exclusive of carpenter and black- " smiths' accounts and beer, which costs me rather " over 100*l.* a year, amounts to 32*s.* per acre. I pay " my carpenter 17*s.* a week and give him a free house " and garden."

3*b*. Allotment award, dated July 26th, 1855.

By award inclosing Beedon Common the Commissioner did set out, allot, and award to the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of the said parish of Beedon a plot of land containing eight acres, to be held by them and their successors in trust as an allotment for the labouring poor of the said parish of Beedon.

And by the same award the said allotment of eight acres was exchanged for an old inclosure belonging to Sir John Read, containing 2*a.* 3*r.* 25*p.* and the said old inclosure was to be held by the said churchwardens and overseers, in trust as an allotment for the labouring poor of the said parish of Beedon, subject nevertheless to and chargeable with a clear rentcharge of 4*l.* to the said Sir J. Read and Queen's College, the owners of another estate in Beedon as therein mentioned.

4. Blewbury - Pop., 639 - Acr., 4,115.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. J. Macdonald says, " Some of the cottages, " most of them indeed, are very fair, better inside " than their appearance would warrant; but there are " three or four that are a sad exception, as they are " much overcrowded. Nearly all the cottages have " gardens and good water supply. Most of them " belong to the landowner, a few to the farmers, and " others, three or four, belong to tradesmen. The " tenants are not, however, compelled to deal with " their landlords. Rents vary from 2*l.* to 4*l.* and " upwards."

4*a*. *Mr. R. Robinson*, occupier, says of the cottages, " They are very fair, are sufficient for the supply of " labour required, are conveniently situated with " regard to the farms, are not overcrowded, and are " well supplied with water. They have all gardens."

Wages.

4*b*. Mr. Robinson thus estimates wages:—

Men attending cattle receive from 2*l.* to 4*l.* at Michaelmas.

Ordinary wages vary from 10*s.* to 13*s.* a week.

Men earn 2*s.* to 3*s.* extra when at piece work.

In hay time they are paid extra 6*d.* a day and one gallon of beer. In harvest they are paid 3*s.* 6*d.* a day and one gallon of beer.

5. Brightwaltham - Pop., 450 - Acr., 2,038.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. F. L. Currie says, " The cottages are for the " most part old and badly constructed. Drainage fair. " Accommodation bad; few have two sleeping rooms, " none three. Water supply good. Gardens good. " The cottages are almost entirely owned by one " squire. Rent from 2*l.* to 3*l.* per annum."

5*a*. *Mr. Thos. Angell Sharps*, occupier: " The con- " dition of the cottages is unsatisfactory. There are " not sufficient of them to supply the labour required. " They are conveniently placed. They are over- " crowded. They are not well supplied with water. " They are well supplied with gardens or allotments."

Boys' Hiring.

5*b*. *Mrs. Hazel* (husband a farm labourer): " My " eldest boy is 11; he was hired by the year for the " first time at Michaelmas last. He gets 3*s.* a week " and 1*l.* at Michaelmas. He's well paid for his age." [Mrs. Hazel's cottage has one bed room on the ground floor. Next it are two very poor thatched cottages.—G. C.]

Cottages.

5*c*. *Joshua Parrott*, a son of 26, a daughter, 19, and two nephews, 13 and 15, in a cottage with one bedroom.

5*d*. *George Slade*, three sons and one daughter, all grown up, in one bedroom. " Most like pigs, sir."

Boys' Hiring.

5*e*. *George Collins* (a very intelligent boy): "I'm 11 " years old, and I've been at work three years. I " went to school one half-year after I went to work. " I went 'pig keeping' at first; now I'm hired by the " year. I get 3*s.* 6*d.* a week and 35*s.* at Michaelmas."

6. Catmore - Pop., 121 - Acr., 696.

Rev. T. G. Onslow: " The cottages have kitchen, " back kitchen, and two bedrooms. Landowner is the " proprietor of cottages. Rent 26*s.* per annum."

State of Education.

6*a*. *Joseph Chapman* (on the road with a team, his son as driver): " My boy is going in his 12. He can't " read nor write, no more can't I, no more can't his " mother. I wish we could."

7. Chaddleworth - Pop., 539 - Acr., 3,322.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. E. Thompson says, " The ventilation and " drainage of the cottages is bad. Many cottages " have only one bedroom. They are owned by land- " owner. The rents are moderate."

7*a*. *P. Wroughton, Esq.*, landowner, says, " The cot- " tages are in good repair, clean and comfortable. " They are quite sufficient for the supply of labour, " and every good labourer is sure of being able to find " employment. They are situated conveniently with " respect to the farms. They are not overcrowded, " and no lodgers being allowed in my cottages, evil " results to morality are of very rare occurrence. " There are wells situated conveniently to the cot- " tages. The cottages are well supplied with means

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" of ventilation, which perhaps are not taken advan-
" tage of sufficiently. Every cottage on my property
" has a plot of ground *attached to it* for a garden."

7*b*. *Mr. John Hedley*, bailiff, Woolley Park: " I have
" managed the home farm at Woolley Park for three
" years. Previous to that I had been in the same posi-
" tion in Northumberland for 30 years. There is a
" great difference between the labourers here and in
" Northumberland. I would much rather pay a North-
" umbrian hind 16*s*. a week than a Berks carter 12*s*.
" I have one Northumbrian as a carter foreman, what
" you would call a ploughman steward. He has 17*s*.
" a week, besides his cottage free, say 18*s*. a week ;
" and he is worth the wage. I plough with two horses
" abreast and use short carts instead of waggons. You
" will see in Mr. Wroughton's field four ploughs going,
" with eight horses and four men, and over the fence
" on another farm four ploughs with 12 horses, and
" four men and four boys, on the same kind of land,
" our ploughs doing the work quicker. There is
" nothing in the northern system beats the southern
" so much in as the management of horses. Our
" horses are kept in the stable, our neighbour's lie out
" in a yard ; our horses are well fed, and two of them
" do more work than three of the neighbour's, and
" we don't require the ploughboy. It would be a far
" better system if the ploughman had charge of his
" horses as ours have, and received the boy's wages in
" addition to his own, the boy remaining at school.
" The only difficulty I have in arranging the two-horse
" system is that we have no cottages for ploughmen.
" A ploughman cannot take charge of his two horses
" unless he lives on the farm premises, and seven or
" eight horses are handed over to one man's care as
" soon as work is over. The greatest difficulty here
" with men, especially day men, is to keep them
" from beer. If a man earns extra wages at any-
" thing he takes it to the beershop. The system of
" giving beer is bad. Men are so inferior here that
" we are obliged to employ more than you do in the
" north."

8. East Challow - Pop., 391 - Acr., 1,289.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. G. Purdue says, " Many of the cottages are
" badly built. The bedrooms are small. Ventilation
" imperfect. Drainage fair. Accommodation very
" bad. Water supply fair. Gardens few near cot-
" tages. There are allotments. Outhouses bad.
" There are 67 cottages in East Challow ; 24 belong
" to landowners, 43 to tradesmen or small owners.
" The rents are very high, from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 1*s*. 4*d*. per
" week."

8*a*. [Mr. Purdue rents six acres of land and sublets it at a moderate rent in allotments of 20 and 10 poles each, sufficient provision in this respect not being made by the landowners.—G. C.]

8*b*. *Michael Elliott*, with his wife and eight children, occupy a cottage with one bedroom, a thatched cottage in bad repair, for which he pays 1*s*. 4*d*. a week. He rents an allotment of 20 poles.

Eldest boy, 16, has 4*s*. a week and 30*s*. at Michaelmas ; second boy, 14, has 3*s*. 6*d*. a week and 30*s*. at Michaelmas.

None of Elliott's children are now at school, and the eldest girl of 11 has never been at any school. Elliott thinks 20 poles quite sufficient garden ground for a labouring man.

8*c*. *Mrs. Charles Payne* : " My husband is a 'fog-
" ger.' He gets 12*s*. a week and 1*s*. extra for Sundays,
" but no victuals. He earns no more during the twelve
" months, except at harvest, when he gets 6*d*. a day
" for milking, and earns what he can besides ; be-
" tween us in harvest about 17*s*. or 18*s*. a week for about
" three weeks, when we work as long as we can see.
" With extra victuals and beer the harvest money is
" little better than the weekly wage. We have four
" children, and our weekly expense is about as fol-
" lows :—

	s.	*d.*
Rent of cottage with one bedroom	1	4
Children's school fees - - -	0	3
Clothing club - - - -	0	4
Bread - - - - -	5	6
Flour - - - - -	0	7
Suet - - - - -	0	3½
Cheese, 1 lb. - - - -	0	9
Tea and sugar - - - -	1	8
Bacon, 2½ lbs. - - - -	2	1
Lard, 1 lb. - - - - -	0	11
Candles, 1½ lb. - - - -	0	10½
Coals, 1 cwt. (from the coal club) -	1	1
Soap, soda, and starch - - -	0	3½
	15	11½

" Last week we had only 14*s*. 6*d*. coming in, as I only
" earned 1*s*. 6*d*. For about six months in summer
" besides harvest I can earn on an average 3*s*. a week
" at 8*d*. a day (3*l*. 12*s*.). We rent 20 poles of garden,
" for which we pay 9*s*. a year. My husband goes 1½
" miles to his work, and he hasn't a pint of beer in
" the week."

8*d*. Mrs. Payne has four children, eldest 10, all at school. The total earnings of the family in field work would be, according to her account—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Husband, 13*s*. a week for 49 weeks	31	17	0
Wife, besides harvest - - -	3	12	0
Man and wife in harvest (including milking pay) - - - - -	3	3	0
	£38	12	0

rather over 14*s*. 10*d*. a week, whilst she estimates the weekly expenditure at about 16*s*. An average winter earning of 1*s*. 6*d*. a week by the wife would reduce the deficit for the year from 3*l*. to 8*s*.

8*e*. *Mrs. Moby :* " My eldest son has 12*s*. a week,
" and he gives me 6*s*. for keeping him. If he lodged
" elsewhere he would have to pay 8*s*. I have a son of
" 13 at Wantage school."

8*f*. The Assistant Commissioner visited four cottages with one bedroom each and no back door in a very confined passage. In one of these cottages, sleeping in one bedroom are a man and his wife, seven of their children (most of them grown up), and two illegitimate grandchildren. This cottage was ornamented with pictorial sheets of the " Police News," a very fashionable paper for the walls of ill-kept cottages.

9. West Challow - Pop., 192 - Acr., 697.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. G. Purdue says of the cottages,—" Construc-
" tion, good ; size, different, some 20 × 18 ; nearly all
" have two bedrooms, some three. The water supplied
" is good. All have gardens and allotment gardens.
" 27 are the property of the landowners, four belong
" to the owner of a mill. Rent about 1*s*. per week,
" some as low as 9*d*."

9*a*. The Assistant Commissioner visited a number of roomy old cottages in this village, which is a great contrast to East Challow, both as to the accommodation and condition of the cottages and the manner in which they are kept by the occupiers. Besides the fact that the people are all pretty regularly employed and that the cottages belong to the chief landowner (though not resident), there is no public house in the village.

10. Childry - Pop., 504 - Acr., 2,900.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. S. Whittingham, D.D., says, " The drainage
" in this parish is being very much improved. Water
" supply is bad in some cottages. The cottages are
" owned by landowners, farmers, and tradesmen.
" Rents vary from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 4*d*., &c. Many of the
" cottages are very deficient in accommodation ; no
" fire-place up stairs, no back places, no garden. In
" short miserable cottages."

10*a*. *Mr. John Burson*, occupier, says, "The cottages "are sufficient as to number, but are not conveniently "situated as to the farms, nor large enough in many "instances. There are gardens or allotments to all "the cottages."

10*b*. The following additional evidence was given by Dr. Whittingham.

"Amongst my other omissions I did not mention that the women had sometimes to go two miles and a half to their agricultural work. In the village they are employed 'sheening' as they call it, forking the straw from thrashing machines. The Wesleyan school will not open till next week, I believe. I had at the Sunday school last Sunday evening 28 boys and 17 girls, all under 13 years. The master of the boys' school is appointed by Queen's College, Oxford; he receives 50*l*. a year and a good house. Owing to the severity of the present master the children attend badly, and a good many children were taken away. I have written twice to the Bursar of Queen's in consequence of complaints from the village. The late master had 25 boys, the present one had only one boy left before Christmas; the girls' school has about 30 girls."

10*c*. The following account of the Fetyplace endowment at Childrey is extracted from the "Parochial topography of the hundred of Wantage," by W. N. Clarke, printed at Oxford in 1824.

"William Fetyplace, Esq., of Childrey and Letcombe, in the year 1526 founded a chantry in the "southern transept of the church, thence called St. "Catherine's aisle, in honour of the blessed Virgin "Mary, the Holy Trinity, and St. Catherine. He "likewise gave to the provost and scholars of Queens "College in Oxford a moiety of the manor of Letcombe Basset and divers other estates" (15 other parishes or hamlets are named as containing the divers other estates), "on condition of their keeping in repair "the said aisle, and likewise an almshouse which he "had founded in the village for three poor men of "the parishes of Childrey and Letcombe Basset. In "the ordinances of the founder it was directed that "the almsmen should pray for the souls of the following persons." (Here follow the names of 21 persons of the Fetyplace family, the provost and fellows of Queen's College, Oxford, and the rector of Childrey. Whether the almsmen still continue to fulfil this duty your Assistant Commissioner did not inquire.) "The chantry priest was to receive 8*l*. per "annum, *and was to keep a school for the children of "the parish*. The allowance to each of the poor men "was 9*d*. weekly, 3*s*. 4*d*. annually for a gown, and "2*s*. 8*d*. for fuel.

"After the dissolution of the chantries the salary "was continued to the chaplain as schoolmaster, and "is still paid at the present day (1824). The original "building remains and is tenanted by the almsmen "and schoolmaster." (This has been replaced by a rather ornamental building containing three almshouses and the schoolmaster's house. — G. C.) "The former (almsmen) receive 3*l*. 3*s*. per annum "each. (Now for about two years past they have received 7*s*. a week.—G.C.) "The salary appointed "by the founder to be paid to the chantry priest, "who was directed to officiate as schoolmaster, probably bore a fair proportion to the income of the "estates bestowed on Queen's College, and was certainly adequate to maintain him, as the statutes "direct that he should not be otherwise beneficed. "It seems indeed, by a prohibition against keeping "hounds and certain other uncanonical amusements, "that such a sum was sufficient for more than bare "support, although it is at the present time scarcely "an object to a village schoolmaster. Had it been "ordained that the stipend should increase even in a "remote proportion to the income arising from the "estates, the whole charity would not thus have "become nugatory. The property in Letcombe Basset alone comprises 500 and 600 acres. In 1818, "according to a return given to the Committee on "Education by the rector there was no other school "in the parish, and all the boys (sic) in the parish "were taught at it; the schoolmaster received 10*l*. "a year besides his house." (He now receives 50*l*., —G. C.)

At the time I visited the parish, January 13th, 1869, I found three school or rather school systems in existence, a Wesleyan mixed school supported by an endowment (as far as I could learn) of about 20*l*., a church school for girls supported by subscription, and the Fetyplace Endowed School, towards which the provost and fellows now pay 50*l*. a year and provide a house for the master. The Wesleyan school was for a time without a mistress, having had about 25 pupils before Christmas. The girls' school under the care of Dr. Whittingham had not again opened after Christmas holidays, but I was told had an average attendance of about 25 girls. The Fetyplace Endowed School had been closed for two months, and at the time of closing had only three boys, as the master informed me. The following notice was hung in the window of the Endowed School.—"On Mon- "day, the 18th, the Childrey endowed school will "be re-opened free for all boys *above five years of age "and able to read simple words of one syllable.* "Parents and others wishing to send children can "see the master between the hours of 9 and 10 "o'clock on Monday the 18th. The qualifications "will be strictly adhered to." The master of the Endowed School was good enough to undertake to get me a return of the children attending each of the schools, and I left with him a form for that purpose; I have however not yet (March 30th) received the return. I have no doubt that the master of the Endowed School had great difficulties to meet through the disinclination of the labouring class to submit to such a school discipline as he thought necessary, and such as children of a higher class are constantly placed under: but, however great those difficulties, and however they may have been increased by the want of discipline in the school at the time he took charge of it, I feel sure that, had this school been under Government inspection, I should not have found one of the best endowed parishes for educational purposes yielding about the least educational fruit of any parish in Wantage Union.—G. C.

10*d*. *Thomas Lawrence*, aged 82, an almsman, up to two years ago a farm labourer:

"I worked for Mr. Godfrey for 45 years, sometime carter, sometimes anything. The labourers here are not so well off now as they used to be, and several men are out of work. The women go 'cheening' (working with steam threshing machine) now, instead of their husbands working with the flail. On one farm in this parish, where they employed 10 or 12 men in winter, in time gone by, they only employ six now. Farmers' men are older than they used to be, because the younger ones has to shift about. There was a school here when I was young, and I should think I went till I was 12; now the parents is so badly off they can't keep them there so long.

"The women don't work so much as they used to, they don't employ them, or they would go; my master employed as many as the whole parish does now, and so the farms ain't kept so clean now. The young men here that are out of work won't go elsewhere to look for it."

Cottages.

10*e*. [The Assistant Commissioner visited some very poor and badly placed cottages in the lower part of Childrey; they were one or two of them the property of the occupiers, the others belonged to small tenement holders. All of these cottages were placed against the bank on each side of a narrow hollow, and had no back doors.

10*f*. About 20 young men out of work in Childrey. —G. C.]

Berkshire.

Mr. Culley.

B.

J.

11. Chilton - Pop., 315 - Acr., 1,500.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. E. M. Chaplin says,—
In one cottage, at this time, in *one* bedroom sleep,

1. An old woman between 80 and 90, who is unable to leave her bed.
2. A man of about 50.
3. His wife.
4. A son of 20.
5. Ditto 18.
6. Ditto 17.
7. A daughter 16.
8. Ditto 9.

} ! ! !

12. Compton - Pop., 590 - Acr., 3,795.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. J. S. Wasey says, "As regards many of the "cottages the ventilation and drainage is exceedingly "bad; water plentiful; garden ground short; rents "generally 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* It would be well if land-"lords would look upon cottages for human beings as "being as necessary, and even more so, than stables "and comfortable shelter for cattle and other animals. "Human beings, with souls, should be cared for cer-"tainly equally, if not before, horses, herds, and "swine."

12*a*. *Mr. Brown*, a large occupier, thus estimates the earnings of a carter, hired by the year:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Upstanding weekly wage at 11*s.*	28	12	0
Michaelmas wage - - -	1	10	0
House and garden free at 1*s.* a week - - - - -	2	12	0
Allowance for journeys - -	2	12	0
One ton of coals and cartage -	1	5	0
Extra earnings at harvest (one week's reaping after doing his horses) - - - - -	1	6	0
Beer allowance - - - -	1	6	0
	£39	3	0

An average of about 15*s.* a week.

12*b*. *Mr. Brown* says, "I think the earnings of day "men are about the same as carters."

13. Fawley - Pop., 243 - Acr., 2,870.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. C. C. Luxmoore, says of the cottages, "That "they four rooms and are well drained, being on the "top of a hill; they are supplied with water from "the village well. They have good gardens and "outhouses; they belong to the landowner, and the "average rent is 2*l.* 10*s.*"

13*a*. *Mr. Stephen Brown*, occupier, says, "The cot-"tages generally are good, and I consider sufficient for "the labour of the parish, but unfortunately they are "all held by the squire of the parish, therefore the "tenant has not the means of selecting the best "labourers.

"They have all a good garden to each cottage.

"My carters earn about 16*s.* a week for the year. "Under carters have from 9*s.* to 10., and carter-boys "from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a week.

"About one-third of my adult labourers are "carters."

Mr. Brown has 27 horses on a farm of 940 acres, about 100 of which are in sainfoin, and the clover-seed is allowed to lie two years.

14. Farnborough - Pop., 232 - Acr., 1,845.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. Edmund Price says, "In six cottages only "are there but one bedroom, the rest have two and "some three bedrooms. Water supply bad. Gardens "all good; outhouses sufficient. They belong to the "landowner. Rents vary from 50*s.* to 60*s.* per "annum."

14*a*. *Mr. T. G. Wells*, occupier, "I think two hill "men are equal to three vale men. They get more "regular employment throughout the year and are "better servants. It is very difficult to keep carters "from spending their allowance of 1*s.* in beer when "they are out with a waggon, and they often add "something to it; there is a public house (the "Blue "Boar") in Wantage where they give an annual "dinner gratis to the carters who frequent it." (The Assistant Commissioner was not able to ascertain the certainty of this custom, but he frequently saw a couple of waggoners standing at the door of the "Blue Boar," the carters being inside and the team-boys out-side looking after the horses.)

14*b*. *Mrs. John Brind*, "I would rather go out to "work in the fields myself than allow my girls to go; "they learn no good. I went out to work to help to sup-"port them, and other women do the same; it is not "much that we earn, but we can't do without it. I "think parents with large families could not do with-"out the earnings of their children till they are 10; "my boys have been out at 7 years old to keep pigs "and do errands, and I was glad to get their earnings. "Some girls go out at 7 or 8, the same as boys. I "would like to have kept my children longer at school, "but they can all read and write. We have no beer-"house in the village."

15. Hampstead Norris - Pop., 1,358 - Acr., 5,769.

Mr. Luke Lowsley, owner and occupier, says, "The "condition of the cottages is very good; they are "sufficient for the supply of labour required, and "several labourers walk two or three miles to work "in other parishes where there is not sufficient "supply. They are conveniently situated with respect "to the farms, and the occupiers are mostly the "owners, and have generally built their cottages. "They are not overcrowded. They are well supplied "with water. They have mostly good gardens, and "there are allotments which 30 years since were only "let to those with large families, but there are now "sufficient for all, and some have two or three. Too "much garden often proves an ultimate loss."

For the Hamlet of Hermitage.

15*a*. *Rev. P. A. Longmore*, says, "The cottages are "of all descriptions, from the newly built of red brick "to the old hut of rubble. They are owned by land-"owners. Rent of cottage with a few poles of "garden ground, usually about 4*l.* a year."

15*b*. Mr. Luke Lowsley thus estimates farm servants' wages,—

"Shepherds,	£	*s.*	*d.*
Weekly wage, 11*s.* or 12*s.*, say 11*s.* -	28	12	0
Michaelmas money - - -	3	0	0
Rent of free cottage - - -	2	12	0
Firing - - - -	1	5	0
Keep of dog and tax - -	2	10	0
Food for five weeks in lambing time	1	15	0
	£39	14	0

Something over 15*s.* 3*d.* a week, besides other perqui-sites, such as 1*s.* for each extra lamb and extra pay for extra work in harvest; but almost every farm varies in some of these particulars, and in many farms the weekly wage is 12*s.* for shepherds, making the average wage, besides some perquisites, 16*s.* 3*d.* a week.

"Carters have generally 1*s.* more than ordinary labourers, a house rent free, firing, double money in harvest, 1*s.* for each journey from home, from 3*l.* to 5*l.* Michaelmas wages, and often food when drilling &c. The system of wholly victualling them in harvest is now abolished in this county, but everyone gives them more or less food and about one gallon of beer per man per day; there are also so many perquisites given that it is impossible to calculate the amount in money. All our carters and shepherds are hired by the year, from old Michaelmas day (Oct. 11th), and at the time of hiring 1*s.* is given to bind the bargain.

"Under carters have about 7*s.* a week and 4*l.* at Michaelmas. Strong boys from 4*s.* to 5*s.* and 50*s.* at

Michaelmas. Boys of 12 or 13 have 3*s.* 6*d.* a day and 30*s.* at Michaelmas. These prices vary according to locality and price of bread, but this is general.

"The hired servants are lodged and have generally fresh beer and vegetables; my own have beer three times a day and a bottle to take with them to the field in summer, they have also vegetables three times a week. The earnings of an ordinary labourer entirely depends on his wife and family at piece work in the summer, but I believe a safe average is taking, from June to September inclusive, 1*l.* per week, and at other times, at certain kinds of piece-work, quite as much, although nominal wages may be 11*s.* As regards women we in this parish pay 8*d.* per day, but nearer towns they pay 1*s.* per day for nine working hours in summer, eight in winter."

16. Hanney - Pop., 947 - Acr., 1,990.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. Jas. Macdougall says, "The cottages in my "parish are like other cottages in poor parishes, some "tolerably comfortable, some very poor. The water "supply is good, and to the greater part of them "gardens are attached. Several are attached to the "larger farms, but a great many belong to small "proprietors."

16*a. Mr. H. Betteridge*, occupier, says, "We have "sufficient cottage room for the population and the "labour required for the parish. Ventilation and "water, no lack of. They have generally gardens."

16*b.* [Some very poor cottages in East and West Hanney; the worst I visited belonged to the occupier. There are some other very poor ones with one bedroom and no garden let at 1*s.* a week. The drainage is bad in both villages, and several ashpits and dungheaps are almost over the shallow wells. —G. C.]

16*c. Mr. W. Athawes*, occupier, says, "The condi- "tion of the cottages generally can't be fairly said to "be good, though they are here quite sufficient for the "labour required. The village is conveniently situ- "ated *nearly* in the middle of the parish. Some "cottages are overcrowded, with the usual results. "There is a never-failing supply of the purest water "at a depth of from four to 10 feet. Ventilation fair, "if appreciated. Nearly all cottages have good "gardens, the soil of which is very fine and rich; "some few have little gardens attached. There is "an allotment of good working land at about a "quarter of a mile distant from the village, let to "the poor by a near resident country gentleman at a "high rent. The matter wants revision: some, "having no need, farm these allotments; others, real "paupers, can't get a rood."

16*d. Mr. H. Betteridge* gives the following statement of wages:—

Cattle-men,	12*s.* a week and	4*l.* at	Michaelmas.
Carters,	12*s.* „	3*l.* „	
Carter-boys	4*s.* „	30*s.* „	

17. East Hendred - Pop., 889 - Acr., 3,400.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

The Rev. A. Pott:—"Cottages vary a good deal, "some are good and some *very bad*. Water is "abundant and good. Privies are sometimes very "badly placed. I should think half the cottages "belonged to resident landowners, the rest to all sorts "of small proprietors."

17*a. Rev. T. Luck*, says, "The cottages on the "whole are bad; many very old and out of repair, many "with very insufficient accommodation, and with the "exception of three some way out of the village "there have been no new ones built as far as I know "with the last ten or twelve years, though there is a "demand for them."

17*b. C. J. Eyston, Esq.*, J. P., says, "Many of the "cottages are very bad. If all the labour were confined "to the parish I think the supply of cottages would "be sufficient. They are tolerably well situated with "respect to the farms; they are overcrowded; they "are fairly supplied with water but are not well "ventilated. Some of the cottages have little or no "garden, but the greater number have small gardens. "Some allotments of land have recently been placed "at the disposal of the cottagers."

17*c.* The following evidence was given by Police Constable George Holliday, who has been five years at East Hendred:—

"There are 35 cottages with one bedroom in East "Hendred, of these eight belong to one landowner "and one to another, four belong to a farmer, 10 "belong to a miller, eight belong to small holders, "one belongs to the occupier, and of three I do not "know the proprietorship. In one of these cottages "there are 10 occupants, in three of them there are "nine, in three there are eight, in two there are "seven, in four there are six, in four there are five, "in the others four or a less number. For one no "rent is paid, for one 26*s.* a year, for 22 of them 52*s.* "a year, for three of them 3*l.*, for seven of them 4*l.*, "and for one 5*l.*

"15 of them have no garden, one has two poles, "five have four poles, four have six poles, one has "eight poles, and two have 12 poles. Their con- "dition is as follows: 12 are good, three are middling, "and 20 are very bad. There have been about 26 "young men out of work lately, but they haven't the "heart to go away from home to look for work."

[Of the cottages described by the police constable as *very bad* nine belong to a landowner, three to a farmer, two to a miller, five to small holders, and two to unknown proprietors. The chief landowner only possesses one of these one-roomed cottages, and his cottages, of which there are about 40, are generally in good condition, a great contrast to those of the owner of nine of those described by the police constable at the request of the Assistant Commissioner. In one of a block of five miserable cottages with one bedroom lives David Bosher with his wife and eight children, eldest son 22, eldest girl 20, next lad 17, youngest child four. Not one of this family can either read or write. In the next house to Bosher there are nine persons who sleep in one bedroom; these five houses are falling to pieces, and are unfit for persons to live in. I saw more signs of poverty in this village than in any one which I visited in Wantage Union, except perhaps in East Challow.—G. C.]

18. West Hendred - Pop., 351 - Acr., 1,974.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. John Kingham Reeves says, "The cottages "may be put under three heads:—

"Good. These are well built, with two rooms on the ground floor and two or three bedrooms; with plenty of good water, ventilation, and gardens.

"Fair. These have one or two rooms on the ground floor, two up-stairs rooms, plenty of water, moderate ventilation, and garden.

"Bad. These have two rooms only, one up and one down, or both on the ground floor; no garden; badly built and in bad repair; generally sufficient, mostly convenient; about half-a-dozen over- crowded.

"The greater number of cottagers have gardens, and the vicar rents two acres of land and lets it to the people in allotments of 10 pole each at 3*s.* 5*d.* per year.

"I occupy about 1,200 acres of land situated in three parishes, my labourers being employed indis- criminately on each farm, so that I find it impossible to give a separate return of labour for the farm in this parish."

Mr. Reeves' farm is six miles in length, stretching from the deep land of the vale to the ridge of the chalk down; the upper land is in four-course husbandry and the lower in three-course, and the following statement given to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Reeves will show the variation in the cost of

Berkshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

labour on this farm in the same course of husbandry since 1855:—

		£	s. d.	
In 1855 the cost of labour was		1,468,	about 24 6	per acre.
„ 1860	„ „	1,546,	„ 26 0	„
„ 1865	„ „	1,539,	„ 25 6	„
„ 1866	„ „	1,600,	„ 27 6	„
„ 1867	„ „	1,819,	„ 30 0	„
„ 1868	„ „	1,849,	„ 31 0	„

In 1866 labourers' wages were 10*s.* a week; in 1868 they were 11*s.*

18*a.* Three lads spreading dung on the Down, ages 14, 16, and 16. Two of them can read and write, and were each of them five years at school. The third, William White, can neither read nor write, and has been at work since he was seven; is a well grown lad of 16, and has 6*s.* a week and 4*l.* at Michaelmas.

18*b.* *Jas. Chadwell*, carter (with him a team-boy, Thos. Rickson, 10 years old, and has been at work for two years; was at school, but cannot read or write now). "Boys are sent to work too young to get through the "dirty ground with a belly not half full of victuals. "They should not be sent to this job before they are "13; they would soon be as good carter boys, and "would be far better men at 20. I think the parents "of large families should be allowed a little rather "than let the children go to work so young."

[The boy Rickson cannot attend night school, as he lives at a "lone house."—G. C.]

18*c.* [I visited three very poor cottages in West Hendred. One of them, in which live Wm. Shepherd, a carter, his wife, and nine children, all sleeping in the one bedroom or loft, the eldest children being 20 and 17, is about the dirtiest and worst specimen of a cottage I ever saw, and the nearly naked children are as dirty as their home. Two of the other cottages I visited are, as far as their structure goes, as bad as Mrs. Shepherd's, but the holes in walls, floors, and roofs were patched over, and everything was clean and tidy, though one good lady apologized for being found all of a "caddle." I visited several other cottages in West Hendred, some poor ones and others fairly good. —G. C.]

19. East Ilsley - Pop., 746 - Acr., 2,845.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. E. H. Hansell says, "The cottage accom- "modation might be better than it is. Water supply "from wells is fair. Rents vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* "and 2*s.* 6*d.*"

20. West Ilsley - Pop., 432 - Acr., 3,200.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. Wm. Chambers says, "The cottage accommo- "dation has been bad, but it has been considerably "improved within the last few years, and will soon, "I hope, be fairly satisfactory. As a rule cottages "in the hands of a large landowner or any gentleman "are in better condition than those which belong to "the poor themselves, or those just above the poor."

21. Letcombe Basset - Pop., 283 - Acr., 1,562.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. C. F. Willis, says, "The worst cottages are "built of wattle and plaster or chalk rubble and "thatched with straw. The best are of brick with "slated roofs. Water abundant, there being a well "of pure water to every four or five cottages. To "most there is a small plot of garden ground attached; "there are also four acres let to the poor in allot- "ments at a mere nominal rent. Total number of "cottages 31. 22 owned by a resident farmer, four "by Queen's College, Oxford, (proprietors of about "550 acres, they have two more cottages being "built,) 20 by small tradesmen residing in the next "village, three by non-resident landlords, and two by "the rector. Average rent 1*s.* a week."

"21*a.* Five women working with thrashing machine at Letcombe Basset, three unmarried and two married, all women of from 20 to 30 years of age. One forking in the rick, two untying bands, and two shaking out the straw from the machine. These women come at 7 and work with the men till 5 or 6, according to the light, and receive 1*s.* a day.

21*b.* Three young men have been out of work for six weeks.

22. Letcombe Regis - Pop., 431 - Acr., 3,720.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. T. Lanfear, says, "There are several cottages "having but two rooms, a room on the ground floor "and the room over it. Ground floor room 13 feet by "11 feet, bedroom, 19 feet by 11 feet; bedroom in some "cases divided into two parts by a partition of wood or "curtain. Some cottages have two rooms on ground "floor 11 feet by 9 and 9 feet by 7, bedrooms same "size. No drains; ventilation very bad; slops thrown "out at the back door. One privy to five cottages, "inhabited by 14 persons, male and female. Water "supplied by a small stream running through the "village coming from a spring. This water is used "for all purposes, although wherever there is any "drainage it is carried off by this stream. Each cot- "tage has a small garden. Some of the cottages are "owned by landowners, some by tradesmen and "others. None are required by their landlords to "deal at any particular shop. Landowners and "farmers charge 1*s.* a week rent, and others charge "1*s.* 3*d.*"

22*a.* *Mr. W. Palmer*, occupier and vice-chairman of guardians, says, "There are no very bad cottages here, "though a good many want improvement. They are "fairly supplied with water. Most have gardens, "but not large enough. I think the garden should be "nearly a quarter of an acre, and I think that land- "owners would get a certain amount of return for "money invested in cottage building by attaching "more land; land worth 1*l.* an acre on a farm would "be as a garden worth 3*l.*, it becomes accommodation "land."

23. East Lockinge - Pop., 318 - Acr., 2,822.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. B. Tyrwhitt says, "New model cottages built "by Col. Lloyd Lindsay here and at Ardington are "visited by Berkshire squires and are considered by "them to be first-rate. They have perceptibly raised "the inhabitants in the social scale by making them "more cleanly and decent and respectable. These "cottages are large, well ventilated, and drained. "Besides these cottages the old cottages are being "repaired and improved by Col. Lindsay, chief land- "owner. There are also three or four smaller cottages "built by the Rev. J. F. Collins, landowner, with "two or more bedrooms. The new cottages have "an ample water supply from wells in the cottage "gardens. Besides small gardens there are allot- "ment grounds for potatoes, &c. All out-houses new "and very good. Rent 1*s.* 6*d.* a week."

23*a.* *Rev. J. F. Collins*, J.P., chairman of board "of guardians, says, "The condition of the cottages "in this parish is good; there are barely sufficient "for the supply of the labour required; not "overcrowded; well supplied with water, and ven- "tilated. Very few of the cottages have gardens "attached to them. A convenient piece of land was "allotted to the poor at the Enclosure in lieu of their "right of cutting furze on the downs. This is about "sufficient to allow 12 poles of ground to each house- "holder."

23*b.* *Mr. Hardy*, bailiff to Col. Lloyd Lindsay. Has been six years in Berkshire, five as under bailiff and one as bailiff; came to Berkshire from Mid-Lothian.

"Our men will average 15*s.* a week or more, taking the year through. I have two men now chaff-cutting, who, with the help of a girl each, are earning 21*s.* a week, and one man with a hand box is earning 17*s.* a week. The worst fault our men have is beer-drinking; they are very inferior to Scotch labourers, such as those in the Lothian for instance; two men there do as much as three here and require less looking after. We use very few boys, as we plough mostly with reins and

a pair of horses, and I have sent for tackle to use three abreast with reins when we want more than two, as we do sometimes. It's all nonsense about three horses abreast doing more harm than three or four in a line on wet land; the surface you turn over is less trodden with three or four in a line, but they make a fine water bed in each furrow that is forgotten because it is out of sight. Some of our land is as stiff as any in the neighbourhood. We have two Clidesdale mares; they will plough as heavy land as any three of the ordinary Berkshire horses and do it quicker. We give a gallon of beer a day per man in harvest.

23*c*. Men are out of work at Hendred because they won't leave their village, they'll rather starve or beg; they are not worth hiring, I would rather do without them. We give as much piece-work as we can to let men earn a fair wage and make them work for it. Men cannot be trusted to do day-work here as they can in Scotland."

23*d*. *Mr. Dalby*, clerk of works, Lockinge,—"The "barrack system for hired boys is a very bad feature "in this neighbourhood; there is no one to look after "them and they go off at night to the public-house. "The public-house here is shut up at 10 o'clock by "Col. Lindsay's desire, and the effect on the young "men has been very good."

23*e*. Allotment award for East Lockinge, dated June 1st, 1853.

By the award inclosing the parish of East Lockinge the Commission did award in lieu of and satisfaction for the right of cutting furze and bushes upon part of the down lands inclosed to the rector and churchwardens of the parish of East Lockinge and the Rev. J. F. Collins, of Betterton, as trustees, a plot of ground containing three acres, one rood, and 24 perches, to hold to them upon trust to let the said piece of land in 43 equal lots to the then present inhabitant householders of East Lockinge, being labourers, upon such terms and conditions as the trustees should appoint, and when any lot should become vacant to let the same to labourers living in the same parish, and after payment of rates and expenses of management to divide the rents in the month of December, yearly, equally between every settled inhabitant householder of East Lockinge who should apply for same in manner to be directed by said trustees.

23*f*. The following table showing the wages and allowances of hired men and boys on Col. Lloyd Lindsay's farm was kindly supplied to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Morland.

Name of Labourer.	Occupation.	Wages per Week.	Michaelmas Wages.	Cottage Rent.	—
		s.	£ *s.* *d.*		
Alfred Welsh - -	Head shepherd -	14	5 0 0	Rent free - -	Shearing 3*s.* 6*d.* per score. Six weeks in lambing time at 1*l.* per week.
John Greenough -	Under shepherd	13	5 0 0	„ „	
William Miles -	Shepherd boy -	5	2 0 0	Lives with his father.	
James Ballard -	Head carter -	14	6 0 0	Pays 3*l.* 5*s.* a year rent.	1*s.* extra for five weeks, both in harvest and haymaking, and one gallon of beer allowed per day when at cart; if on a long journey allowed 1*s.*, if a short journey 6*d.*
James Miles - -	Carter - -	14	4 0 0	Rent free - -	„ „
John Dawson -	„ - -	13	5 0 0	Pays 3*l.* 18*s.* a year for rent.	Half a gallon of beer when at cart and the same journey money as the head carter.
Stephen Hicks -	„ - -	13	4 0 0	Rent free - -	One gallon „ „
John Robey - -	„ - -	13	—	Sleeps on the farm	Half a gallon „ „
George Alder -	„ - -	11	4 0 0	„ „	Allowed journey money the same as the head carter.
Enoch Walker -	„ - -	11	4 0 0	„ „	„ „
William Woodley -	„ - -	10	4 0 0	Lives with his father.	„ „
Ernest Barnet -	„ - -	10	4 0 0	Sleeps on the farm	„ „
Henry Miles - -	„ - -	8	3 0 0	„ „	„ „
Charles Stratton -	Attends bailiff's horses.	6	3 0 0	„ „	
Jacob Wilkins -	Fogger - -	13	5 0 0	Rent free.	
John Woodley, junr.	Fogger boy -	5	2 10 0	Lives with his father, rent free.	
John Wilkins - -	Fogger - -	11	2 0 0	Lives with his son, rent free.	

The other 16 men are not hired, but with a few exceptions are paid 13*s.* per week.
About 14 women are employed and are paid 6*s.* per week.

[Allowing 3*l.* as value of rent-free cottage these earnings are about as follows for the year :—
Head shepherd, over 18*s.* a week.
Under „ „ 16*s.* „
Head carter „ 18*s.* „
Married carters, from 18*s.* to 17*s.* a week.
Unmarried „ „ 14*s.* 6*d.* to 12*s.* „
Foggers - „ 16*s.* to 12*s.* „
The day-men at an upstanding wage of 13*s.* cannot earn less than an average of 15*s.*—G.C.].

24. Peasemore - Pop., 332 - Acr., 2,055.

Rev. Thomas A. Houblon says, "Almost all the cottages have kitchen and *pantry* down stairs and two bedrooms upstairs, and are well ventilated; the

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drainage is tolerably good; very good water supply; garden and wood houses. For the most part they belong to the landowner, and are at moderate rents."

25. Upton - Pop., 306 - Acr., 1,378.
Cultivation mixed.

Letter from Rev. Richard Hooper to G. Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner.

My dear Sir, March 17, 1869.

I must apologize for not replying to your note and circular, but Lent and Confirmation preparation, and the many applications of all sorts, have made me dilatory in my correspondence. I will say, then, that this parish is essentially agricultural. (2.) That I think the boys are sent to work far too young, as the low rate of wages makes it imperative on parents to get them from school as soon as possible. That this tells upon their physical strength I infer from their dwarfish stature, as I have many boys from 16 to 18 apparently not more than 12 or 14. The girls go out to service when about 13 or 14; and those who remain for field service invariably fall from virtue. This I attribute to *hereditary example*. Mark this, if you please; all the teaching, all the preaching, you can give seems to have *no* effect on this point. I don't mean *whoredom* but fornication before marriage. The cottage accommodation in this parish was and *is* simply abominable; but my chief farmer (Mr. N. Humfrey), who is a considerable landowner, is building *every year* some admirable cottages. Will this correct the above sin? It may go far to do so, but as long as children can point to their parents I am afraid we shall have uphill work.

Till I came here there was *no* school; the children had the privilege of going to the endowed school at Blewbury, but they never availed themselves of the privilege, as there was always a jealousy on the part of the trustees of the Blewbury school. I built a capital school by my own exertions, and mainly support it out of my own pocket. The average attendance is about 35. I have no Government assistance, and *do not want* it. Being a liberal in politics, I do not refuse admission to the children of dissenters, although I have only *one* dissenting family in the village. When Mr. Gladstone disestablishes the Church, my school shall be a private school, and not in his power.

I have a night school from November 1st to March 1st at the vicarage, for farm lads; and it is very successful.

What we want is,—

1. An inspector of nuisances for our villages.

2. Better cottage accommodation; which we are getting in this village.

3. An elevation of the tone of morality; which *I hope* education and example may promote, for there had never been a resident clergyman till I came.

4. I think no boy ought to go to farm work till he is 14. Here they begin at 10.

5. Higher wages; for my farmers confess they grow 10 times as much corn as their grandfathers did. A confession that made me suggest that my tithe ought to be 10 times as much as at commutation; but *they could not see that.*

6. I find field work for women very demoralizing, and the pay insignificant, 8*d.* a day.

I must do *my* farmers the justice to say that we have *no pauperism*, as they employ every one *all the year round.*

An inspector of cottages and dwellings of agricultural labourers would probably be one of the most efficacious means of remedying much of the social evils now prevalent. Compulsory powers of repairing, draining, &c. ought to be given. Many of our Berkshire villages contain cottages utterly unfit for human dwellings.

Yours very truly,
Richard Hooper.

26. Sparsholt - Pop., 493 - Acr., 3,693.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. H. A. Dodd says, "Many of the cottages are "old, but are at this time being repaired by the "landlord. In some the ventilation is insufficient "and the drainage unsatisfactory. The water supply is adequate to the wants of the village. The "people spend their money where they please, and "the rents are low."

26*a.* The Assistant Commissioner visited some very poor thatched cottages, some of them with one bedroom; 12 or 14 of them, all in bad condition, belong to a non-resident landowner. In one of these lives,

26*b. Samuel Basson*, who says, "I pay 45*s.* a year for the cottage and a bit of garden, and I have an allotment of one chain (16 poles), for which I pay 8*s.* (at the rate of 4*l.* an acre). Squire Atkins lets his allotment land at about half the price and has been doing up some of his cottages. I have two boys at work; one of 15 years gets 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, and 30*s.* at Michaelmas; and the other of 8 gets 2*s.* 6*d.* a week and 10*s.* (this was the youngest boy hired for the year that the Assistant Commissioner discovered the age of). We have six children, two little ones at school; one girl 17, out at service. My wife works out when she can, but she has been ill lately. Both my boys went out to work at 7, when there's many to keep they must go; they can neither of them write, but they can read a little. I am a fogger, and get 11*s.* a week and nothing at Michaelmas; I get no regular work at harvest; I have worked for Mr. Frogley for 20 years."

27. Wantage (including hamlets) - Pop., 3,925. Acr., 8,000.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Rev. W. J. Butler says, "The cottages in Wantage "are generally owned by small proprietors, who are "utterly reckless of the health and morals of their "tenants. Wretched hovels destroy decency, self-"respect, and love of home. Nothing is more necessary than that some measures should be taken to "prevent small capitalists from running up utterly "unfit dwellings and reaping a large per-centage at "the expense of health, life, and morality. I could "mention frightful results of the present system of "dwelling houses. The commissioners of the town "are becoming more strict as to sanitary arrangements; still much is wanted. The drainage is "unsatisfactory. Water supply is generally good. "Rents vary from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. I have "built six cottages at a cost of 710*l.*, including the "land they stand on. The tenants pay 2*s.* 3*d.* weekly, "and thus yield a per-centage of nearly 5*l.* per annum "on the cost. I believe this can be done in most "neighbourhoods. My cottages are large enough for "comfort, have three bedrooms, a boarded parlour, "and a small bricked kitchen. Each has a small "piece of garden ground."

27*a. W. D. Washrough, Esq.*, owner and occupier, says, "The cottages in Wantage are mostly good. "There are, however, many bad ones in out of way "places occupied by the lowest class. They are much "overcrowded, and immorality is the natural result. "They are all well supplied with water, but ventilation "is generally objected to. Of course in the town there "are only a few gardens, but in the outskirts there is "a large plot of land (in Charlton) occupied by many "of the Wantage labourers. In the neighbourhood "there are mostly gardens, though small, to the cottages, and also allotments near their homes, but "rather dearly let."

27*b.* [Assistant Commissioner's Note.—Wantage: Visited six new cottages built of brick by the vicar (Rev. W. J. Butler) on the site of 10 old cottages, which he bought and pulled down. These cottages have a living room about 10 × 10 on the ground floor, with a back room for washing, &c.; on the first floor a bedroom about 10 × 10 and another about 7 × 10, and above a very good attic room about 10 × 12. The cost was,

for old cottages and ground, 230*l.*; for cost of new cottages, using old materials, 480*l.*; total cost, 710*l.* for six cottages, let at about 2*s.* 3*d.* a week each, a return of 3½*l.* 2*s.* for an outlay of 710*l.* These cottages were built from Mr. Butler's own designs, and give a return of nearly 5 per cent. This does not include a wooden porch. The offices are not very good, *i. e.* too near the cottages, and not sufficient, there being only two privies for the six. Each cottage has about 5 poles of garden in front of it—a great improvement on the 10 old cottages, all standing on the ground now occupied by six.]

27*c*. *Mrs. Hughes:* Husband a labourer; occupies a very poor thatched cottage with one bedroom, rent 1*s.* 7*d.* a week. Father and mother and six children at home. Eldest girl, 16, at home. Mother and eldest girl work in the fields, the girl on a farm three miles off. She leaves home at 7 a.m. and gets home about 6 p.m., and then goes two nights in the week to a night school. Next girl "minds the baby," and five other children go to school. Eldest boy works on a farm about four miles off, and comes home on Saturday night. He is 14, and is a carter's boy, and gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. It takes it all to keep him. "I give him a "quartern loaf and money to buy two others, ½ lb. of "lard, ½ lb. of bacon, ¾ lb. of cheese, and some coffee "and sugar to take with him every week. My girl "gets 9*d.* a day and 1*s.* at haymaking. She has "worked out since she was 15."

27*d*. *Mrs. Ranklin* (age 65, husband a farm labourer): "I have worked out since I was a girl, at first with "my father. People never work now like what girls "worked when I was young. My husband couldn't "do harvest work this year, so I went with another "woman. I have been spreading dung all day to-day. "We work from 8 to 5 now, and have an hour for "dinner. We get 8*d.* a day now, 10*d.* a day and beer "in hay time, when we work from 7 to 6, with one "hour's rest. Working out in the fields is good for "women, does young women good. A girl going out "with married women may hear a good many things "she shouldn't; it greatly depends on whom they "work with. A great many young women work out. "I have only one daughter, and she wouldn't work "out in the fields. I wouldn't like to send a girl out "till she's 12 or 13. I don't think the eight hours' "work would hurt her. It would be a good thing if "women hadn't to work in winter. It would be a "great deal better for women with families to stay at "home; they lose as much as they get by not looking "after their families.

"Boys don't go so early to work now as they did. "Half-day wouldn't do for farm boys. The little "boys are very 'deedy' boys, more deedy nor the "bigger boys. It would not hurt the families if boys "were not allowed to work before 10. They earn "very little pay below that. Me and Mrs. Watson "could cut half an acre a day at 10*s.* an acre. We "have earned 5*s.* each a day."

27*e*. *Maria Elborough* and her sister, single women about 40: "We used to be able to earn 5*s.* a week "each of us slopping, working nearly 12 hours. We "don't look after the hours at that work. Field work "we can do more at. We go haymaking. I don't "think girls are done good to by working out; it "makes them too bold. We get 1*s.* a day and beer, "three pints, in haymaking time."

27*f*. I saw (December 18) seven teams at work on the down land. Six had three horses abreast behind and one in front, with a man and a boy. One team was a pair of horses with reins. No boy was under 10, but one of 10 said he had been at work before 10. Another team had a boy of 14 holding the plough and a boy of 13 driving. These boys both hired by the year; boy of 14 had 5*s.* 6*d.* a week and 50*s.* at Michaelmas; boy of 13 had 3*s.* 6*d.* a week and 30*s.* at Michaelmas. Both boys could read, but neither could write.

27*g*. The man with two horses (*John Chapman*) says, "I am a carter. I have charge of seven horses. "I am hired by the year, and get 11*s.* a week, upstanding wages, 3*l.* 10*s.* at Michaelmas, and a house and "a bit of land they reckon at 5*l.* I don't justly know "how much land there is. A day man gets about as "much in a year as a hired carter. It seems to suit some "men better, and there ain't much in it. Shepherds, "carters, and foggers are hired by the year from old "Michaelmas day (October 11). That boy you were "talking to is my son. He can read a little, but he "can't write. I was sent out to work almost before "I was breeched, but boys don't go out now before "they're 10; they're no use so young."

Supposing this man's cottage and ground is worth 5*l.*, his wage amounts to about 14*s.* 3*d.* a week. "Day "men get 10*s.* a week."

27*h*. The following evidence was given by a labourer in Wantage:—

"You see there's ten times the schooling now than there was when I was a boy; and when a boy knows a thing or two he looks about him and gets an errand boy's place or such like, or an older boy gets a groom's place up towards London, and a real able-bodied young man, if he hasn't a wife and can't help himself won't stay to get the wages they give here, and so the work is left to the old men and boys."

28. Charlton (hamlet of Wantage).

H. D. De Vitré, Esq., says, "The cottages are "certainly not good and require much looking after, "as in several cases they are overcrowded, and as a "rule the water supply is bad. As a rule the cot-"tagers have either gardens around their cottages or "allotments within a quarter of a mile of the village."

28*a*. *Mr. B. Castle*, occupier: "A large portion of "the cottages have gardens attached and about from "10 to 20 poles of land in allotments.

"Hired men have about 14*s.* a week for the year.

"Carter lads, 8*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* Boys as drivers, "4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.*

"Daymen, I should say, earn from 15*s.* to 17*s.*

"Married shepherds have from 16*s.* to 18*s.*

"Under shepherds (lads of from 16 to 18 years) "have from 8*s.* to 10*s.*"

28*b*. *Mrs. John White:* "Ordinary farm labourers "get 11*s.* a week at Lockinge, my husband works "there; we have no other means just now besides "this 11*s.* a week. We buy a bit of bacon that my "husband may have a bit to carry out with him. I "have one child at home. I work out whenever I "can get work. Very few unmarried women work "out here. We pay 1*s.* 4*d.* a week for our cottage. "We have two bedrooms; it is only one brick thick "four inches, and it rains in all about the roof. There "is only one privy for four cottages here, which is "very indecent. I worked out and was also in service "nine years before I was married. I think that some "girls who work out are bolder than girls in service, "they have more time on their own hands. I don't "think farm work itself injures them, but they earn "very little by it. I don't think parents with a large "family could keep all their children from work up "to 10 years of age; as soon as they can earn a penny "we're glad of it. When my husband is up at "3 o'clock for grass mowing and doesn't get home "till 8 he requires more than the little necessaries "he generally gets, and then the tools are to pay for. "There's very little left, and sometimes we are obliged "to pay off in summer *what we have been obliged to "owe in the winter*. In summer last year my husband "only earned about 2*l.* 10*s.*, I wasn't out. In ordinary "summers between us we have earned 1*l.* more. "Women are paid 8*d.* a day, but we seldom can "make out all the week. We begin about the end "of March and go on till the end of October, and we "may earn (this year there was no weeds growed "and nothing to do) 5*l.* This is as much as we women "can make good."

The best wife for a labourer is the woman who has worked out.

28*c*. *Mrs. Henry Champ* (husband farm labourer): "We have six children, eldest 13. Our cottage is very "bad, only one bedroom, and made of wattle and dab.

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" My boy of 13 gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a week and 1*l.* at Michael-
" mas. My boy of 9 is at school, he is too young to
" workbut he must be out soon."

28*d. William Champ*, " I can't read, I am 13. I am
" a ploughboy. I was at school a long while, but I
" never learnt to read."

28*e. Mrs. John Kent:* " My husband is a farm la-
" bourer, he has 10*s.* a week. We earned about 3*l.* in
" harvest besides the 10*s.* I can earn 4*s.* a week
" when I make a full week. I have six children ;
" my three boys went out to work at 9 years old."

28*f. George Godwin*, carter, says, " It is quite right
" that children should go to school, but with so little
" coming in how are the parents to keep them ? I
" have a boy of 11, he went to work before he was
" 9 and has grown well, but stiff land were cruel
" on him at first. Both these boys (two boys of
" 13 and a lad of 17 with them) and the lad go to
" night school. My boy went driving a plough when
" he began first, they mostly begins so, and there's a
" smartish few at it before they are 10. I heard of
" this business about educating the children more, but
" if the Parliament gentlemen wants our children to
" go to school they'll have to help all them as have
" young children."

29. Grove (hamlet of Wantage).

There are cottages by the brook side here with no wells and no drinking water, but from the brook which has just passed through Wantage and receives the sewage of Letcombe Regis and Wantage. I would have been very sorry to drink it to-day (January 6th in flood). In a block of two cottages live John Webb, farm labourer, and his family, four children (two boys 18 and 15), and his wife. In the other Daniel Webb kept by the parish. These cottages have each what have been two bedrooms, but only one is habitable. Webb's account of the cottages is " If it wasn't for
" the gardens these houses ain't worth 6*d.* a week ;
" they are all tumbling down about our ears and now
" they be raising our rent to 4*l.* a year. The brook
" was far dirtier yesterday."

FARINGDON UNION.

30. Ashbury - Pop., 742 - Acr., 5,520.
Cultivation mixed, in four and five course husbandry.

Mr. Heber Humphrey, occupier and guardian, says,
" Some cottages still in great need of improvement ;
" a fair supply for the requirements ; not so conveni-
" ently situated as could be wished, not overcrowded
" generally, though many have as yet only one or
" two bedrooms—*which should be made illegal*—a
" fair supply of water.

" All deficiencies of gardens made up by good
" allotments let out by the lord of the manor, and the
" same in the neighbourhood generally.

" I may add that we are fast growing away from
" the evils which this inquiry is intended to remedy.
" As a rule, those mothers who have themselves been
" in service when young are the best managers in a
" home (beyond comparison) ; and, what is of equal
" consequence to the family, they know and feel the
" value of education for their children, and see that
" they attend when the others do not, and this is the
" true cause of good or bad attendance at the schools.
" I am so convinced of the benefit of a few years
" domestic service to young women that I could not
" say a word against a restriction on their field work
" if I could be sure that it would not drive them in
" too many cases to anything worse. A general re-
" striction on older women's field work I do not think
" could be fairly maintained, for a woman when she
" has brought up her family and they are got away
" from home, even if she had been to service, might
" be much more comfortable helping her husband earn
" a little to put by for old age in the open air than in
" competing with the fast increasing number of those
" who prefer indoor employments.

" With what machinery has done in the last 10
" years I don't think we employers should be affected
" much by a general restriction, but this same ma-
" chinery provides a certain amount of very light
" work exactly suited to the parties mentioned
" above."

31. Bourton - Pop., 328 - Acr., 1,200.
Cultivation one-third arable, two-thirds pasture.

Henry Tucker, Esq., landowner and high sheriff, says, " There are few villages better provided with
" cottages than this, the old hovels having been re-
" placed within the last few years by substantial,
" comfortable, and convenient dwellings, well venti-
" lated and supplied with good water, and small
" gardens attached, which are supplemented by ample
" allotments close to the village. Rules are laid down
" to prevent overcrowding, and all let by the week.
" The writer obtained at his own cost in 1859 a
" return of all the cottages in the Faringdon Union,
" with the number of rooms in each, and number, ages,
" and sexes of their inmates in a tabulated form,
" which he still holds. He made a digest from these
" tables of some of the worst cases, which was pub-
" lished in the *Times* and produced a great impres-
" sion on the public mind. He failed in his endeavours
" to induce some member of Parliament to bring the
" matter before the House of Commons with the
" object of obtaining a similar return for all England,
" which he still believes to be the only proper course
" to adopt, and all that different Governments have
" since done in sending Dr. Hunter and others through
" the country to obtain information on this subject
" only serves to confirm that opinion, because all such
" desultory modes of seeking information must fail
" to give anything like a true idea of the deplorable
" condition of our agricultural labourer and artizan
" with respect to their dwellings. Since the estab-
" lishment of these schools a marked improvement is
" to be observed in the general intelligence of the
" labourer, which is seen in the desire of the boys to
" get more lucrative employment away from the
" village, and the girls greatly prefer domestic service
" to field work. Formerly the parish had to keep a
" number of young able-bodied men during winter,
" but of late years there has been scarcely an idle
" hand in the village either in winter or summer."

32. Buckland - Pop., 912 - Acr., 4,434.
Cultivation mixed.

The Assistant Commissioner visited several very comfortable cottages in this parish belonging to the chief landowner. Speaking of the farm labourers, Mr. Williams, land steward to Sir William Throckmorton, said, " The men here will only work from 7
" to 12 and 2 to 5 o'clock, and won't, except in
" harvest, make any effort at piece-work."

33. Coleshill - Pop., 464 - Acr., 2,660.
Cultivation mixed, larger proportion grass.

Mr. E. W. Moore, land-agent, says of the cottages,
" Dining room, 14 × 12 ;
" back rooms, 12 × 10.
" Bedrooms over.
} Ventilation and drainage excellent.

" Usually three bedrooms ; excellent supply of
" spring water ; gardens about a quarter acre. All
" belong to the Earl of Radnor. Varies according to
" accommodation from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 2*s.* per week."

The following evidence as to the condition of the agricultural labourers was given by Mr. Moore :—

" When I came here the men were a lawless, lazy set, and always badly off ; they had allotments of half an acre each, and tried to live off them.

" Lord Radnor soon after gave them allotments or gardens near home of 40 poles, and they are now about the best instead of being about the worst labourers in the county. All the cottages on Lord Radnor's estate are good [these on Coleshill are very good.—G. C.]. We have a difficulty in dealing with cottages held on quit rent by the occupiers. They prefer the wretched place. ' Good enough for we.'

" The reduction of the pauperism in Faringdon Union is only the result of a careful examination of cases ; the board are liberal when relief is necessary. The rule is not to give immediate relief to a man who

has been in regular work up to the time of application. We make him wait a few days or a week. Another rule is not to pay a member of the patient's family as a nurse, except under peculiar circumstances."

33*a*. *Mr. James Robertson*, farm bailiff, Coleshill:—"Men won't take the trouble to send their children "to school here even if they can; they send them "out half-naked to starve birds and starve themselves, "poor things. I always employ as many men here "in doing such things as spreading dung as we used "to employ women in Scotland, four to a plough "opening the drills, and the men think they are "going to be killed with hard work. We are obliged "to use three horses in a line here on sticky ground "when it is wet. I would not have believed it had I "not seen the land."

33*b*. Earnings of five day labourers in Coleshill House Farm from Michaelmas 1867 to Michaelmas 1868, as given by Mr. Moore.

	£	s.	d.		s.	d.	
1.	38	7	9,	or	14	9	per week.
2.	34	2	9,	or	13	1	„
3.	36	13	10,	or	14	1	„
4.	34	11	6,	or	13	4	„
5.	40	6	7,	or	15	6	„

Average, 14*s*. 2*d*. per week, nearly.

34. Little Coxwell - Pop., 302.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. John Dyke, occupier and guardian, says, "The "cottages are bad and insufficient, and many of them "overcrowded.

"Water supply pretty good.

"Ventilation often bad.

"The cottages generally have gardens or allot-"ments."

35. Eaton Hastings - Pop., 185 - Acr., 1,511.
Cultivation mixed on four-course system.

Mr. W. T. Kinch, owner and occupier:—"The "cottages are generally very good; they are sufficient "for the supply of labour and conveniently situated; "they are not overcrowded and are well supplied "with water. Nearly all have gardens."

36. Hinton Waldrish - Pop., 329 - Acr., 1,847.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. Wm. Jephson:—"The cottages are better "than they used to be. In our parish some not fit for "habitation; the squire has promised to pull down "and build others in their place; but there are not "enough cottages, and some are very crowded. In "the neighbourhood there are some very disgraceful "habitations with no prospect of amendment, very "great moral evil has been the consequence; they "are supplied with water but not well ventilated. "The cottages have gardens and allotments."

37. Longworth - Pop., 1,131 - Acr., 2,024.
Cultivation about ⅓ pasture, arable land in four-field system.

Mr. Albert Edmonds, occupier and land-agent,—"The condition of the cottages is tolerably good with "a few exceptions. They are sufficient for the supply "of labour required, they are conveniently situated "with respect to the farms; they are overcrowded in "some cases; they are well supplied with water, they "are generally well supplied with gardens or allot-"ments."

38. Pusey - Pop., 134 - Acr., 1,070.

The Assistant Commissioner visited several very good and roomy stone cottages with three bedrooms each, belonging to the chief landowner; these cottages were built at a cost of about 250*l*. each.

Esau Ballard, hurdle-maker, shearer, and thatcher,—"I can make about 2*s*. 3*d*. in short days; in sum-"mer I have made my 3*s*. and 3*s*. 3*d*. a day. My "wife goes with me sometimes. We have eight "children, two girls, 14 and 15, are out at service, "three girls 13, 12, and 10, and a boy 8, are at school. "Boys should not go to work before they are 10. I "would not let any girl go out to field work if I could "get her out to service, they are not worth anything "for service after they have been at field work, not "one in twenty. I am getting money from my club "just now, as I am too ill to work."

39. Uffington - Pop., 644 - Acr., 3,147.
Cultivation mixed.

Mr. Jas. Lawrence, occupier and guardian, says, "The condition of the cottages are not good, but are "fast undergoing improvement. They are quite "sufficient for the supply of labour required, and are "conveniently situated with respect to the farms, "but in some cases where there are large families "they are rather overcrowded, and I have no doubt "it has a very bad effect on the morals of the chil-"dren. The supply of water is good, but the venti-"lation is not good. Most of the cottages have a "good garden and also an allotment."

40. Stanford-in-the-Vale - Pop., 1,075 - Acr., 3,829.

There is some land in this parish belonging to the poor of the parish of Shrivenham, and let by the trustees to the rector of the adjoining parish of Shellingford. Some part of this poor's land is let in allotments of 20 poles to the poor of Stanford at the rate of 4*l*. per acre. (There are several labourers in Stanford who have not got any allotment ground.)

Stanford is a scattered village, containing some good and some very bad cottages belonging to many different proprietors. Rents vary from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. a week. One cottage, rented by Mrs. Puzey at 1*s*. a week, is a mere den—a ground floor room about eight feet by seven, with a so-called bedroom open to the thatch over it, with no back premises. Many of these cottages have been built on the waste, and have no back premises and no room in front for offices. In such a cottage, with one bedroom, live Charles May, with his wife and three children, eldest girl 17. The cottage inside was neatly kept, but the midden and offices close in front of the door were anything but pleasant. For this cottage May pays 1*s*. 2*d*. a week.

41. Woolstone - Pop., 256 - Acr., 1,674.
Cultivation mixed.

Mr. W. J. Butler, occupier and guardian, says, "The cottages here are better than many in the neigh-"bourhood. Some are unoccupied. They are well "situated for the farms. Though I know of no evil "results from overcrowding, it would be better if "some new ones on a three-roomed plan were built. "The supply of water and ventilation are good. "Every cottage has an allotment of garden ground "conveniently situated, and most have a small piece "of garden in front. The allotment is 25 poles."

ABINGDON UNION.

42. Cumnor - Pop., 1,021 - Acr., 6,800.
Cultivation mixed.

Rev. F. G. Henley says, "The cottages are fair "and improving. There is sufficient for the labour. "Some few are crowded, but not as a rule. We have "never heard of any case of immorality resulting "from it. Plenty of water to nearly all. They are "old fashioned cottages. Nearly all gardens or allot-"ments; most of the people have both. The allot-"ments are about half a mile from the village.

"The women in this parish do slop work, *i.e.* "smock frock, trousers, and waistcoat making for the "Oxford and Abingdon ready-made shops. They "earn, take the year through, about 4*s*. a week, but "have to work late to do it."

43. Frilford - Pop., 1,111 - Acr., 4,948.
Cultivation mixed.

J. Aldworth, Esq., landowner, says of the cottages, "They are very good, not enough in number to supply "labour, well situated, not overcrowded, plenty of "water, and well ventilated. They have all good "gardens."

Berkshire.

Mr. Culley.

B.
j.

44. Kingston Bagpuze - Pop., 283 - Acr., 1,180.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

J. Blandy Jenkins, Esq., landowner, says, "The "cottages are mostly in good order, and are more than "sufficient for the supply of labour, and are conve- "niently situated, and are not overcrowded; are well "supplied with water, and are well ventilated. All "the cottages in my parish have good gardens adjoin- "ing them, and I should say that in the neighbour- "hood generally they have gardens."

45. Longcot - Pop., 446.
Cultivation mixed.

Mr. John Fairthorne, occupier and guardian, says of the cottages, "They are not very good, but quite "sufficient for the supply of labour. They are con- "veniently situated and not overcrowded. They are "well supplied with water and well ventilated. All "the cottages in the parish have gardens or allot- "ments."

46. Steventon - Pop., 886 - Acr., 2,382.
Chiefly arable; rich loam.

This is an uninclosed parish, the Dean and Chapter of Westminster being lords of the manor; it is now in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and will probably soon be enclosed. The following is extracted from the Assistant Commissioner's notes on this village:—

Eleven old thatched cottages of the very worst description near the railway station by the side of the brook, which drains any filth washed into it and sewers to make the tea of the inhabitants. These cottages have each of them one bedroom, *i. e.* a room open to the thatch, which in any other house would be called an attic, with a window on the floor, and are approached by a ladder. One of these, in which Wm. Brewer lives, belongs to a maltster in Abingdon, for which, with a shed at the back, he pays 2*s.* a week rent; two belong to a charity and are let at 6*d.* per week, and eight belong to the parish and are let at 6*d.* per week. Anything more unfit, inside and out, for human habitation it would be difficult to conceive. In one lives a Mrs. Prior and her daughter and five children. There are two very bad cottages on the hill above, one belonging to the man who occupies it, and the other to the railway company. Railway workmen occupy the best cottages in this village, which is badly supplied with clean water and very much too well supplied with dirty. If there is not always typhoid fever in Steventon, it is not for want of a standing invitation.

46*a*. In 1864 a very excellent school was erected in Steventon at a total cost of 1,066*l*. 8*s*., which was made up by the following contributions:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Sale of old school	160	0	0
Government grant	174	10	0
Grant from National Society	30	0	0
Oxford Diocesan Education Society	20	0	0
Offertory at Ruridecanal meeting	3	0	0
Church collection	15	8	0
Dean and Chapter of Westminster (lords of the manor)	100	0	0
The Rev. H. Waddington, vicar	433	0	0
Subscriptions, chiefly from residents in the parish	130	10	0
	£1,066	8	0

[The living is described in the Clergy List as of the annual value of 160*l*., and in the County Directory as being worth 260*l*.]

WALLINGFORD UNION.

47. Long Wittenham - Pop., 583 - Acr., 2,115.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck says, "The cottages in this parish are in bad condition (the neighbouring parishes, Clifton and Little Wittenham, are better); they are nearly all in the village, scarcely sufficient for the supply of labour required; their situation with reference to the farms is a minor evil. I do not know of *direct* moral evils with reference to overcrowding, that is an evil. Well supplied with water, but generally badly ventilated.

"The cottages in this parish (and neighbourhood) have generally fairly good gardens. I let five acres of land near the village in 50 allotments. I have reason to believe this has worked well. The rent 5*s*. per annum.

"There are about 22 cottages belonging to St. John's college, nearly all let on lease or copyhold with the farms. They are in *very bad* condition."

47*a*. MY DEAR SIR, March 13th, 1869.

I SEND you an account or rather abstract of an account of the school in this parish for 22 years, up to the time the children may be cast on their own resources. It is a curious fact that in a parish purely agricultural so many should have left the parish, the number of emigrants does not include those who have died abroad, this would make it about 30. It is a great mistake to think that our rural population sticks to one place; this is so no doubt when they are settled in life, but the young bees certainly leave the hive—especially the females. If they looked to field labour this would not be the case.

Yours faithfully,

G. Culley, Esq. J. C. CLUTTERBUCK.

An account of the children who have passed through the school at Long Wittenham, from 1833 to 1854 inclusive.

Population of the parish, varying from 550 to 600.
First admission 57, when the school was opened.
Average of admissions yearly 20.

Total during 22 years - 213 males, 187 females.

Of these,—

Known to be dead, some having left the parish	75
Living in the parish at present	128
Left the parish	197

As a rule the best conducted have left the parish. Of these 25 have emigrated either to the United States or to Australia or New Zealand.

It is difficult to ascertain the time under instruction; most were admitted as infants at 3 years. There has been a decided tendency of late, and by a somewhat regular progression, to leave school at an earlier age.

None, that I am aware of, have been tried or convicted of any serious offence.

The period taken includes all that may be fairly supposed to be on their own resources.

The whole number admitted to the present time, March 1869, is 648 from February 1833.

Of these there are now in the parish 83 males and 45 females; left the parish 85 males and 112 females. This excess of females leaving the parish is due to marriage and domestic service.

48. South Moreton - Pop., 371 - Acr., 1,300.
Cultivation is mixed.

Mr. S. Hart, occupier, says, "Some very good "cottages and some convenient for the farm. All "the cottages have good gardens.

"Carters are hired by the year from Michaelmas, "and unless it is stated at the hiring that we will "not keep a man in sickness, we are bound to do so. "I have five cottages let with my farm, and I think "every farm ought to have such cottages for the use "of shepherds, cattle-men, and carters. My carters "have 12*s*. a week, a cottage and garden rent free, "and 3*l*. at Michaelmas; they get a week or two to "reap by piece work in harvest.

"My shepherd has 12*s*. a week, cottage and gar- "den rent free, and 3*l*. at Michaelmas; he also has "1*l*. for lambing and supper for a month, and in har- "vest he gets some reaping with his wife.

" Day-labourers are now at 11*s.* a week, they were " at 12*s.* a week ago, but we sunk them 1*s.* because " corn went down (December 1868). They have 20*s.* " a week in harvest for four weeks, and what more " they can earn (with a wife and child they generally " draw 2*l.* or 3*l.* more); for carting they have 3*s.* a " day. In hay time they have 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day " and beer. We allow a gallon a day, but they are " never satisfied. One of my neighbours gives 1*s.* " extra per day instead of beer.

" Women have 8*d.* for short days, 1*s.* when work- " ing men's hours, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for long days in har- " vest and hay time."

BRADFIELD UNION.

49. Beenham - Pop., 505 - Acr., 1,728.
Cultivation is chiefly arable.

Rev. T. H. Bushnell says, " The construction of " the cottages is too various to admit of general " description. Ventilation is usually by means of a " window which can be opened, fire-places are usually " stopped up by the tenants. Drainage is very de- " fective, the sewage forcing its way into open ditches " at the back of the cottages. Water supply is also " defective, the people in a dry summer being obliged " to go long distances to procure sufficient water. A " large majority of the cottages have no, or very " small, gardens attached to them. Some belong to " the landowners, most to small tradesmen. Rent " varies from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a week."

49*a.* The accounts for 1868 of the Beenham school show that the total expenditure for the year amounted to 41*l.* 11*s.* 8½*d.*, of which 17*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* was paid by school pence and sale of books, leaving 33*l.* 15*s.* 6½*d.* to be made up by subscription. This school is a very efficient one, and is conducted at this comparatively low cost from the fact that the salary of the mistress only amounts to 22*l.* 10*s.* per annum

The clothing club shows an expenditure of 66*l.* 6*s.*, and is provided for as follows :—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Deposits	49	14	8
Interest	1	9	7
Subscriptions in aid	15	1	9
	£66	6	0

50. Bradfield - Pop., 1,167 - Acr., 4,020.

Rev. T. Stevens says, " The cottages in this parish " are not good, the rooms small and ventilation bad. " Very few cottages have three rooms; the majority " have two, but some only one, bedroom. Water " supply in some localities bad. Rent about 3*l.* per " annum."

50*a. Mr. Charles Witherington*, occupier and guardian, says, " The cottages are generally bad; they are " deficient in number for the supply of the labour re- " quired; they are very inconveniently situated with " respect to the farms; they are not overcrowded " now, as the guardians in board have attacked that " nuisance vigorously. In places the cottages are " badly supplied with water and badly ventilated. " The garden ground varies in size and quality very " much. Some gardens are very bad, as a rule only " about from 10 to 15 perches. No allotment ground. " I believe that a larger garden would enable the " man to pay for a better cottage a fair rent. I " should like to see one rood of ground to each " cottage, and every one contain at least two if not " three bedrooms."

50*b. Mrs. Wm. Sidy.*—" My husband is a farm la- " bourer, he has 11*s.* a week now when he gets work " full time. We pay 30*s.* rent for our cottage (a very " poor thatched one) and garden. Wages were 12*s.* " about six weeks ago (January 1869); they have sunk " them because bread is cheaper. There are not many " men out of work about here. I worked out a little " before I was married and a short time after. Most " young women get out to service and that is a great " deal the best place for them."

50*c.* Three very poor cottages at Tuch Clump and two or three poor ones at Cock Lane. (The cottages in this and some of the neighbouring parishes, as Beenham, Ufton, Sulhampstead, Burghfield, &c. are very much scattered, there being no particular collection of cottages which could be called a village.)

50*d. Mrs. John Froude.*—" My husband (a carter) " has 12*s.* a week, a cottage rent free (a very poor one " with one bedroom), and 2*l.* at Michaelmas; when " a carter pays his own rent he has 5*l.* or 6*l.* at " Michaelmas. In this parish the men have 11*s.*, " in Beenham they have 10*s.* I have six children at " home and two girls out at service; they went at 13. " Most girls get out to service easily here, and its " better for them than field work. I have two boys " at work, one of 11 hired by the year as a plough- " boy; he gets 4*s.* a week and 2*l.* at Michaelmas; the " other is 10, he is to get 3*s.*, he goes with a pony " cart for a farmer." The house next Mrs. Froude's has five persons sleeping in one bedroom, the youngest 14.

51. Burghfield - Pop., 1,139 - Acr., 4,133.
Cultivation is mixed.

Mr. A. F. M. Druce, occupier and guardian, says, " The cottages are very bad, being principally built " by the labourers themselves on waste grounds. " They are insufficient for the supply of the labour " required; they are not conveniently situated with " respect to the farms; to my knowledge the cottages " are not overcrowded; in many parts they are badly " supplied with water. The chief part of the cottages " have good gardens."

51*a.* [Most of the cottages in this parish have been built by the labourers themselves, and are held by them at a quit rent of 4*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* 6*d.*, according to the quantity and quality of garden ground attached to them. All such cottages have ground varying in quantity from about 20 to 80 poles (⅜th to ½ an acre), and I found that some of the quit rents had lately been raised. These squatters cottages are scattered about all over the parish, but most plentifully in the common; the pattern is usually the same, though the condition of the cottages varies from tolerably good to very bad (some examples, such as those occupied by William Crocker, James Day, and others, being altogether unfit for habitation). The usual squatter's cottage consists of walls of mud or brick, or both, with a thatch roof enclosing one living and one bedroom, both on the ground floor, with occasionally an additional so-called bedroom covered by a lean-to at the back. The occupiers of all the cottages which I visited pay their quit-rent to the Earl of Shrewsbury. There is a parish school near the church and another school erected and maintained by Mr. Bland, placed as conveniently as possible for squatters on the common. Some part of the parish lies wide of the school. I visited one family living in a very bad waste cottage with half an acre of garden round it, for which 8*s.* 6*d.* is paid. There are six children of this family (five above 7 years of age), none of whom have ever been at school (the cottage is two miles from the school). The walls of this cottage were largely adorned with sheets of the *Police News*, whilst those of another waste cottage in good condition close to it were ornamented with very presentable scriptural pictures. The result of the cottage system in this parish is that one occupier of 500 acres has no labourer (except some boys lodging in his house) who comes less than 1¼ miles to his work (one comes 3 miles). This gentleman suffers so much from the want of cottages that he informed me he had offered 7 per cent. on the outlay if his landlord would build a sufficient number for his servants who have to attend to live-stock.—G. C.]

52. Englefield - Pop., 392 - Acr., 1,500.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. F. J. Eyre says, " The cottages belong to the " landowner, and the rents are moderate."

Berkshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

The cottages in this parish are many of them (29) new and all well cared for.—G.C.

52*a*. The following evidence was given by Mr. Turner, agent to Mr. Benyon.

"The parish of Englefield has one labourer's cottage for every 21 acres of land; the parish of Mortimer with West End has one labourer's cottage for every 22 acres; the parish of Ufton has one labourer's cottage for every 31 acres, but three-tenths of it is woodland.

"We have built during the time I have been agent, namely, 12 preceding years, 64 new labourers' cottages at an average cost of 110*l*. each or 220*l*. the pair; six others are now in hand, exclusive of school houses and curate's cottage; 11 new farm houses with entire sets of new buildings; 4 new farm houses smaller; 1 doctor's house; 1 public house (small)."

Of wages Mr. Turner, who has charge of one of Mr. Benyon's farms, says, "I have paid between "Michaelmas 1867 and Michaelmas 1868 to F. Cooper "(our best carter) 39*l*. 16*s*. 10*d*., S. Horn (a useful "good labourer) 34*l*. 16*s*. 1*d*., C. Collins (an average "good carter) 35*l*. 4*s*. 10*d*.; these sums include all "money payments."

52*b*. The following account of men's earnings is given by Mr. William King, who has charge of Mr. Benyon's other farm.

"Cash received for 52 weeks' labour performed for R. Benyon, Esq., M.P., on Chalkpit Farm, Englefield, Berks, from January 3rd till December 31st:—

	£	*s*.	*d*.
By James Wickins	37	1	5
By David Day	38	6	10
By George Allen	36	12	8
By Thomas Hoin	37	19	8
By Thomas Dixon	35	4	4
By James Allen, senior	35	1	4

53. Grazeley - Pop., 648.
Cultivation is mixed.

W. J. Mount Esq., J.P., says, "Speaking generally "the cottages in this parish are bad; in the neighbourhood I think they are better. There are quite "enough for the requirements of the farms, and conveniently situated for that purpose. Many of them "are badly supplied with water, and the ventilation "indifferent. Some of them are overcrowded, and "the moral tone of the inhabitants is evidently "lowered by this. There are gardens, and in some "cases there are allotments in addition."

54. Mortimer-West-End - Pop., 461 - Acr., 2,363.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

"In my parish five cottages have three sleeping rooms, four of these cottages being very good; 33 have two sleeping rooms, 19 being fairly good, the rest defective as to space and repair; 26 have one sleeping room only. There are more cottages than the demand for farm labour in this place would require. They are conveniently placed with respect to the farms. Four of the two-bedroomed cottages are decidedly overcrowded. I need say nothing with respect to those with one sleeping room only; they speak for themselves. In the 12 years I have been here no facts have come to my notice which prove this want of proper accommodation to have been the cause of immorality. Such huddling together of all ages and both sexes must obviously degrade the moral sense. Water supply good. Ventilation in most of the cottages sufficient. All the cottages here have good gardens.

"My 'parish,' ecclesiastically speaking, does not include the whole of Mortimer-West-End, which is a distinct parish so far as the support of the poor, &c., is concerned. The population of my district is 345, and my return of the cottages refers to this portion of the tithing only. I have not included in it houses inhabited by those who are not usually included among the 'labouring classes,' *e. g.* families of gentlemen's servants, small tradesmen, public-houses, &c.

"The indifference of some of the parents to their children's education shows itself in the irregularity of the children's attendance, not in withdrawing them altogether from school before they are of the usual age for leaving school. Except in the matter of shoes, poverty is no hindrance to the children's schooling, for I have never met with a woman who did not admit that the 1*d*. fee was amply repaid in the week by the saving in her children's clothes. The mothers (three) of illegitimate children have all come home pregnant from service."

55. Ufton - Pop., 367 - Acr., 2,080.
Cultivation is mixed. 600 acres in woods.

Rev. Jas. Fraser says, "The cottages are generally "of brick and slated. A considerable number are "thatched; in many the lower rooms are not ceiled. "The rooms vary considerably in size. The only ventilation is by doors and windows and chimneys; a "large number are very smoky. There is not often "a nuisance in respect of drainage. The water "supply is fairly accessible and abundant. In some "cases there is a deficiency of outhouses and of privies. "Almost all the cottages belong to the landowners; "only one belongs to a tradesman. The rent is moderate, from 1*s*. a week to 3*l*. and 3*l*. 10*s*. a year. "*Most* have good gardens, *all* have *some* garden. "But, speaking generally, the cottages are not in a good "state of repair, and a few originally erected by "squatters on the waste, and which are at present "held upon lifehold under the lord of the manor, are "unfit for habitation, and only fit to be condemned."

55*a*. *George Brimsden*, 18, hired by the year at 8*s*. a week and 5*l*. at Michaelmas; had 7*s*. and 4*l*. last year. Has lodgings found him in farm house, but no board. Can read and write well (was at school till he was 14). Does not think any of the other four lads who lodge with him can read or write.

The cottages, which are scattered about over the parish, are sufficiently described by Mr. Fraser.

55*b*. Speaking of the lad Brimsden and of the custom of hiring lads by the year and finding them lodgings in the farm house or elsewhere, Mr. Fraser says:—

"He (Brimsden) is one of those boys hired by the year and put, a lot of them, into a place which they occupy by themselves, with nobody responsible for looking after them, who are utterly ungetatable by any civilizing or improving influences. It is an arrangement which I should be heartily glad to see broken down. The boys themselves,—at least the mass of them,—like it, because it makes them independent; but it is fraught with mischief to them in every way. These particular lads on Case's farm,—there are four of them,—live 2½ miles off; so it has been hopeless to persuade them to attend night school.

"I endeavoured to persuade him to be confirmed, but without success.

"I quite agree with your suggestion as to the proper remedy for doing without these 'off-hand' boys, viz., a sufficient number of cottages attached to the farms."

56. Sulhampstead - Pop., 432.

A parish with cottages scattered about in it and no village. The chief landowner has 51 cottages, and eight in the adjoining parish of Burghfield. All of these cottages are in good repair, with two or three bedrooms; and the Assistant Commissioner was very much struck with the neatness and cleanliness of about 12 which he visited. Of four of these 12 the mistresses work out when they can get work, and their houses are equally well kept.

All the cottages appeared to keep pigs and a good supply of bacon, with a well stored dresser, and shelves were prominent features in each cottage. Some of these cottages are very roomy, being old farm houses converted, and some are newly built brick cottages of a very good description. The rent, with a garden of

from 16 to 20 poles (which all have), varies from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

56*a*. *Mr. Thos. Leaver,* bailiff to M. G. Thoyts, Esq. —"All the cottages on Mr. Thoyts' estate are in good "condition, and are well looked after. There are 51 "in Sulhampstead and eight in Burghfield, scattered "about the parishes in blocks of two cottages gene- "rally. Each cottage has a garden of from 16 to 20 "poles, which I consider sufficient. The rent varies "from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. Mr. Thoyts ploughs "with two horses in reins, and does not employ any "ploughboys. Ploughmen when with horses work "from 7 a.m. till 11 a.m. and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in "summer, and as long as it is light in winter. Mr. "Thoyts uses a steam plough; the two engineers "have 18*s.* a week each, and the man who guides the "plough has 14*s.* These men have no extras. We "have three lads of from 16 to 17, who are called "engine boys. They are paid 6*s.* 3*d.* to 7*s.* a week, "and have 4*l.* to 5*l.* at Michaelmas. A carter has "12*s.* to 11*s.* a week, as ordinary wages are 11*s.* "or 10*s.*, and 6*l.* 10*s.* to 6*l.* at Michaelmas. A "cowman has the same, with 6*l.* at Michaelmas. "Shepherd has 14*s.* a week and 6*l.* at Michaelmas, "and 1*l.* per hundred for all lambs cut and tailed. "We do not cut our corn with a machine, because we "can get plenty of hands."

Newbury Union.

57. Shaw-cum-Donnington - Pop., 680 - Acr., 1,989.

The chief landowner, Mr. H. R. Eyre, has 35 cottages for 1,500 acres, of which 150 are wood, 150 water meadow, and 1,200 let in farms, chiefly arable. Of these 20 are newly-built very good cottages, with three bed-rooms, built in blocks of two each, costing from 300*l.* to 400*l.* per block, and are placed in different parts of the estate, where healthy sites presented themselves convenient for supply of labour to the different farms. The other 15 cottages belonging to the estate are old cottages enlarged and improved. There are in addition cottages built on the waste and on charity lands, which supply labour to this property. The 20 new cottages were built to replace a number of old ones inconveniently placed at one end of the parish, the proprietor regarding cottages in the same light as other necessary farm offices. Each cottage has 20 poles of garden, and some of the labourers have in addition 20 poles of allotment ground, paying for the cottage and garden 4*l.* a year, and for the 20 poles of allotment ground 6*s.*, *i.e.*, a farmer's rent plus the rates and taxes paid by the landlord. The whole educational provision for this parish is left to Mr. Eyre, who is now waiting for some Governmental interference to compel the other landowners to bear their share of the expense necessary for enlarging the school. Mr. Eyre is decidedly in favour of an educational rate for such purposes levied on the *owners* of property.

58. Thatcham - Pop., 2,729 - Acr., 8,000.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

G. White, Esq., landowner and occupier.—"The "cottages are certainly on the whole not very good. "I think them perhaps worse in this parish than in "some others of the union. They are quite sufficient "for our own labour, and supply labourers to other "parishes. My own farm has not a single cottage. "The late Mr. Tull and Mr. Northway bought up "cottages to exclude liberal voters from the county. "The results to morality are precisely what would be "expected under similar circumstances. The water "supply is almost nil, and little or no ventilation."

"My own cottages in the adjoining parish of Shaw have excellent gardens, and out of the village of Thatcham most cottages have tolerable gardens. In the village most persons have allotments conveniently situated, but expensive enough. The allotments are let by the parson and by the chief tenant farmer at 6*d.* a pole, four pounds an acre!!"

59. Welford - Pop., 1,030 - Acr., 5,086.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. T. Tanner, owner, occupier, and guardian.— "A great part of the land of this parish belongs to "C. Eyre, Esq., and he has done and is doing a good "deal to the cottages under his control, and takes "care they are not overcrowded. Those belonging "to some others are not so good, and especially where "they belong to small proprietors.

"The greater part of the cottagers throughout the parish have a cottage and 20 poles of ground for 1*s.* per week."

59*a*. Copy of a letter from Mr. Tanner to the Assistant Commissioner.

Dear Sir,

Yours to hand of the 7th inst., which I will endeavour to answer. As to Mr. Cherry's (chairman of the Hungerford Union) observation that the work is left to old men and boys: for the last few years the drain of young men from the country districts has been very great, but since the stoppage, to a great extent, of engineering works, the discharge of soldiers, and the railway companies not being very prosperous, there has been rather a reaction, and this winter we have seen more young men out of employ than for some time past.

I do not think a scarcity of labour would injure to any great extent the employer or the employed, as we should bring machinery to our assistance and we should soon get a more intelligent class of men. I think you will find as a rule where there is a resident landlord, who is in a position to assist his poorer neighbours, that the agricultural labourer is better off than he has ever been. That is the case here. You will find a very few cases of real distress, and where it does exist it is from the effects of drunkenness, and that is caused from the "beershop," the curse of this country, being brought to their own doors. I think if our rulers would turn their attention to this, it would be a certain step towards improving the condition of the working class. They themselves would be glad to have the temptation removed.

With regard to the more immediate inquiry, I think very few children are employed under nine years of age in this locality. There may be a few bird keeping, attending cattle, &c., for a few weeks in the summer. Since there have been so many openings for young men, the labourers are anxious that their children should have a certain amount of education, and I have one or two cases where the parents have stipulated that the boy should go to school for the winter months from November 1st to February 1st, or longer if I could spare them. I do not think this parish quite a fair specimen, as the poor have so many advantages which are not to be found in many places.

I have given in the return a statement of the actual earnings of three men, exclusive of anything earned by the wife and children during harvest. I think they may be taken as a fair average, as I have men (whom you would not call skilled labourers) who earn a good deal more, and some who are scarcely able bodied who earn less. I find in many places the cottage accommodation very bad and very crowded, particularly where there is no resident landlord or where you are dependent on speculators for cottages. I think a great deal of evil arises from young girls working in the fields, and if they could be restricted from it they would be induced to go to service and eventually do better for themselves.

There can be no doubt one of the most crying evils of the day, both in town and country, and which are the source of nearly every evil which befalls the labouring class, are the gin shops in the town and the beershops in the country. I do not think that any great amount of evil arises from agricultural labour, either mentally or physically, except through the medium of the latter of these abominations.

Yours respectfully,

G. Culley, Esq. Thos. Tanner.

Berkshire.
Mr. Culley.
B.
j.

59*b*. The following is the statement of the earnings of three average able-bodied labourers referred to by Mr. Tanner in his letter :—

No. 1 earned in 1867, 39*l*. 19*s*. 8*d*.; in 1868, 36*l*. 12*s*. 4*d*.
No. 2 „ „ 40*l*. 9*s*. 6*d*.; „ 36*l*. 17*s*. 6*d*.
No. 3 „ „ 36*l*. 0*s*. 2*d*.; „ 32*l*. 11*s*. 2*d*.

In a note Mr. Tanner says, "Nos. 1 and 2 had a "better opportunity from task work than No. 3, who "has the lowest amount of earnings of any able-bodied "man I employ."

It will be observed, that these men earned on an average 3*l*. 9*s*. 5*d*. less in 1868 than in 1867, and that in both years they held the same relative position in regard to amount of earnings. In 1867 their average weekly earning was 14*s*. 9*d*., in 1868 it was 13*s*. 7*d*.

60. Winterbourne - Pop. 377.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

Mr. R. Fisher, occupier and guardian : "The cot- "tages are generally near the farms, and most of them "have gardens."

Hungerford Union.

60*a*. Kintbury - Pop., 1,802 - Acr., 7,645.

G. C. Cherry, Esq. landowner and chairman of board of guardians, says, "The condition of the cot- "tages is not such as I wish to see it. The system "of drainage in the village is bad. There are many "small cottages, seldom more than two sleeping rooms, "with privies built close to the living apartments, and "in many instances one only to three or four families. "Cottages are much wanted in the parish. Those "which exist are tolerably convenient to the farms, "but I do not regard proximity to the farms as of "permanent importance in the placing of cottages. "To be near the church, the schools, and the village "shop is at least equally important. Some of the "cottages are overcrowded, on which state evil results "to morality must follow, but I cannot quote any "particular instance of such mischief. Probably the "bad state of the home is generally only one of several "causes of immorality. The supply of water is good "from wells and dipping places. The cottages are "situate in rows or are detached, and the opportunities "of ventilation are sufficient, but frequently they are "not used. Most of the cottages have gardens, but "probably it would be an exaggeration to speak of "the gardens being on an average 12 perches in ex- "tent. There are convenient allotments of land for "some."

Wokingham Union.

61. Barkham - Pop., 280 - Acr., 1,050.
Cultivation is mixed.

Rev. A. Roberts says, "The cottages, with a few "exceptions, are commodious and owned by land- "owners. The average rent is 1*s*. 6*d*. a week. The "population in this parish is so exceptionally small "that there is some difficulty in answering some of the "questions in this paper. We have only about 30 "cottages of any kind, and about 10 labourers' "families."

62. Bearwood - Pop., 750.

The cottages in this village and parish belong to the landowner. Most of them are new and in every respect excellent. There is also an excellent school maintained by the landowner without any Government grant, the master not being certificated. The attendance, which not only includes all the available children in the parish, but many from neighbouring parishes, some children walking as many as four miles to school, attests the success of the teacher, as well as the general management of this school. Absence without sufficient cause is looked upon as so grave an offence that children seldom present themselves after missing a day's attendance without an explanatory note from their parents, some specimens of which were shown to the Assistant Commissioner, as well as a medical certificate which the parents of one family had thought it necessary to send to the master. The architectural arrangements of this school are very good.

62*a*. Evidence of *Mr. Simmons*, bailiff to Mr. Walter.

"I asked four of our men this morning what size of garden or allotment they would like. They all said that 25 poles, the quantity which Mr. Walter allows, is sufficient. Day men in this neighbourhood are paid from 11*s*. to 12*s*. a week. When at day work we pay 12*s*. and give as much piece work as possible. In summer almost everything is done by piece work.

"Our carters look after two horses each. They get 12*s*. a week, a cottage and garden, worth 4*l*. a year, and 2*l*. at Michaelmas. That, with about 1*l*. for extra hours in harvest and beer in haytime and harvest, is the whole wage. Ten of our 28 men are carters. The use of the steam plough reduces the number of horses, and therefore of carters. It makes way, however, for some labourers at higher wages.

"With Howard's machinery we employ—

1 engineer	at 18*s*. a week.
1 windlass man	at 15*s*. a week.
2 anchor men	at 14*s*. a week each.
1 ploughman	at 14*s*. a week ; and
3 boys	at 8*s*. a week each.

"Our drainers at piece-work earn about 18*s*. a week.

"A man and his wife in harvest should earn 30*s*. a week. For day work in harvest we pay 3*s*. a day and beer, say 3*s*. 6*d*. a day. It doesn't much matter, however, how much many men earn ; all beyond what is absolutely necessary to keep their family goes to the beershop.

"Cottages are very dear about here, and if the farmers had them they might be tempted to let them to their labourers at high rents.

"A five-course cropping, taking oats after wheat, is very common about here. Sometimes they make it six by taking wheat, beans, oats after clover."

63. Finchampstead - Pop., 639 - Acr., 3,926.
Cultivation is mixed.

A large portion of this parish is covered with heath and fir wood growing on sand and moorland. A good many cottages have been built lately by Mr. Walter of Bearwood, who is one of the chief landowners ; a free school was also built a few years ago by the same gentleman, and is now supported by subscription. Scattered about the woods are many huts of broom-dashers who earn a hard living by making heath brooms or besoms. The larger proportion of the broom-dashers live in huts built by themselves, for which, with about 1½ acres of poor land, they pay a rent varying from 10*s*. to 15*s*.; others live in brick cottages run up by speculators, paying a rent of about 2*s*. 3*d*. a week for cottage and garden. The huts built by the broom dashers for their own occupation are very much of the same character as the squatters' cottages described in the notes on Burghfield parish. Before the introduction of machine-made brooms, or the instruments which now serve to do the work of brooms, broom dashing was a pretty thriving trade. In those days, too, the heath and handles were to be had for the gathering or cutting, now all is changed except the habits of those who stick to the trade, and prefer their hut on the heath to a better cottage with the restraint of a village or town. Broom dashers have now hard work to earn a living, and the trade is evidently dying out. In manner the broom dashers are somewhat blunt, after the fashion of those who are lords of all they survey, but the bluntness is as far removed from rudeness as from servility. After conversing with these people you cannot help regretting that broom dashing will soon be a thing of the past.

63*a*. The beerhouse nuisance crops up in all its strength in this parish ; wherever a bit of land can be purchased a speculative brewer or publican runs up three or four cottages and a public, trusting to a good

return from the sale of beer if not from the rent of the cottages; if such a bit of land can be obtained near any cottages already in existence so much the better for the beer speculation.

64. Wokingham - Pop., 4,144 - Acr., 8,131.
Cultivation mixed.

Captain Walter, occupier, says, "The condition of "the cottages is fair, vastly superior in every respect "to the houses occupied by the labouring classes in "towns. The supply is not sufficient for labour re- "quired, and I consider no farm complete without "the landlord finds ample accommodation for all the "labourers required to work it."

64*a*. Many children of the agricultural labouring class attend a school attached to the district church, both of which have been recently built by Mr. Walter of Bearwood, who is one of the landowners of the parish. At the time this school was built a Government grant was refused on the ground that such a school was not necessary. There were 95 children in attendance on the day on which the Assistant Commissioner visited it, and the annual grant for last year was, he was informed, upwards of 50*l*.

64*b*. *Captain Walter*, occupier, gives the following evidence as to wages, earnings of men, &c.: "Collier, "a thatcher, hay-cutter, &c., receives 2*s*. 3*d*. per load "of 36 trusses (this price includes delivery into barn); "he receives the same price for cutting a load of hay "into chaff (engine power and machine being found "him); for thatching he receives 10*d*. per square "(100 feet). When not employed at piece work his "ordinary wages are 2*s*. 2*d*. per diem in winter and "2*s*. 6*d*. in summer. When his wife and boy assist "him their joint earnings are about 35*s*. a week at "piece work. Alexander, shepherd, has a good "house, &c. rent free, wages 14*s*. a week, 30*s*. per "hundred for lambs, and extra pay for shearing. "Small, a carter, has 12*s*. a week, with 6*l*. at Mi- "chaelmas, 3*d*. per hour overtime, and in harvest 6*d*. "per diem in lieu of beer, and 6*d*. per diem for long "journeys. Willis, a labourer, employed chiefly at task "work such as draining and trenching, can earn from "15*s*. to 18*s*. a week. As a rule, every sort of work "on Tangley farm is let by the piece, and in course "of time we hope there will be scarcely an ex- "ception to this. Last year I mowed more than 100 "acres of grass by Wood's machine, giving the men "3*d*. per acre in addition to their beer money and "standing wages. At this rate they were able to "earn 5*s*. per diem of eight working hours.

"Labourers are generally wanting in energy and "intelligence, and I do not think that the best "school education will be of much avail where farms "are small, and the occupiers consequently but little "raised above their men."

64*c*. *Mr. George Ross*, bailiff to Captain Walter, says, "The average wages of our day-labourers are in "winter 12*s*. to 13*s*. a week, in summer 13*s*. to 15*s*. "with an allowance of beer in hay time and harvest. "Strong active men draining can earn from 20*s*. to "22*s*. a week, and trenching from 15*s*. to 22*s*. a "week, with moderately dry weather.

"It is desirable that boys should be kept pretty "closely at school until they are 12 years of age, and, "even if they are not refreshed with a little schooling "for some years after, few of them will make the "farm labourer that is wanted in these times.

"I think it is desirable that females under 14 years "of age should not be employed in agriculture; after "14 they might be employed in weeding and assist- "ing in hay and harvest work. If they are well "taken care of at home I do not think that agricul- "tural work will hurt the female constitution or "affect their after usefulness."

[Mr. Ross, who gives this evidence, is a native of Aberdeenshire, and has raised himself from the position of an ordinary farm-labourer.]

Windsor Union.

65. Windsor.
Cultivation chiefly pasture.

Mr. Henry Tait, occupier for Her Majesty, says, "The cottages on this farm and all the Crown pro- "perty are good and convenient, and are well situated "for the farms, but it is not generally the case in the "parish and district; they are badly constructed and "overcrowded, and not well situated for the farms, "they are not well supplied with water, and badly "ventilated."

"The cottages generally have not good gardens, "some have allotments, but too far from their cottages."

65*a*. [All the labourers in regular employment on the Shaw farm are housed on the premises except four. Seven single men have lodgings in what in Scotland would be called a bothie (except that it approaches nearer a "model lodging" than an ordinary "northern "bothie"); downstairs are a living and cooking room, and upstairs a separate bedroom or partitioned recess for a bed for each man. These men cook for them- selves, an operation which generally consists of boiling a bit of bacon once a week. The bothie or barrack is looked after by the wife of a ploughman who lives next door. The same barrack or bothie system exists at the dairy and Flemish farm. In the latter case as well as at the Norfolk farm some of the labourers come a considerable distance to their work, and the Flemish farm barrack is only visited by a female overlooker twice a week. Five men are housed in this manner, each having a separate bedroom, with the same down- stairs arrangement as at the Shaw farm.]

65*b*. Of the wages, *Mr. Brebner*, manager of the Norfolk and Flemish farms, says, "Wages for day "men are now (January 1869) 13*s*. a week. Carters, "single men, hired by the year, have 10*s*. a week "and 8*l*. at Michaelmas, with an addition of 5*s*. a "quarter if they keep their harness clean."

65*c*. [At the sawing yard and workshops which are in the Park the three or four cows are kept by Her Majesty for the use of the workmen and their families, the milk being sold to them at a very low price, just sufficient to pay the wages of the man who looks after the cows.

65*d*. There is an educational and industrial school in Windsor Park, entirely supported by the Queen, where about 120 children of persons employed by Her Majesty are educated free of expense; of these 50 boys and 50 girls are clothed (the boys in jackets and knickerbockers of black and white checked Scotch cloth and black leggings, the girls in a dress of a smaller check, with a scarlet cloak for winter); 30 boys and as many girls receive a dinner every school day, and 12 boys and as many girls under 7 years of age are admitted without either of these privileges. The school is an excellent building, with all the appliances necessary for teaching the girls cooking, baking, and washing, and there is a large garden where the boys receive their out-door training. A child of any person employed by Her Majesty is eligible after seven years of age if it can pass the first standard of the Revised Code, and may remain, a boy till he is 15, a girl till she is 16, during which time each child costs the Queen about 6*l*. 10*s*. per annum, according to the information I received from Mr. Warren, master of the school.—G. C.]

Rules of the Royal Schools, Windsor Park.

Admission.

1. That none but the children of parents actually employed in the service of the Queen be eligible to the school, except by Her Majesty's commands.

2. That the school consist of 50 boys and 50 girls, clothed uniformly during school-hours at the expense of H.M. the Queen.

3. That 30 boys and 30 girls be provided with dinner on the days of attendance.

4. That upon a vacancy at dinner the place be supplied from the remainder, regard being had solely

Berkshire.
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j.

to the good conduct of the boy or girl in the selection made to fill up the vacancy.

5. That exclusion from the dinner be the punishment generally awarded to misconduct, either by suspension from it for one day or more, or dismissal from it altogether, according to the gravity of the offence.

6. Twelve children of both sexes under 7 years may be received into the school, but without any of the above privileges, in order to be prepared for subsequent admission; but this will not constitute any prior right of admission over other candidates, if prepared properly for the first standard (Revised Code).

Attendance.

1. The days of attendance are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

2. That the hours of attendance in school be as follows:—

From March to October from 9 till 4.30 o'clock.
From October to March from 9 till 4 o'clock.

3. That the children do attend regularly, punctually, clean, and dressed in the clothes provided by Her Majesty. These clothes are to be taken proper care of by the parents at home, according to the circular issued to them by the managers.

4. That no child be absent without making application to the master or mistress, and stating the ground of the application.

5. That if any boy or girl be absent without leave the master or mistress shall inquire into the cause; and if such absence continue and the child's attendance be in any way irregular, they shall report such child to the managers of the school.

6. That if such irregular attendance continue the child shall be dismissed.

Instruction.

1. That the school be inspected every year by an inspector from the Privy Council, and the report of such yearly inspection be forwarded to the managers, to be by them laid before Her Majesty. No boy or girl can be admitted except qualified up to the first standard.

2. That the instruction be under the care of a master and mistress, assisted by pupil-teachers and under the control and superintendence of the managers of the school.

3. That the children do pay due regard to the teaching and discipline, not only of the master and mistress, but also of the pupil teachers as their assistants.

4. That any failure in respect of this, or any inattention to their instructions, shall be at once reported to the managers.

5. That the school do open and close with prayer.

6. That the instruction be as follows:—

Careful religious and moral training.

Boys.

Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, grammar, etymology, gardening.

Girls.

Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, grammar, needlework, knitting, cooking, baking, washing, domestic economy.

7. That the hours of intellectual teaching and industrial work be specified in a time table, to be prepared by the master and mistress, and from time to time submitted to the managers for their approval.

Leaving the School.

1. That the age for leaving the school be, for the boys 15 years, for the girls 16 years.

2. That the managers have power to dismiss a child for misconduct.

3. That no child (except under special circumstances) be removed from the school without a month's notice of their intention being given by the parents to the master or mistress, and by them submitted to the managers.

By Command of Her Majesty.

Windsor Castle, 1866.

C.
j.

BERKSHIRE EVIDENCE.

APPENDIX C.

CONTAINING EVIDENCE APPLICABLE TO AREAS LARGER THAN PARISHES.

RESOLUTIONS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

Wantage Union.

66. Copy of Minute made at a Meeting of the Guardians on the 6th day of January 1869.

"Mr. Culley, an Assistant Commissioner appointed to inquire into the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, having attended the meeting for the purpose of obtaining information from the guardians; it is the opinion of the guardians that inasmuch as children under 10 years of age in agriculture are only employed during the summer in this union, no legislative interference is necessary to regulate the employment of children in agriculture."

Correctly extracted from the minute book of the Wantage Union.

Edward Ormond,
Wantage, 7th January 1869. Clerk.

[Assistant Commissioner's notes taken at the meeting of the Wantage guardians on 6th January 1869.

It was stated by the chairman that one effect of the Union Chargeability Act is that farmers instead of employing men whom they do not much want in winter as formerly, now let them go to the union, not caring to save the general fund as they did their own parish. The board decided against the desirability of legislative interference for the sake of education on the ground that the facilities for obtaining education are all that can be desired, and that children under 10 years of age are very little employed. It was generally agreed that the earning of so much money in summer and so little in winter is a cause of mischief to the labourers, whose habits are very improvident.

When the justices discharge a man from farm service who is hired by the year they divide the Michaelmas money into five portions and allow two-fifths for the harvest quarter.]

Faringdon Union.

67. The following is a copy of the resolution passed at a meeting of Faringdon board of guardians on Tuesday the 19th of January 1869, in answer to a question proposed to the board by Mr. Culley, Assistant Commissioner on the Commission appointed to inquire into the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture.

"Resolved, that it is the opinion of this board that children under 10 years of age ought not to be employed in agricultural labour."

The above resolution was carried unanimously.

[Assistant Commissioner's notes taken at the above meeting.

Great stress was laid by many guardians on the desirability of encouraging night schools, and on the growing desire for education evinced by the success of night schools in Faringdon union. A landowner who has had considerable experience in the working of the Factory Acts spoke very strongly of the benefits which had been conferred by them on the children employed in large factories.]

ABINGDON UNION.

68. At a meeting of the Abingdon board of guardians held on the 15th of February 1869,* it was resolved after a considerable discussion that "legislative interference with the employment of children in farm labour is not, as far as this union is concerned, desirable."

[Assistant Commissioner's note.—The above resolution was carried by a majority of five to three as against a resolution in favour of restricting farm labour to children (*i.e.*, boys, as girls are not so employed,) to those over 10 years of age. The chief objection to such legislative interference was that where families are large, and consist of children all or nearly all under 10 years of age, an injurious pressure would be put upon the parents by such a restriction; it was urged also that a restriction as to age unaccompanied by compulsory attendence at school would only add to the number of idlers.]

BRADFIELD UNION.

Mr. Culley, H.M. Assistant Commissioner, *re* Employment of Children, &c., in Agriculture.

Copy Minute.

69. "Mr. Culley attended and explained the objects intended by this Commission and in his being present to ask the opinion of the Board of Guardians upon the subject. After a long discussion, it was proposed by Mr. Fraser and seconded by Mr. Poole, and carried unanimously, that no child ought to be employed in agricultural labour under the age of 10 years, unless such child could produce a certificate of being able to read with facility."

[Note.—Several guardians complained of the difficulty of getting ploughboys, which would be increased by any further interference than that suggested in the resolution. It was stated at the same time that there was no lack of adult labourers.]

NEWBURY UNION.

70. Extract from the Minutes of the Board of Guardians of the Newbury Union, in the county of Berks, at their meeting, held on the 2nd day of February 1869, at their board room.

"Mr. Culley attended according to his proposal last week, and asked the opinion of the board whether, taking into consideration the demand for labour in their neighbourhood, they were prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour. On the question being put, the board recommended that no restriction should be so placed."

A true copy, dated this 6th day of February 1869.

JOHN TANNER,
Clerk of the said Board.

[Assistant Commissioner's Notes.—The above resolution was carried after a fair discussion, from which some occupiers appeared to be opposed altogether to the education of farm labourers, while others only deprecated legislative interference, on the ground that it would put an unnecessary pressure on the parents of large young families and would fail of doing any good unless school attendance was at the same time made compulsory. It was stated that schools now attracted many children by inducements other than the offer of education, such as shoe and clothing clubs. The fear of an educational rate was also frequently dwelt upon. Upon the whole the feeling of the Board was in favour of a further advance in education, but objected to a resolution in favour of a somewhat extended interference, proposed by a member of the Board, who is also a clergyman.]

HUNGERFORD UNION.

71. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians of the Hungerford Union, held this 3rd day of February 1869.

Present—G. C. Cherry, Esq., Chairman; Mr. J. Miles, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Ward, Mr. Bew, Mr. Thos. Church, F. L. Coxe, Esq., Mr. Kimber, Mr. Atherton, Mr. Redman, Mr. May, Mr. Wallis, Mr. Woodman, Mr. Edmonds, the Rev. J. Butler, Mr. Stagg, Mr. Lewis, H. R. Seymour, Esq., and Mr. Thos. Waldron.

George Culley, Esq., one of the Assistant Commissioners appointed to inquire into and report upon the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, attended the board and fully explained the purport and object of the inquiries he wished to make, particularly with reference to the employment of boys in agriculture.

And the matter having been discussed by the Board,

It was moved by G. C. Cherry, Esq., seconded by Mr. Miles, and carried *nem. con.*,—

"That, taking into consideration the demand for labour in this union and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, this board recommends that some restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour."

In accordance with such resolution, it was moved by G. C. Cherry, Esq., and seconded by Mr. Woodman,—

"That the restriction should be, that no boy under the age of 10 years should be so employed, except in the case of any boy of nine years of age who can produce a certificate of his ability to read, write, and cipher."

An amendment to the last motion was made by Mr. Bew, and seconded by Mr. Thos. Waldron,—

"That boys of the age of nine years without such qualification should be employed as farm labourers."

On the amendment being put to the meeting, the same was carried by 9 votes to 8.

[Assistant Commissioner's Notes.—The Hungerford Union maintains the children of widows receiving relief until the boys are 10 and girls 11 years of age, unless any boy or girl under these ages is actually earning wages, and there was no instance on the books on the day of the Assistant Commissioner's visit of a boy under 10 earning wages. The chairman, in moving a resolution in favour of legislative interference for the sake of education, said, "I have for a long "time seen that we should have to provide against a "short supply of labour; the farm work is now practically left to boys and old men, the younger men "go elsewhere to seek labour at higher wages. . . . . "The rate of wages we can only leave to regulate itself "according to the ordinary principles of supply and "demand; but in order to check this exodus of able-"bodied labourers we may as landowners offer the "inducement of better cottages. Nothing will check "the desire to leave the district more than a provision of better houses than exists in many of our "parishes."]

MEDICAL EVIDENCE.

72. *Mr. W. R. H. Barker*, a surgeon of 35 years' standing, one of the medical officers of Wantage Union, speaking of the employment of boys, says, "I do not "think any legislative restriction would be desirable, "as practically boys cannot be overworked two years "running, as they would refuse to be hired the second "year."

* This resolution is copied from the Assistant Commissioner's note-book.

Berkshire.
Mr. Culley.
C. j.

73. Copy of Letter to G. C. from Wm. Lightfoot, Esq., surgeon, M. O., for Harwell district of Wantage Union.

Dear Sir,

I beg to say, as far as my experience of 21 years goes, that a healthier set of women and girls are seldom to be met with, which I consider owing to field work.

Many women work in the fields about here, but very few girls, and they prefer it to needlework, plenty of which they can get from a tailor's establishment at Abingdon.

The boys go early with the teams and seem none the worse for it, but like it. As far as education goes, I have found and have heard many others say that the uneducated make by far the best servants, both in a moral and physical sense, and I may say in principle.

The boys commence at from 10 to 12 years of age. The hours which the women are at work are from 8 to 12 and from 2 to 5, and they have most of them a short distance to go. Their occupation is not laborious, and consists principally in couch picking, except at harvest time, when they reap like the men.

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,
W. Lightfoot.

RELIEVING OFFICERS' EVIDENCE.

74. *Mr. Jas. Read*, R. O., and inspector of nuisances, Wantage Union, Vale district: Has been 11 years R. O. "I think the cottages have been improved in "my district, especially on Col. Lindsay's estates and "in the town of Wantage; but there is room for "improvement in many parishes. There are very "bad cottages in nearly all the villages, except in "Lockinge and Ardington. There are some very "bad cottages in Sparsholt, Childery East, and West "Hendred. There are a good many men (about 25) "out of work lately at East Hendred. The young "men don't like the yearly hiring, and they often "break their service to go up the country, but they "generally come back no better off than they went. "I don't think it would put much pressure on the "parents to prevent the children going to work up "to 10, and it would save the boys from being "crippled by early work."

75. *Mr. Tanner*, R. O. Wantage Union, Down District, "There are not many men out of work on the "hills. Boys are employed as young as 9, but not many; "where boys go with their fathers they go earlier; "yearly hiring begins at 10. Girls don't go out till "nearly 12, bird keeping, couch picking and sometimes "dung spreading in winter, and thrashing. Wages "are better on the hills, population is not so thick and "farms are larger; wages vary from 10*s.* to 11*s.* now.

"East Ilsley, 11*s.*

"West Ilsley, 10*s.*

"Harwell in the Vale, 12*s.*

"Cottages are generally good on Mr. Wroughton's "estate and good cottages are growing up on Col. "Lindsey's property, what he builds are thoroughly "good. In all parishes there are good and bad "cottages. I have been relieving officer 15 years; "there is not much difference in the condition of the "labourers, but cottages have been improved during "that time."

76. *Mr. Jas. Jeffries*, R. O., Faringdon Union, "I "think some of the poorest cottages in my district are "in Kingston Isle. In this union we are very strict in "examining into the circumstances of every family by "whom an application for relief is made; the result "has been a great decrease in the expenditure on "out door relief, while the persons who receive relief "are better satisfied than under the old system, and "the labourers generally have been induced to sub-"scribe to benefit clubs, such as the Farmer's Club "at Uffington, The Vale of White Horse Club, and "the Farnborough Club. Where cottagers keep "lodgers we reduce the allowance by 1*s.* for each "lodger; this has the effect of discouraging them from "crowding their houses with lodgers."

77. *Mr. Chas. Rogers*, R. O., Newbury Union, "There are a good many cottages with one bedroom and "by no means good in Leckhampstead. Throughout "the Union very few of the landowners' cottages are "bad; the bad ones belong chiefly to small proprietors "or to the occupiers themselves."

78. *Mr. Latimer Harper*, R. O., Hungerford Union, "Many of the labourers in my district belong to benefit "clubs, some held at public houses and some at schools, "and I sometimes wonder how they can afford it. "I don't think they could afford at their wages to keep "their children longer at school than they do now. "As a general rule the parents don't care much about "education, but they are improving in that respect. "My districts includes some parishes of Wilts and "daymen generally receive 9*s.* a week just now; "some men have 10*s.* where they have to go farther "to their work. The guardians withdraw relief from "widows' sons after they are 10 years of age, and "the same is done in Newbury union; relief is also "withdrawn in the case of boys under 10 who are "actually at work. The parishes in Berks in which "the wages are 9*s.* a week are Lambourne, East "Garston, East and West Shefford. Women of all "kinds are paid 8*d.* a day."

SCHOOL TEACHERS' EVIDENCE.

79. *Mr. Ingram*, West Hendred, 13 years certificated teacher. "If we could have the children in regular "attendance up to 10½ years of age their education "would be sufficiently advanced for all ordinary pur-"poses. I don't think any of the Factory Act modes "of interference could be put in practice with advan-"tage here, our great difficulty is irregular atten-"dance; the age at which children leave school also "is dropping, boys of 10 or 11 now do the work "which used to be done by those of 13 or 14 years "of age."

80. Extract from return made by *T. L. Goodlake, Esq.*, chairman of Faringdon Union.

Boys from 10 years of age are employed principally in bird keeping and driving horses; after 12 years they are employed all the year round.

Girls begin field labour about fifteen, they greatly prefer it to domestic service. They work about 9 hours per day; they are engaged in all the lighter kinds of husbandry, the labour is far from hard.

Female labour is abundantly used. It is popular with employers from the fact that two women can do more work at a less cost than one man; women earning from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, a man earning 10*s.* to 11*s.* In clearing land and preparing roots for cattle the women excel the men.

The age on which it is desirable to place any restriction as to working on the land depends so much on the physical constitution of the lads, that I think the cases of individuals should be left to their own merits.

I regard the employment of females, especially the young, in field labour as an unmixed evil.

"Our villages are well provided with day and Sunday schools. Night schools have very recently become popular; indeed, in their case the demand has stimulated the supply. The mothers keep the elder children at home whilst they themselves go to field work; and when with large families complain of the impossibility of finding the weekly pence. The mothers appreciate infant schools as a compromise, which enables them to work whilst the little ones are cored for. In Buckland, Coleshill, Shrivenham, and Bourton, the cottages are exceedingly good; in the remaining 27 parishes of this union they vary from indifferent to very bad, many are mere hovels. In the larger parishes there are many small proprietors whose speculations in cottages cause great evils. In comparison with others they are very highly rented. The habit of taking the rent weekly operates hardly against the tenant, indeed a moiety of our paupers' out-relief goes at once into the pockets of these needy

owners. In number the cottages are equal to the supply of the labour required in the district. Labourers' dwellings are generally conveniently situated in respect to their work. Overcrowding is very common. I fear school and church are utterly powerless in the presence of the complete disregard of decency to which the poor are exposed; indeed the practice of modesty in the case of females is scarcely practicable. Where a third sleeping room is provided it is usually let if the poor are left to themselves. This is prevented in the case of villages belonging to single owners. In the four parishes I have named there is nothing to be desired in the way of water or ventilation; the remaining parishes vary in supply of water, and as to ventilation from indifferent to very bad. The cottages for the most part have small gardens attached, but in the towns of Faringdon and *Lechlade*, and in a less degree the large village of Stamford, the speculation houses to which I have before alluded have frequently no land attached to them. I should like to add that, in my opinion, the provisions of the Common Lodging-houses Act might advantageously be applied to the best interests of the poor by compelling all houses under 6*l*. a year rental to come within its ambit. The question of cottage rents, and consequently of good or bad accommodation, is purely a question of wages. So long as the price of labour remains at its present figure in this district it is impossible for the tenants to pay more rent, and the rent they pay is barely sufficient to keep the houses in habitable repair. The erection of proper cottages is simply a luxury in which the more wealthy alone can indulge, the capital sunk in their erection being completely unremunerative. Far otherwise is the case of cottages in the small towns; the poor flock to them, as the necessaries of life are cheaper than in the villages, this enables them to pay double the rent, and as the houses are run up with the sole object of a quick return of the capital invested, every thing that can conduce to the comfort and health of the inmates is simply ignored. Marked have been the benefits of the Nuisances Removal Acts, which the guardians of this union, encouraged by the magistrates, have carried out to the utmost of their power. The ever presence of fever I attribute chiefly to the filthy habits of the poor themselves; their disregard and dislike of cleanliness is inconceivable. Again, their treatment of good cottages offers but a sorry stimulant for supplying them with such. The multiplication of low beerhouses beyond the control of the justices aggravates the social condition of our poor. I almost despair of any improvement till beer and spirits are sold across the counter like any other necessary of life.

The system of hiring women at statute fairs I cannot sufficiently condemn. It is a custom utterly unknown in many parts of England, and therefore cannot logically be pleaded as essential to agriculture here. After 18 years of petty sessional experience, I have come to regard the annual hiring of women as a fruitful source of bastardy applications, and of immuring able-bodied women with their children in workhouses.

81. Extract of Return made by J. S. Bowles, Esq., J.P., Chairman of Abingdon Union.

"Boys are employed at all times of the year, beginning at 10 years, but no large proportion of them are so young as 10. Girls are seldom employed, and when employed it is for the purpose of keeping birds off newly sown corn; they are employed from the age of 11 to 14.

"Women are employed in bean planting, picking weeds, haymaking, and harvesting. I do not think that boys should be employed to work on the land before the age of 11. I think the employment of unmarried women in the fields is decidedly objectionable, it makes them rough handed and rough tongued, and gives them a distaste for household discipline and confinement. The employment of married women, except in haymaking and harvest, tends to the neglect of their homes and small children.

"Most (if not all) of the parishes in this union are provided with schools, and the children for the most part take advantage of them.

"The cottages are neither better nor worse than those of other rural districts in England; they are overcrowded, ill ventilated, with an uncertain supply of water. All the cottages have not good gardens. There is a fair supply of allotment patches."

82. Extract from Return made by Rev. T. Stevens, Chairman of Bradfield Union.

"Boys are employed in agriculture all the year round (perhaps not always continuously) from eight years of age.

"Girls from 16 and upwards are employed in weeding, haymaking, and harvesting.

"Women are very generally employed at the same work as girls and at manure spreading, thrashing, and root cleaning.

"There are schools in every parish; a good many take advantage of them. There is an increasing desire for education among the poor."

83. Extract of Return made by H. R. Eyre, Esq., J.P., Chairman of Newbury Union.

"Boys are employed here from the age of nine at all times of the year.

"Girls are employed here in field work, but not universally, and from the age of 16 to 20.

"Women are not employed to a great extent except in places where there is root stripping.

"It is desirable to place a restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land; for the boys' sake physically boys of tender years, that is under 10 years of age, should not be exposed to much out-of-door work. It is desirable on every account to restrict the employment of females in field work, and particularly of girls under 16 years of age.

"Means of education are universally provided, and advantage is generally taken of it in this union.

"The condition of cottages is very unequal, and a large proportion belong to other persons than landowners. Some instances of overcrowding have been brought to my notice, and overcrowding in every case tends to immorality and evil results. Water is not probably deficient, but in small and confined and contracted dwellings occupied by families, ventilation must generally be defective.

"Good gardens and allotments are general, but not universal; they are indeed scarce in some places, in the suburbs of Newbury and the neighbouring villages."

Extracts from a Return made by G. C. Cherry, Esq., Vice-Chairman of Quarter Sessions and Chairman of Hungerford Union, referring to the Union of Hungerford.

"The acreage and population of Hungerford Union is as follows:—

	Acres.	Pop.
In Wiltshire	52,047	9,936
„ Berkshire	44,014	9,721
„ Hampshire	2,226	225
	98,287	19,882

"Means for elementary education are generally provided. In many parishes there are both day and night schools, in some only day schools. They are attended much better than was the case a few years years back, and gradually the indifference of this class as to the education of their children is passing away. I cannot attribute the non-attendance to any other causes than indifference and early labour. The condition of many cottages in most parishes of this union is bad. Improvements in this respect are taking place. Many are overcrowded, whence must arise evil results to morality, although I cannot quote instances wherein such results have been traceable to

Berkshire.

Mr. Culley.

C.
j.

this cause alone. I have been struck by finding that in the census returns for 1861 there are shown to have been in that year one inhabited house on an average for every 4·68 persons in this union, and one inhabited house on an average for every 23·13 acres. These figures do not tell of a deficient number of cottages, and if they are correct there need not be much overcrowding. Yet there is overcrowding. The supply of water is generally good. Ventilation is little attended to in the larger villages and small towns of this union. I beg to refer to my answer for Kintbury parish, which presents a fair sample of the union. It is in the larger villages and small towns that the cottages are worst supplied with gardens or allotments. In such places garden ground commands a high rent."

NEWBURY FARMERS' CLUB.

84. Resolutions passed at a Meeting held on the 27th of February 1868.

"1. That this meeting views with alarm a Bill which was introduced into Parliament last session entitled 'Mr. Foster's Education of Poor Bill,' together with the amendments to be proposed by Mr. Bazley for compulsory education, and deprecates any measure which countenances an education rate.

"2. That the members now in attendance at the meeting pledge themselves to promote the principle of voluntary aid (as at present in operation) in support of schools for the working classes, and promise to do their utmost in obtaining additional subscriptions ie order to render the said schools efficient.

"3. That this meeting discountenances all efforts which have for their object the exclusion of religious teaching from our parish schools.

"4. That no boy should be employed in farming operations before the age of 9, unless he had previously learned to read."

85. Extract from a Letter from J. Walter, Esq., M.P., to Geo. Culley, Esq., on the beerhouse difficulty.

"Instead of placing the licences in the hands of the magistrates, who would be apt to exercise the power capriciously and sometimes unjustly, I would allow everybody to sell beer *not* to be drunk on the premises, and give the magistrate ample power to take away the licence in case of its being abused. People must have beer, but there is no occasion for them to meet and drink together in beerhouses—there is the evil. If they want to meet together for convivial purposes, which they must be allowed to do occasionally as well as their betters, then let them go to the public-house, which I agree should be licensed by the magistrates as at present."

86. Letter from H. Tucker, Esq., High Sheriff of Berks, to G. Culley, Esq.

Bourton House, Shrivenham,

DEAR SIR, Jan. 30, 1869.

IN 1859 I obtained at my own cost a return of all the cottages in the Faringdon Union, showing the number of rooms in each, and the number, ages, and sexes of their inhabitants. From these returns I sent a digest to "The Times," which was published and produced a great sensation at the time.

I urged several members of Parliament to bring the matter before the House of Commons, with a view to obtain a similar return for the whole of England, believing, as I still do, that there is no other way of getting at the real state of misery and degradation in which a large proportion of our agricultural labourers and artizans are housed, and this opinion is confirmed by all that has been done by Government, and is still being done, to obtain information upon this subject. The means adopted can never secure the desired end.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

HENRY TUCKER.

87. The following paragraphs are extracted from a pamphlet entitled "The Sanitary Improvement of "Labourers' Cottages and Villages," just published by Mr. William Menzies, Deputy Surveyor of Windsor Forest and Parks :—

I am unwilling to join in much that has been written to show that the agricultural labourer has not the same position either in independence or comfort as he had in some previous times of this country's history. On the contrary, I believe they have been as a body gradually advancing from the earliest times. The amount of wages they receive, and a comparison of the prices at which articles of food and clothing could be purchased at different periods, do not afford so sure a test as is supplied by the average duration of life of the whole body of the people. . . .

It would, I believe, be generally admitted that the life of all classes has constantly been lengthening, and this could only arise from the whole community possessing more comforts in the shape of house accommodation, better food, more skilful medical attendance, better provision in the shape of hospitals, unions, and asylums ; all of which institutions are supported, some by voluntary contribution of the richer classes, and some by rates upon all descriptions of property. These institutions extend their benefits to all the lowest classes of society, and might safely therefore be reckoned as wages. . . .

It is quite evident to every one that much of the unhealthiness and immorality, both in cottages and villages, arises from the bad condition of the dwelling-houses of the labouring classes, and as the effects of these evils fall upon the community generally, the Legislature is entitled to deal with the matter. . . .

It is quite evident also to every one that the effect of the Union Chargeability Act, passed for England in 1865, will be in time largely to increase the building and maintaining of cottages upon landed estates in the rural districts, so that the labourers necessary for these estates may be nearer their work than they have hitherto been. Speaking more particularly of agricultural labourers, it is a common calculation among themselves that every hour they can save in travelling to and from their work is worth 3*d.* to them, and directly or indirectly it is worth about as much to their masters. . . .

With respect to the number of dwellings in country districts, it would appear to be impossible to introduce a Bill compelling landowners to build so many cottages in proportion to their estate. Arable land is changed to pasture or to building ground, while clay land and light farming land require a different number of men and horses, so that in fact no rule could scarcely be fixed as to the number that would be required ; but, subject to such special cases as I shall subsequently specify, I think the building of a sufficient number of cottages for their labourers may safely be left to the certain effect of landlords finding it their interest to do so, and they are becoming every day more convinced. . . .

The general care of the health of a rural district is left by the vestry of each parish to an inspector of nuisances.

It would be difficult to conceive a more inefficient body of men. . . .

Villages of small houses, and indeed towns as well, spring up in the country districts very generally, and especially in England, where water can be found in the subsoil within twenty-five feet, that being the lift of an ordinary pump, or what can be reached by a well pole.

The soil and subsoil are therefore naturally porous, and the danger is increased by the water underneath being almost always "travelling" water; that is, water passing from a higher level, however slowly, to some natural outlet. This has been thoroughly investigated and established by Pettin-Koffer, the German physiologist, in his researches on the causes of the cholera at Munich, in 1865. The wells thus draw from a large area, and if the cesspools or privies leak into the soil, as they almost always do, epidemics are thereby disseminated through the whole population, especially towards the end of the summer and in dry seasons.

I think it would be found upon investigation that epidemics of the class of fever and cholera spread in country villages in proportion to the number of the houses upon the ground, and the nearness to the surface of the water in the wells. . . .

A very large number of landlords have for many years been acting on the right principle of considering good cottages on their estates to be as necessary as farm buildings, and I do not think that I have stated anything as essential which they as a body have not been providing already; especially those who have been engaged upon it for some time, and have given their attention to the subject.

Perhaps also the Government might advance money on especially favourable terms to those who were inclined to undertake the building of cottages and dwellings which come up to the requirements of the description I have attempted to specify; or, still further, in cases where, upon full investigation by one of the inspectors, it was evident that, owing to the increase of population, the pulling down of houses, or some causes of this description, there were not sufficient houses for the labouring classes, the Home Office might grant powers under some very stringent conditions to the local authority to compulsorily purchase land in that parish or union, build a certain number of cottages, and charge the union or parish with the full interest. . . .

As the law stands at present, it is the duty of no one specifically to interfere with these matters, and say where they are wrong; but, however difficult and formidable a work it is, every one who sees the effects is, I believe, convinced that some change for the better must be attempted.

Crime in every form would, I believe, decrease, and so would the poor rates in the long run, whilst the lowest class would be raised from their present condition, and be saved much suffering and misery.

88. The following paragraphs are extracted from a pamphlet entitled "A Voice from Berkshire," addressed to landowners by Mr. H. R. Eyre, chairman of the Newbury Board of Guardians, published Sept. 17th, 1866:—

". . . . . Some general and extensive plan of housing the labouring poor must be devised, and the private rights of landowners must not be an obstruction to it—some plan which shall not depend upon the indulgence, or the accidental benevolence and liberality of individuals—some plan which shall recognize the personal liability of proprietors of all classes for the state and condition of their house property.

". . . . . Let us urge upon the Government and our Legislators to take Parliamentary action in the business and duty of housing the people, that the resistance of ignorance, indifference, and self-interest may be overcome, and that the partial efforts which have already produced an instalment of what is due to the requirements of the people, may be aided and supplemented by a general movement in the same direction."

89. The following is extracted from an address to "the Tenant Farmers and Occupiers of Land in the "County of Berks" by Mr. H. R. Eyre, published on the 30th of October 1866:—

". . . . . Some say, indeed, that this matter (supply of proper cottage accommodation) is better left to the operation of the principles of political economy. I am surprised at the suggestion, and more surprised at the source of it, because it not only seems to ignore all moral and social duty in the matter, but it seems to ignore a fact which a little thought and a little enquiry would disclose, that the system of land tenure in this country, and the difficulties connected with the transfer of land render the principles of political economy practically inoperative. If it were not so, we should not now be deploring the want of cottages, we should not have to complain that the supply does not keep pace with the demand.

". . . . . One of my correspondent writes to me that the landowners are not to be made answerable for the state of the cottages; for the cottages are for the most part in the hands of speculators. It is true that the rural population are very much at the mercy of those who invest in cottages for profit, and that the cottages are, for the most part, what we should expect when they are built on the principle of getting the highest rent at the lowest cost.

"But is not this the consequence of the supineness and indifference of the landowner? And if the landowner will not build to the extent of meeting the wants of the rural population employed on his estate, is there any other means of providing the necessary dwellings except that which we know to be attended with every evil?

". . . . . In a return which I have of the number of cottages in the Newbury Union, it appears that of 2,155 cottages in the rural districts, 622 only are the property of the landowners, and as many of these 622 are occupied by gamekeepers, gardeners, and other servants of the landowners, the proportion of those occupied by the agricultural labourers is proportionately reduced.

"It is seen, then, from this return that the agricultural labouring population, by whose labour the land is cultivated, upon whose labour the profits of the farmer very much depend, and by whose labour, to a great extent, rents are realized, are not housed for the most part either at the cost or by the care of the landowner.

"How far the labourer is thereby aggrieved I shall not attempt to say; how far he is often injured and his strength impaired by being forced to live at a distance from his work, and in an inferior, confined, and ill-ventilated cottage, I do not undertake to say.

"But that these circumstances affect him adversely we must all see, as well as that they constitute a grievance to the tenant farmer, who is often unable to command good labour, and cannot exercise that control over his labourers which he ought to have.

"We are likely to be told that the Union Chargeability Act will effect much, as it has removed the inducement to exclude the labouring classes from our estates and parishes, but it does not operate to require the landowner to build cottages, and until he is moved to do this the evil must remain.

". . . . . The intention of this address is to exhibit the matter connected with labourers' dwellings in its real aspect, and to show what that system has produced which leaves things to settle themselves. It is not to excite public indignation against any, but only to unite all in one common work, that there may be no room for reviling the proprietary classes, or for charging them with the habit of ignoring or repudiating their duties and obligations.

"What, I would ask, has made the present but the past, and what is to make the future but the present? If we would not hand down to posterity an evil which we deplore ourselves; if we would not perpetuate a system which helps to corrupt and demoralize our people; if we would not forfeit the blessings we enjoy, we must at once put our hands to a work which will be twice blessed, blessed to him who engages in it, and to him who has the benefit of it.

"I am very well aware that there are landowners in Berkshire who have been long engaged in remedying the evil which is complained of, but the problem to be solved is not who is building and who is not building cottages, but how far the work ought to be optional and discretionary, whether any safeguard should be established against a public evil, partly arising from the right of ownership, and what security the tenant farmer and the people should have, that the agricultural labourers should be well and sufficiently housed.

". . . . . I propose, then, that we petition Parliament to promote by further public measures the necessary work of providing additional habitations and homes for the people, and to find a national remedy for a national grievance."

Berkshire.

Mr. Culley.

C. j.

PAUPERISM.

90. STATEMENT of the Proportion of In-door and Out-door Paupers to the Population in the Unions of Berkshire. Giving the Population and Acreage of the Unions and Number of Acres per Head of the Population.

Union.	Population.	Acreage.	Acres per head of Population.	Proportion of Paupers to Population.
Newbury - -	19,999	42,956	2·14	1 in 13
Hungerford - -	19,882	98,287	4·94	1 in 15½
Faringdon - -	15,688	64,207	4·09	1 in 30½
Abingdon - -	20,861	57,535	2·75	1 in 13
Wantage - -	17,308	75,700	4·37	1 in 14½
Wallingford - -	14,017	40,860	2·20	1 in 13
Bradfield - -	15,771	62,166	3·94	1 in 14
Reading - -	25,876	4,699	·10	1 in 20½
Wokingham - -	14,455	42,226	2·91	1 in 11½
Cookham - -	13,031	29,588	2·27	1 in 20½
Easthampstead - -	7,436	25,176	3·38	1 in 18½
Windsor - -	21,301	22,407	1·05	1 in 31½
County of Berks -	205,635	564,717	2·74	1 in 16½
England - -	20,066,224	37,324,883	1·86	1 in 19

BERKSHIRE EVIDENCE.

D.

APPENDIX D.

CONTAINING EVIDENCE ON LOANS CONTRACTED UNDER AUTHORITY OF INCLOSURE COMMISSIONERS, EVIDENCE ON PIECE WORK EARNINGS, AND OTHER EVIDENCE NOT PECULIAR TO THE COUNTY OF BERKS.

91. COST of LOANS contracted under the POWERS of the INCLOSURE COMMISSIONERS for the BUILDING and IMPROVEMENT of COTTAGES.

Showing the difference of the yearly charge which would be incurred for a loan of, say, 1,500*l.* for building 10 cottages under the rules of the Inclosure Commissioners when advanced by the Government at a charge of 3½ per cent, and when advanced by a public company (taking the Lands Improvement Company as an example) at 4½ per cent., adding in each case the yearly instalment necessary to repay the principal sum in the specified number of years.

The gross sum upon which the rent-charge would be calculated would in the case of an advance by Government be—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cost of cottages - -	1,500	0	0			
Inclosure Commissioners' charges 2¼ per cent. -	33	15	0	1,533	15	0

The gross sum upon which the rent-charge would be calculated in the case of the public company would be—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cost of cottages - -	1,500	0	0			
Inclosure Commissioner charges 2¼ per cent. -	33	15	0	1,608	15	4
Company's charge of 5 per cent. - -	75	0	0			

The difference in the amount of rent-charge for a loan repayable in 25 years (the longest term on which the land improvement company can advance money), 30, 35, and 40 years will be as follows.

Number of Years over which the Loan extends.	Government Loan, 1,533*l.* 15*s.*		Company's Loan, 1,608*l.* 15*s.*	
	Rent-charge.	Rate per cent. on 1,500*l.* expended in building.	Rent-charge.	Rate per cent. on 1,500*l.* expended in buildings.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
25 years - -	92 11 2	6 3 5	108 9 0	7 4 7
30 years - -	82 19 8	5 10 7¾	98 5 0	6 11 0
35 years - -	76 7 0	5 1 10	91 14 4	6 2 3
40 years - -	71 10 8	4 15 4	87 1 6	5 16 1

92. Extracts from a correspondence on the subject of loans for cottage building and improvement between Captain Dashwood, a director of the "Lands Improvement Company," and the Assistant Commissioner.

From Captain Dashwood, February 20th, 1869:—

"The old Government loan, now all expended, was at 3½ per cent. for 23 years. The Lands Improvement Company's loans are at 4½ per cent. for 25 years; the General Land Drainage Company's for 30 years at 4½ per cent.

"Say a cottage costs 150*l.*; under the Government loan the yearly charge paying interest and principal would be:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
For 23 years at 3½ per cent. -	9	11	0
„ „ at 4 „ -	10	0	9
„ „ at 4¼ „ -	10	5	9
„ „ at 4½ „ -	10	10	9
The Lands Improvement Company's charge for 25 years at 4½ per cent. - - -	10	1	1½
General Land Drainage Company's charge for 30 years at 4½ per cent. - - -	9	3	1½
If the term by a new Act was extended to 35 years the companies' annual charges would be - -	8	5	1½

"Say an owner gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for a cottage (*i.e.* 3*l.* 18*s.* yearly), he will lose,—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Under the 25 years' scale	6	3	1½
„ 30 „ -	5	5	1½
„ 35 „ -	4	7	1½

"So by being allowed 35 years instead of 25 he would lose less yearly by 1*l.* 16*s.* Question: whether this is worth amending the Act for? Though a landowner by building such cottages loses yearly say 6*l.*, the estate is clear at the end of 25 years, and is immediately benefited by having labour on the spot.

"Calculate the yearly loss at 5*l.* a cottage on 20 cottages; would it not be more advantage for an owner to pay 100*l.* a year for 25 years, or say his life, than to attempt to erect the cottages of his own savings at a cost of 3,000*l.*?

"What a comfort to an owner to think that he had comfortably housed 20 families at a cost of 100*l.* a year, and at the same time improved his estate."

93. From Captain Dashwood, March 1st, 1869:—

"I may be wrong, but on working out the facts as to the rate of interest and the longer term of 35 years I think those landowners or agents who make difficulties on the score of expense have not well calculated the difference as to the value of an estate with the labour well and conveniently housed or the contrary.

"As to the rate of interest, 3½ per cent., we need not trouble ourselves, I fancy, as Government, after being obliged to charge the Inclosure Commissioner expenses, will never again be allowed by the country to lend on such easy terms as 3½ per cent.

"As to extending the term of years from 25 years to 35; considering that the insurance offices, as also the Inclosure Commissioner, are against such an arrangement, I do not think that point will ever be allowed, and when one finds that the extra charge is per cottage only 1*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* yearly, or say 7½*d.* per week, I cannot deem such an increase of charge to be any real obstacle to cottage building to any owner, especially when he considers the charge is all paid off at the expiration of 25 years.

94. Mr. Culley, March 8, 1869, to Capt. Dashwood.

. . . "As to borrowing money at 7 per cent. for cottage building, if it was only a question of 'cottages 'or no cottages,' or of 'cottages well placed instead 'of cottages very badly placed,' I would entirely go with you; but unhappily we have to persuade landowners to pull down wretched old cottages, for which they are now receiving as much rent as they could reasonably ask after expending 150*l.* each on new. In point of fact in many cases the first effect of such an operation would be the loss of 7 per cent. on the cost of each cottage, and all we can say (pecuniarily) as an inducement is, 'Your labour will be so much more 'valuable if you place these cottages more conveni-'ently for your farms; your labourers will be in every 'respect improved by being more decently housed; 'and you will escape the yearly tax of maintaining 'these ricketty old cottages.' It must therefore be our endeavour to reduce as low as possible the rate of interest to be paid on a loan contracted for such a purpose, and to extend the time as far as will practically reduce the yearly instalment in payment of principal, to put the life-renter for this purpose as nearly as possible in the position of an owner in fee."

95. Capt. Dashwood to Mr. Culley, March 16, 1869.

"I am still of opinion that the charges for building cottages, and the yearly loss between rent received from occupants and the interest paid for capital, are not sufficient to prevent owners embarking in such an improvement to their estates, though without doubt they afford the non-enterprising owner a good excuse."

EARNINGS AT PIECE WORK WAGES.

96. The following is an analysis of the earnings of mixed gangs of English and Irish drainers employed at piece work wages in the same fields in Northumberland on three estates, taken by the Assistant Commissioner from the pay sheets of Mr. Joseph Batty, superintendent of drainage works under Mr. G. A. Grey, land agent and inspector under the Inclosure Commissioners. The number of years each man had been at work as a drainer, the number of years each Irishman had been in England, and other remarks as to the ability of them, were given on the margin of each sheet by Mr. Batty.

The following is a correct statement of the earnings of a mixed gang of English and Irish drainers working together in the same fields in North Northumberland, at piece work wages, on Capt. Leyland's estate at Haggerston:—

Field 1. In 28 days—
11 Englishmen earned 43*l.* 6*s.* 4½*d.*
Average per man per day, 2*s.* 9¾*d.*
13 Irishmen earned 44*l.* 2*s.* 10½*d.*
Average per man per day, 2*s.* 5*d.* (rather over).

Field 2.
14 Englishmen earned 53*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.*
Average per man per day, 2*s.* 8½*d.* (rather over).
10 Irishmen earned 30*l.* 12*s.* 5½*d.*
Average per man per day, 2*s.* 2¼*d.*
Average earnings *per day*, taking both fields—
For 25 Englishmen, rather over 2*s.* 9*d.*
For 23 Irishmen, rather over 2*s.* 3¾*d.*

Of the 25 Englishmen 22 are described as having "drained for several years, constant at the work." Of the 23 Irishmen 15 are described as having been in England and drainers for several years, some of them for 15 years, none for less than six or seven years:—

Taking the earnings of these practised drainers only the case stands thus:—

	Per day.
The 22 practised English drainers earned an average of - -	2*s.* 9¾*d.* nearly.
The 15 practised Irish drainers earned an average of - -	2*s.* 7*d.* nearly.

Taking the case of the beginners only—

	Per day.
3 Englishmen average	2*s.* 4½*d.* nearly.
8 Irishmen „	1*s.* 10½*d.* nearly.

The highest individual earning—
By an Englishman is 3*s.* 8*d.* per day nearly.
By an Irishman is 3*s.* 6¾*d.* „ exactly.

Taking these gangs therefore as examples of the merits of the men as drainers—

An English beginner is worth 15*s.* 3*d.* per week.
An Irish „ „ 11*s.* 3*d.* „

After, say, 10 years' practice and better food, the account stands thus:—

The English drainer is worth 16*s.* 10½*d.* per week.
The Irish „ „ 15*s.* 6*d.* „

If this, then, be a fair example, as I have every reason to believe it is, good food and practice reduce the *difference* between the native Northumbrian and Irish settler from 4*s.* a week for beginners to 1*s.* 4½*d.* for drainers of about 10 years' standing.

Berkshire.

Mr. Culley.

D. j.

These earnings are very small for drainers in Northumberland, and Mr. Jos. Batty accounts for it by saying that there was no great demand for drainers at the time the fields were done, and that the men are below the average. He considers that a "real good "hand" ought to earn 4*s.* a day, and often does.

The following are two more instances of the earnings of mixed gangs in Northumberland :—

In a field on Lord Grey's estate at Ancroft nine Englishmen and two Irishmen earned 74*l.* 7*s.* 5*d.*

9 Englishmen averaged 3*s.* 2½*d.* per day, or 19*s.* 3*d.* per week.

2 Irishmen averaged 3*s.* 3½*d.* per week, or 19*s.* 9*d.* per week.

In a field on Mr. Culley's estate in Glendale, Northumberland—

12 Englishmen and 6 Irishmen earned 90*l.* 19*s.* in 31½ days.

12 Englishmen averaged 3*s.* 3½*d.* per day, or 19*s.* 9*d.* per week.

6 Irishmen averaged 3*s.* 0¾*d.* per day, or 18*s.* 4½*d.* per week.

This last gang is spoken of by Mr. Batty, the superintendent, as a fair average lot, both English and Irish (all practised drainers).

Highest earning of any one man of this gang, 3*s.* 7*d.* per day, nearly ; lowest, 3*s.* per day, nearly.

It will be seen that the difference between the earnings of the English and Irish drainers (all practised hands) in the last case is exactly the same (1*s.* 4½*d.* a week) as between the *practised* English and Irish drainers in the first case, none of the same men being employed in both cases. The earnings in the last case are, however, better, and more what they ought to be, where the farm labourer on a yearly hiring has 16*s.* a week in money or kind. The practice of these drainers is to work together in parties of two, or at most three, such parties being, in the cases taken, always composed of men of the same nationality ; in other respects they are entirely on an equality as to means of earning, the parties of two or three men taking each drain in succession as they finish that in which they have previously been working. It will be borne in mind that the English and Irish here compared are men probably of the finest class physically of their respective countries.—G.C.

Report on Beds.

97. Extract from a letter addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by Mr. Thomas Bennett, late land steward to the Duke of Bedford.

Park Farm Office, Woburn, Beds,
Oct. 26, 1868.

My dear Sir,—

Thanks for the perusal of your report, which I return by book post. . . . . I think you overlook the fact that where the Duke of Bedford, as landowner, is short of cottages, his estates are close to villages where our labourers reside, as Potsgrove, Ridgmont, Eversholt, Lidlington, that the landowner, if he erected all his land requires, has no power of pulling down or of restraining others in building ; hence the fostering of over populating districts, by inducing young persons to stay in their native place instead of looking for work in the more thinly populated districts, consequently when the least slackness of labour (as in this exceptional year) sets in, there is an immediate outcry of over population. The numbers out of work in the Ampthill and Woburn unions since harvest is something far beyond my experience since the days of the old Poor Law. Woburn Union has the work test going on, and ablebodied people are ordered to walk from Toddington to be at Woburn at 7.30 a.m., go to work to earn 1*s.* 6*d.*, and then walk home. At Ampthill there is a committee formed to assist emigrants. In every parish on the sand range of hills there are from 20 men and strong lads, and upwards, quite idle at present.

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Union.	Parish.	Extent of Farm in Acres.			Nature of Soil.	Course of Husbandry.	Males.						Females.						
		Arable.	Pasture.	Total.			Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Bakewell -	Bakewell - -	38	343	381	Limestone and grit.	4 course - -	—	—	—	—	7	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
,, -	,, -	100	480	580	Brown - hazel, and limestone.	,, -	—	—	—	4	6	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
,, -	Baslow - -	127	218	345	Clay subsoil -	,, -	—	—	—	2	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
,, -	Edensor -	7	54	61	Loam on grit -	- - -	—	—	—	—	1	1	Occasionally.				1	—	1
Chesterfield	Staveley - -	240	240	480	Stiff land -	- - -	—	—	—	2	7	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mansfield -	Ault Hucknall -	166	100	266	- - -	5 course - -	—	1	—	2	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Belper -	Allestree - -	5	198	203	Marl and clay -	- - -	—	—	—	—	5	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
,, -	Duffield - -	60	210	270	Very strong -	- - -	—	—	—	1	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burton -	Church Broughton.	74	180	254	⅓th light, ⅔ths strong clay marl.	4 course - -	—	—	1	2	4	7	—	—	—	2	4	—	6
,, -	Egginton - -	66	234	300	Gravel - -	- - -	—	—	1	—	6	7	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
,, -	Marston - -	35	222	257	Light and strong clay marl.	4 course - -	—	—	—	1	5	6	—	—	1	1	1	1	4
,, -	,, - -	100	152	252	Gravelly - -	5 course - -	—	—	2	1	5	8	—	—	—	2	1	—	3
,, -	Scropton - -	40	210	250	Light and sandy	- - -	—	—	—	3	5	8	—	—	—	—	3	4	7
Total of 13 Farms - -		1,058	2,841	3,899	- - -	- - -	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	12	7	25

TABLE B.—Showing the Difference of Employment between North and South Derbyshire (Spring Quarter).

—	Number of Farms.	Acres Arable.	Acres Pasture.	Total Acreage.	Males.						Females.						
					Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
North Derbyshire -	8	743	1,843	2,586	—	1	—	11	36	48	—	—	—	—	1	2	3
South do. -	5	315	998	1,313	—	—	4	7	25	36	—	—	1	5	11	5	22

Derbyshire.

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TABLE C.

Showing the Variation in the Labour Returns for the different Seasons on 13 Farms in Derbyshire (given in detail for the Spring Quarter, *see* Table A.), exclusive of extra Hands in Harvest.

These 13 Farms extend over 3,899 Acres, of which 1,058 are Arable and 2,841 permanent Pasture.

—	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring - - -	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	12	7	25
„ Summer - -	—	—	4	19	63	86	—	—	1	5	14	7	27
„ Autumn - - -	—	1	4	18	61	84	—	—	1	5	10	3	19
„ Winter - -	—	—	4	18	56	78	—	—	1	5	8	3	17

1. *Mr. George Russell*, county-court judge, says, "The agricultural labouring class pay better than any other class of debtors coming before me."

Many witnesses bore testimony to the fact that the agricultural labourers of Derbyshire live and treat their families in a better manner, and are less willing to throw themselves on the rates, than mining or manufacturing labourers earning much higher wages.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE FROM NORTH DERBYSHIRE.

2. Letter from Mr. E. M. Wrench, a surgeon in practice at Baslow, in Bakewell Union.

DEAR SIR,

IN reply to your letter of the 25th, I have much pleasure in giving you all the information in my power regarding the state of the agricultural labourer and his family in my part of Derbyshire, the more so as his state is most satisfactory. It is quite the exception for any children under 13 years of age to be employed, unless it be by their own parents, in driving the cows to water or milking; and it is almost unknown for a child to suffer from over work.

Women are employed a good deal for milking, but for nothing else.

Education is generally appreciated by the parents, and liberally supplied by the landlords, so that if a child at 13 is unable to read, it will usually be attributable to its own or its parent's vice, and not to its having been profitably employed.

The health of the agricultural labourer and his family is very good, and has much improved lately, from better cottage accommodation and water supply, though much remains to be done.

The Derbyshire neck is not nearly so common as it used to be. It is, as far as I can ascertain, after careful inquiry, attributable to defective nutriment, perhaps monotonous diet, and *not*, as is commonly supposed, to the limestone water or repeated intermarriage. The largest family of Cretins in this neighbourhood occurs in one where a very well-to-do farmer's daughter ran away with a labouring man, and where there was not the least consanguinity.

The food of the agricultural labourer has much improved since the introduction of railways, by the substitution of wheaten bread for oat cake. Milk, in the summer or cheese season, is very scarce, but at other times is pretty plentiful and easily procurable, with great advantage to the women and children.

It is the custom of some of the landlords, most especially his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, to allow the labourers to rent enough grass land to keep one or two cows, with the greatest advantage to the labourer, by aiding his wages (which average 14*s.* a week), and inducing thrift to his wife by affording her more employment, and to the children by providing them with milk for nearly half the year, when there is no cheesemaking.

The labourers form small clubs, each member of which has the milk of all their cows in turn, and by these means each family is able to make one or two good cheeses every week or ten days. The beneficial result of the labourer keeping his cow is wonderfully exemplified in the health of the children of Baslow, where, out of a population of over 900, the deaths under 10 years of age (including those who only lived a few hours from birth) has averaged less than three per annum for the last 10 years, or at the rate of 3·103 per 1,000.

I need scarcely say that this preservation of infant life would be our destruction were it not for the constant exodus of our young people to the neighbouring large towns for work, for which their good education and healthy frames eminently fit them.

The labourer's cow again being of use in affording a little capital to enable the parents to apprentice their children to lucrative trades, or to send them to the colonies, where their practical knowledge of cattle is most useful.

I am, &c.
E. M. WRENCH.

3. EXTRACT from a Return made by *Mr. C. Evans*, surgeon (in practice for 30 years in the neighbourhood of Bakewell). „

"Boys are not generally employed under 11 or 12 years of age, and these only few in number, and mostly in the course of the summer.

"Girls are not generally employed, and seldom under 14 years of age, assisting in haymaking and other light employment in the fields.

"Women are employed occasionally, but not to any extent.

"It is desirable to restrict the age of boys working on the land to 12, unless they go to school all the winter.

"I think it is not desirable to place restriction on the employment of females in agriculture, but they certainly should not be employed before they are 13 years of age.

"There are the National and private schools provided for the education of the labouring classes, and they take advantage of them. I attribute the children's non-attendance at school to their being employed too early in agriculture.

"The cottages are tolerably good, and sufficient in number for the supply of labour required. They are conveniently situated with regard to the farms, they have often two bedrooms, but in a few cases only one, where father, mother, children, and grandchildren sleep. Many of the cottages have gardens, or a little land near at hand.

"The health of the agricultural labouring population is better than those employed in factories.

"Miners have a little land, and are greatly benefited in health by working on it.

"Cases of 'Derbyshire neck' are diminishing, though still hanging about the district in which it used to prevail most."

4. Letter from *Mr. J. E. Walters*, surgeon, in practice for 44 years in the neighbourhood of Bakewell.

SIR, May 27, 1869.

IN answer to the questions which you have given me, I beg to state that, generally speaking, the children are very well cared for. They usually begin work from 10 to 14 years of age, and their field of labour at home.

The hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; their health is generally good, and the state of their education tolerable; at any rate they have plenty of opportunity, as we have schools everywhere, and their attendance, as far as I know, is very good.

The women are usually employed during the hay and corn harvest, and some work in the seed times, but they have nothing to complain of, excepting sometimes a scarcity of work. You may, therefore, with great truth, report favourably as far as regards Bakewell and its immediate neighbourhood.

Yours, &c.
JAS. E. WALTERS.

5. EXTRACT from a letter from *Mr. Jos. Taylor*, surgeon.

"There are not, to my knowledge, any children employed in agriculture in this neighbourhood. The locality is chiefly manufacturing and mining, with a little agriculture on a small scale."

NORTH DERBYSHIRE.

6. EXTRACT from a Return by *Mr. R. Nesfield, J.P.*, agent to the Duke of Rutland.

"Boys are only partially employed in agriculture in my neighbourhood.

"Girls are only very partially employed, sometimes in weeding corn, which lasts only a short time. Women are only employed occasionally in weeding corn, haymaking, and at harvest time.

"The hours of work of women are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour at noon, and half an hour at 4 p.m.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land in this neighbourhood.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, as so few are employed.

"Cheap schools are provided within reach of the agricultural classes, and they take advantage of them to a great extent for their children.

"Cottages are generally good in this neighbourhood, and are sufficient for the supply of labour, and are for the most part conveniently situated in respect to the farms. They are not overcrowded, and are well supplied with water.

"On the Duke of Rutland's estates I try to keep the cottage rents at 1*s.* a week. Most labourers have a garden, and two small fields enough for two cows, one field to pasture, and one field to mow.

"Labourers' wages vary from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a week, with additions in haytime and harvest. In the neighbourhood of Ilkeston the Duke of Rutland gives allotments of a quarter of an acre, charging 80*s.* an acre for the land, including rates and taxes, and these are in great demand amongst the framework knitters and colliers.

BAKEWELL UNION.

Population, 31,378 - Acreage, 107,023.

7. Evidence of *Mr. H. P. Bagshawe*, relieving officer and occupier.

"More than three-fourths of the acreage is in permanent grass.

"Boys are rarely employed before they are 12 years old; they are then usually hired by the year, and live in the farmhouse. They work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and are usually employed morning and evening in milking, and often loiter and play in the middle of the day.

"It is not necessary to restrict their employment, as they are almost useless in this neighbourhood until they are 12 or 13 years of age.

"Many of the parishes in the north district of Bakewell Union are provided with schools, where a number of children go free, and in most of the others the weekly charge does not exceed 2*d.* to 3*d.* The schools are tolerably well attended, most children remaining long enough to learn to read and write.

"There are plenty of cottages for labouring men in the neighbourhood, and rents are usually reasonable, say from 50*s.* to 70*s.* per annum; many of them, however, only contain one bedroom, and I have more than once met with cases of immorality which might be almost directly traced to this evil. They are well supplied with water, and the rooms, being a good size, are usually well ventilated.

"Labourer's wages average 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. An ordinary weekly wage for day work is 13*s.* to 13*s.* 6*d.* Such men in haytime and harvest (harvest is very short) have as much food and beer as they can consume; the meat and beer will be worth 6*s.* to 7*s.* a week. All unmarried and some married labourers are fed in the farmer's house, and have 8*s.* a week upstanding wage, and 12*s.* in haytime, occasionally 14*s.* Some labourers have in addition 300 or 400 yards of potato ground, and the leadage of coals from the pit. Coals are cheap, and a ton lasts about eight weeks, *i.e.*, about six weeks in winter, and 10 weeks in summer. Coals cost from 6*s.* to 6*s.* 6*d.* a ton at the pit, and with gates will cost the labourer from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* 6*d.* where the farmer leads them; at the station they cost from 9*s.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* a ton. I pay a labourer as follows:—

"12*s.* 6*d.* a week wages; a quart of new milk per day, worth 2*d.*; a house and garden and manure; from 300 to 400 yards of potatoes; leadage of coals from the pit; about half food and beer in haytime. A good man can always get work. We still have a good many Irish in haytime and harvest.

"A great many more children are employed in the mines than in agriculture.

"The women grumble if you ask them to do a bit of haymaking."

8. RETURN for Bakewell Union sent by *Lord G. H. Cavendish, M.P.*, chairman of Board of Guardians.

"Very few boys are employed in agriculture.

"Girls are not employed.

"I have seldom seen women employed in the fields, except in making hay. Many of the labourers and miners occupy a field or two, and keep a cow, and at hay time the whole family, down to the youngest, are brought into the hay field.

"The children in the union workhouse are mostly the children of pauperized families, while others come from places where there was at one time considerable manufacturing prosperity (such as Cromford and Tideswell), where the cotton trade and handloom weaving were at one time prosperously carried on, but which are now much decayed. There are very seldom any able-bodied labourers or their children in the workhouse.

"The cottages vary very much in different parts of the union. The miners and labourers mostly live in villages, and probably prefer it to living in detached cottages. Generally the cottages are sufficient for the supply of the labour required, and in places where manufactures have decayed, there are many cottages which would be vacant as far as the demand for supply of labour is concerned, but from the comparative cheapness of rent they attract a poor population from other quarters.

"Some of the cottages in this village (Ashford) have good gardens, and there is a considerable allot-

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ment of land conveniently situated for the use of several of the villagers. There are also in the neighbourhood, both on the properties of the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Rutland, allotments of land, but I think in this district the better class of labourers look more to renting an acre or two of land to enable them to keep a cow, than they do to having a garden or allotment of garden ground. The union is chiefly pastoral, and in several villages the population are principally lead miners, who work the mines under the peculiar customs of the Derbyshire 'king field.' Many of the miners also occupy an acre or two of grass land."

9. Evidence of *Mr. Daniel Roberts*, bailiff to the Duke of Rutland.

"Women do no farm work now, not even in hay and corn harvest. Upwards of 20 years ago women were a good deal employed in twitching, cleaning turnips, and other light work; now, hay-tedding and mowing machines and reaping machines have entirely taken the place of female labour, and provided for an increasing deficiency of male labour in haytime and harvest. Formerly a great many Irish labourers came, but their number is greatly diminished; not one-half come now of the number who used formerly to come, and without mowing machines we should have a great difficulty to get through our hay cutting. Irish labourers who do come, come here for hay time, then go further south, where harvest is earlier, and come back for our late harvest, and then go to Lancashire for potato-picking.

"Labourer's wages vary from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a day. I employ about 20 men at from 2*s.* 4*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, and in summer these men get from 5*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* an acre (without beer) hay cutting; reaping and setting up is done by the thrave of 12 sheaves (girth about 27 inches) at 5*d.* a thrave.

"I do not think wages have altered much for the last 40 years, but the labourers have fallen off in quality.

"An allotment of, say, six acres to keep two cows is not common. We have one or two such; they are apt to make the man neither labourer nor farmer, and make them more independent than the farmer likes. Some farms are as small as 40 acres, and there are cottage farms of 10, 15, and 20 acres.

"Our farms are increased as opportunity offers; small holdings are not desirable.

"Little cottage holdings on the edge of the moors have gradually been increased by the families holding them from 10 to 50 acres, the enclosing and improving being done by the occupiers, who hold at a nominal rent. The custom is to re-value these farms about every 15 or 20 years. Labourers, at 15*s.* and 14*s.* a week, making an allowance for loss of time by bad weather, will probably average for the year 1*s.* a week less."

10. Evidence of *Mr. E. Cunningham*, master of the Bakewell workhouse.—"I think it is very desirable that there should be some restriction on the employment of children in agriculture; the children of the poorer farmers are in a fully worse position than those of ordinary labourers."

Bakewell.

Population, 11,254 - Acreage, 43,020.

11. Evidence of *Mr. Wm. Greaves*, occupier.—"Boys are employed in agriculture from 13 years old the whole year round.

"No girls are employed.

"No women are employed.

"Men work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; boys from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"There are scarcely any cottages attached to the farms, the labourers living in the towns and villages; and in most cases they have to walk, on the average, two miles to and from their work. The cottages are generally good, and well supplied with water.

"In the villages small cottage allotments are general.

"The wages given to my labourers are 14*s.* a week the whole year; during hay and corn harvest they have 8*s.* extra, instead of beer, and this for one month certain for hay, and longer if the harvest is not over, and a month in corn harvest, longer if a slow harvest. Sometimes the corn cutting has been let to the men (chiefly oats), when they have brought their wives, and averaged about 10*s.* to 12*s.* per acre. We have a good supply of labour, and they are employed throughout the year. Our extra men are generally Irish; they have been in the habit of coming here early in June, and staying to assist in haymaking, which is of great extent here, and they remain till the end of July, when they have gone forward to the corn counties; but for the last three or four years they have not come as much as before, and in 1866 and 1867 we were much perplexed to get the grass cut and made, and mowing alone cost 6*s.* and in many cases 7*s.* and in some 8*s.* per statute acre. This has compelled us to have machines, and most farmers last year cut their grass by mowing machines. I believe we have not half so many Irish come now as formerly; emigration is one cause, and another cause is that many go direct to the corn counties by railways.

"I am proud to say I think no neighbourhood is better supplied with native labourers, and none where the labourers are more regularly employed; it is the exception when we have any able-bodied man in our union. The great drawback to the farmers generally is the want of cottages on their farms, and the rule is that the labourers live in the towns and villages, and, I should think, average two miles from their work; this tells on the men heavily, both in distance and the baneful effects of beer-houses. Were they lodged on the farm they would not have the opportunity, and in case of need be of greater use to their employers.

"The small cottages are generally well kept; and water is abundant.

"Women are not employed here; and boys not till they are 12 or 13 years old; they begin at 4*s.* a week, and get up to 8*s.* and 9*s.*; they also are allowed, in proportion to the men, extra wages in harvest time. Our labour is regular, as, owing to having so much grass land, cattle require in winter what the land does in summer, and consequently our men are employed all the year round."

11*a*. Evidence of *Mr. Young*, Ewe Close, occupier.—"Cowmen and shepherds have 16*s.* a week the year round. My moor shepherd has a cottage and six acres of good land, and pays 12*l.* a year to the Duke for it; my home shepherd rents a good cottage at 2*l.* 10*s.* a year. My ploughman's wage is worth about 17*s.* a week for the year. He has 14*s.* a week upstanding wage, a load of potatoes at Christmas, Lady-day, and when we take them up; at Christmas he gets 1*l.*, and the same at Lady-day for seed time; in harvest he has beer and one meal per day, and the same in hay time, and gets 2*l.* at harvest for extra hours.

"All my other labourers have 14*s.* a week at all times except harvest, when they take cutting corn and hay by the acre, and average about 1*l.* a week for eight weeks; they also take up turnips and potatoes by the piece. At Hassop Park (Colonel Leslie's) they take cows in for 21 weeks in summer, as at Chatsworth. If a labourer has not a cow he borrows one. All our men are in sick clubs, and most of the farmers subscribe to these clubs; there are also cow clubs, to which the members pay 2*s.* 6*d.* a year.

"We don't like paying men in kind in any way; if we kept cows for our men it would lead to pilfering.

"I have no farm servant in my house now; and a good many farmers have got rid of them.

"I am always trying to get my labourers to send their children to school, but it is very difficult; they don't understand the value of it, and I don't see what can be done without some form of compulsion."

11*b*. Evidence of *Mr. Lawrence Furniss*, occupier.—"I occupy 400 acres, of which 300 are grass. I board and lodge three men, to whom I pay an average of 16*l.* a year. A lad of 15 has 10*l.*

"I consider these men much better off than labourers living on their own account. Such men may save 10*l.* a year, and some of them do. A man has just left me who has saved 100*l.*; he is looking out for a farm.

"A dairy woman managing cheese making has 14*l.* a year; some have as much as 20*l.*

"The men we have in the house are cattle or horse men. When such a man is boarded out he gets from 8*s.* to 9*s.* for board. The men we keep are the best labourers, a good deal, because they are best fed.

"The labourers' cottages in the neighbourhood are very fairly good.

"Labourers who live at home have from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a week, but any good labourer can command 14*s.* As soon as we commence cutting hay it is customary now to pay 1*l.* a week, and give from two to three quarts of beer per day; this would last for four weeks; and there would be the same wage for four weeks in harvest on our farm.

"Labourers' wives seldom do farm work. On my farm they do not work either in hay time or harvest.

"All girls may go to service.

"A good strong boy of 12 gets 1*s.* a day.

"Men work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; they breakfast at home, have a quarter of an hour at 10 o'clock, and dine from 12 to 1 o'clock, and when working long hours they have drinking time at 4 o'clock."

Baslow.

Population, 2,366 - Acreage, 5,450.

12. Evidence of *Mr. T. W. Gardom*, occupier.—"There are very few boys employed in agriculture in this parish under 12 years of age; they are generally employed in summer; some few all the year.

"The distance they have to go to their work is under a mile.

"Their hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and from light to dark in winter.

"I would restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 12 years. There is a National school well attended.

"The cottages are good, and are let at a low rent; they are sufficient in number for the supply of labour required, well situated with respect to the farms, not overcrowded, well supplied with water, and well ventilated.

"All the cottages have good gardens.

"The wages of labourers are 14*s.* a week; they are hired by the week. Three of my best men have cottages on the farm free of charge."

Darley.

Population, 2,156 - Acreage, 7,104.

13. *Rev. D. Vawdrey*, rector and vice-chairman of Board of Guardians, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture from 7 or 8 years old upwards; they are employed from March till the end of September.

"No girls are employed on the land.

"No women are employed.

"They go from half a mile to two miles to their work.

"No restriction is desirable for any purposes except for *educational*. Their employment is very healthy. For the latter purpose, however, it is a question whether some restriction would not be advantageous.

"We have a boys' school, a girls' school, and an infant school, with a night school in the winter months. The education received is of a very imperfect and elementary kind, from the early age at which the children leave school and the desultory and intermittent attendance. The demand for labour is the chief cause of this, and to a certain extent the *distance* which the children have to walk to school, owing to the very scattered nature of the population.

"The cottages are substantial and not overcrowded; they are mostly very well supplied with water and well ventilated.

"Most of the cottages have small gardens, but very few allotments for other purposes, and especially for the keep of a cow; the withdrawal of this privilege, where it has existed, is, in my opinion, in the highest degree prejudicial to the labouring classes. The loss of the cow has entailed the loss of the pig, a scarcity of, and in many cases the entire deprivation of the first necessary of life for a young family, viz., milk. The labourer is a less important man in his own esteem, has lost his attachment for the old homestead and country, has become migratory in his desires, and seeks when he is able the little farm and its comforts in America, which he can no longer obtain in England. If he remains at home he gives to the alehouse the time he would otherwise have given to his croft and green crop. The habits of the wife and daughters are equally changed for the worse. They are become less domestic and (at least in *domestic* occupations) less industrious, as we all feel who have to employ servants.

"In this neighbourhood the contrast in the dress and character of those females who are thus associated with a little dairying on their own account from that of others with no such association is very striking.

"The cultivation of the parish is chiefly of a mineral nature; there is, however, a very extensive nursery, garden, in which a great number of boys are employed from spring till autumn. A considerable number of families are also supported by working in lead mines, and some by hand-loom weaving. There is also a large flax mill employing a many hands in the mill, and in dressing the flax, and there are extensive stone quarries and stone getters."

13*a*. Letter addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by the Rev. D. Vawdrey.

Darley Rectory, Matlock, Bath,
25th May.

Dear Sir,

My apology for addressing this communication to you is partly the fact that I happened to be the Chairman of the Board of Guardians at Bakewell when you addressed them yesterday, and partly the fact that the subjects you referred to were matters which have exercised my own thoughts for many years, as a resident in Derbyshire, and having superintendence (spiritual) over an important parish therein. As a body, the guardians of the Bakewell union are a remarkably shrewd and intelligent class of men, but few probably had directed their attention specially to or would feel able to answer off-hand the questions on which their opinion was asked, and any replies given under such circumstances would be crude and hasty. I think it right, however, that *some one* should undertake the responsibility of replying to you, and as I have been honoured with the confidence of the guardians on occasions of this kind for nearly 20 years, probably they would expect me to *try* at least to be the exponent of their views.

I have not your printed questions by me, but so far as I remember they related chiefly to the two points, 1, the general condition of the agricultural population in these parts, and 2, the degree to which they are educated.

As to the first, you were most correctly informed that their general condition is good, probably above the average of that of the general English labourer. There are, however, considerable exceptions to this rule, chiefly in districts where hand-loom weaving still prevails, a mode of living which those who have followed it still cling to with a most perverse tenacity, in spite of the depression and poverty which are associated with it. *Goitre* is an evil incident to this locality, so extensive and so mischievous that no report of the hilly districts of Derbyshire would be complete without some reference to it. There is a great deal of it in this parish. In one family six daughters were deaf and dumb, one son a maniac, and another imbecile. In another family four daughters were deaf and dumb. There are many other cases of imbecility and imperfect development, either of bodily or mental

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power or both, all in this parish. Yet this parish is well drained, has admirable water all flowing from gritstone, and is spread over a wide and very open valley. Goitre chiefly prevails among the aboriginal inhabitants. I know but of one instance where any strangers coming to live here (and there are many) have shown any symptoms of it. Among the aborigines the system of intermarrying has been carried on for generations to an extent which I never met with out of Derbyshire, and to this fact, more than to any other, I attribute the prevalence of this disease. Some years ago I obtained from all the medical officers of our union an opinion as to the possible and probable effect of administering to sickly children, at a certain age, in the spring of the year, port wine and quinine (especially if good milk were a constant part of their diet) in gradually eradicating the seeds of goitre. Their opinion was unanimous that the systematic adoption of such a course would *in time* be effectual. But then the poor could not be expected to buy such articles. The guardians should have the power and indeed be *required* to dispense them whenever their medical officers recommended them to be given. It would be a most economical policy to do so.

In connexion with this subject comes the labourers' cow and cottage allotments. I am sorry to see that modern notions of political economy are year by year causing these things to disappear amongst us. Twenty years ago there were few respectable labourers in this parish who had not their cow or cows. The wife and children mostly did the work required by them, and the husband gave his own labour to his employer. About 12 years since a large portion of the parish changed hands, and the first thing which the new owner did was to abolish the old system on his entire estate. I am sure that the change has been prejudicial in every way. These men (political economists I mean) are much influenced by the "reports of commissioners." Probably a report in favour of the old system might have some influence towards reviving it.

II. The question of education remains to be answered, and a most difficult one it is to answer. I have almost given it up in despair, so far as this parish is concerned, from the difficulties I have met with in obtaining results in any degree satisfactory. Every year, if occupation of any kind, at however trifling a remuneration, is to be obtained for children, they are taken away from school at ages still younger and younger. Twenty years ago we had at school a large class of boys and girls, all of whom were above 13 years old. Now there are few of either sex, especially in the summer time, older, if as old as 10. The boy at 6 nurses the baby or gathers manure, and the boy at 7 goes to the nursery garden to weed, and the instant the law permits them the rest are off to the flax mill at half time, in which condition their education is supposed to be provided for. But all the education which is here provided for such children is given by a very worthy, but very incompetent mother of a large family of children, a dependant of the mill owner. You intimated yesterday that a *thoroughly good* education offered would overcome all these difficulties. But a thoroughly good education is a very costly thing. The greater part of the property in this parish is owned by non-resident proprietors, most of whom contribute nothing towards the education of the poor. Ill paid as my teachers are, the deficiency in the funds of the school has (every year) varied from 10*l.* to 30*l.*, which has invariably fallen on myself. If 50 or 60 boys attend during the winter months, from March to the end of September the number is reduced to about 20. The mill, extensive nursery gardens, and our chief proprietors' farming operations call them off, and a really good schoolmaster will not occupy a post where attendance is so irregular and his work so little appreciated. That the parents should not send a child to school where it could earn 3*s.* a week out of school is not to be wondered at. Its education would cost the parent practically in that case 3*s.* 3*d.* a week. But the question is, if education *is* to be given at all, how it is to be given. Certain things seem to me to be absolutely necessary. 1. A school rate, to be paid by the *owners* and not the *tenants*. 2. One-half the cost of the school, &c. to be paid by government, to give them the right of interference and inspection. 3. Making it obligatory on mill owners to send their children to the school which has *a certificated* master or mistress, if there be such a one in the parish, and not as here, to a dame school. (This would make a vast difference to us here, not only in the number of our scholars, but also in our funds.) 4. Prohibiting the hire of any child *unless certified by the inspector as able at least to read moderately, and perhaps to write moderately* under a certain age, say 9; and this certificate to hold only on condition of a certain amount of attendance *subsequently*, either at night school, or in the winter months, until 12 or 13, unless the inspector should certify sooner that the child's education were sufficient. 5. The giving to every child properly educated under the hand of the inspector, and in some conspicuous and attractive shape, say an emblazoned card or certificate, that its education had been brought up to the government standard. Trifling as such a thing may seem, I believe that the holders of such a certificate would attach great importance to it, would feel themselves, and be felt by their neighbours, to be superior personages. 6. Where parishes are small in area and population, to consolidate them for educational purposes. Instead of a number of inefficient schools, as at present, we should have fewer, but all good ones, by such an arrangement.

I have just dotted down a few thoughts on the very important subjects concerning which you requested information. If there is any further point on which I can give you the least assistance I shall be glad to do so. I am, &c.

D. Vawdrey.

You will understand that the above statement has never been communicated to the Board, probably many of the guardians would agree with me, and some would differ from me. But such as the opinions are, I am alone responsible for them.

Edensor.

Population, 592 - Acreage, 4,829.

14. *Mr. J. G. Cottingham, J.P.*, agent to the Duke of Devonshire, says, "There are some boys employed in agriculture in this neighbourhood.

"No girls are employed.

"Women are only employed in hay time or on land belonging to their cottages.

"Women and boys work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"Boys should not work out until they are 12 years old.

"I think it desirable to restrict the employment of females to harvest work and weeding corn and turnips and dairy work.

"There are excellent schools for boys, girls, and infants, and they are well attended. The weekly payment is very moderate.

"The cottages are generally good, but this is an exceptional parish, as there are scarcely any purely agricultural labourers. The cottagers are chiefly employed as gardeners, grooms, woodmen, and gamekeepers for the Duke of Devonshire. The cottages are well ventilated and supplied with water, and are not overcrowded.

"The cottages have all gardens, and most of them have sufficient land to winter a cow, in summer they pasture their cows in Chatsworth Park, paying 3*l.* for the summer grass, about 21 weeks."

The following evidence on small holdings and cow allotments was also given by *Mr. Cottingham*.

14*a*. "I think that very small allotments are a mistake, and that a man with an allotment of, say, 10 acres, to keep a couple of cows, is better off than the holder of 20 or 30 acres or a farm just big enough to tempt him to do nothing else but work on his farm.

"I reduced one man to 10 acres from 20 to compel him to work, and he afterwards told me I had made a gentleman of him; he now works for the Duke of Devonshire at 14*s.* a week, and has his grass allotment of 10 acres. This system works well, bringing up a good class of labourers, and giving their wives an occupation at home."

14*b*. Extract from a Return by *Rev. J. Hall*, vicar.

"The circumstances of this parish are altogether exceptional. It is entirely the property of the Duke of Devonshire. The people are employed by him in various ways, and are well cared for in every respect. I am clearly of opinion that the small farmers, *i.e.*, persons holding from 30 to 60 acres of land, are as a class worse off in this neighbourhood than the labourers, who receive generally from 14*s.* to 18*s.* per week.

"On the other hand, where a labourer can have, as is common with us, just so much grass land as will enable him to keep one or two cows, which can be managed by his wife with scarcely any demand upon his own time, his position is undoubtedly much better than that of those to whom this privilege is denied.

"I am satisfied that these views are shared by nearly all who are acquainted with the district. The children are usually sent to school at 2 or 3 years of age, and seldom leave before they are 14."

14*c*. *Thos. Wilson*, labourer, Chatsworth, says, "Labourers under the duke have 14*s.* a week; farmers sometimes pay more, but the work is not so constant.

"I have eight acres of grass with my cottage, and I keep two cows. It takes about four acres to keep a cow, two to graze, and two to mow.

"The duke (Devonshire) allows labourers to put their cow in the park for 21 weeks, from May 15th to October 10th, at 3*l.*, and a great many do it. Women used to reap and such like, but they don't do it now, and you seldom see one in the fields; they look after their houses and their cows instead.

"There are two cow clubs about here for insuring the cows, we pay 2*s.* 6*d.* for each cow on entry, and 1*s.* a year after. Wages used to be 12*s.* a week here, but the duke has raised them to 14*s.* I think labourers are very comfortably off round here."

Hassop.

Population, 139 - Acreage, 1,129.

15. *Mr. J. Young*, agent to Colonel Leslie, says, "The cultivation is chiefly pastoral. The only ploughed land is a few acres, to give a little bedding for cattle and pigs in winter.

"Boys are employed from 10 years of age in milking cows and cleaning out their houses, also in weeding, making hay, and such like.

"Girls are not much employed in this parish in agricultural outdoor work, excepting in milking cows or where they are working for their parents, as many do, the holdings being very small, and the work done by the members of the family.

"Women are employed in the same manner as girls.

"The hours of work upon the land for men are 10 hours when for hire, but children principally work for their parents, and in that case their hours would be difficult to ascertain; the same with regard to women.

"I think it is scarcely necessary to restrict the age of boys, doing such work as they do here, unless they were compelled to attend a school instead of working. If this can be done I think a great blessing would be conferred on the rising generation.

"I think it is unnecessary to place any restriction on the employment of women in agriculture. Children should not be compelled to work before they are able, so as to retard and stint their physical development. I think they should be kept at school until they are 12 or 13 years of age. All persons are not equal in stature and strength at the same age, and should be treated accordingly.

"There is a school for boys and girls, where the ordinary branches of education are taught under a certificated master. The girls are taught knitting and sewing under a mistress. The charge is 2*d.* a week for young children, and 4*d.* for those further advanced. The children in the neighbourhood avail themselves of these schools. The master and mistress are both Roman Catholics. The schools are endowed by Colonel Leslie, and are under Government inspection. The capitation grant goes to pay the schoolmistress, who is the wife of the master.

"The cottages in the township of Hassop are good, although in the surrounding neighbourhood, such as Calver, Stoney Middleton, and other places, many of them are poor, chiefly in the occupation of miners, with a mixture of small farmers, or what may be called crofters. The women and girls chiefly work at the cotton mills in the neighbourhood, and the men at the mines and lime quarries. Those cottages which I describe as poor are neither well ventilated, lighted, nor well supplied with water, though it is only in a very dry time that they are short of water if they choose to carry it from the brook, or the well, or tap. I have not observed any evil results to morality directly chargeable to overcrowding.

"The wages of agricultural labourers will, I think, be fairly stated at 15*s.* a week; some are less than that sum, and some may have that and a cottage free. As a rule, they pay for their cottages.

"The cottagers usually eat wheaten bread, tea, and coffee, potatoes, butchers' meat as often as they can afford it, and puddings. I cannot call them a religious class, nor well educated.

"The mode of hiring men is chiefly by personal application on either side. Still there are hiring markets in various parts. There is a fair at Hope on the 13th May, where ploughmen are engaged by the year, and also female farm servants. Still they are subject to a month's notice, and can get off their engagement by a month's notice. Rate of wages for ploughmen I have already given. Female wages are about 10*l.* per year, but in large dairy farms a professional dairy maid will get 14*l.*, and some more. Labourers' wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, though in summer good men get more, up to 18*s.*; still secondary men you may get for 15*s.* per week any time of the year.

"Custom of letting small holdings for sheep and cows is from year to year, subject to six months' notice. There are no letting of these small holdings by advertisement or submitting them to competition in any way. It soon becomes known where a vacancy is likely to take place, when an applicant goes to the agent and applies for the holding. They leave the question of rent entirely to the agent or landlord. This is the practice amongst small holdings, and to a considerable extent in large ones, and shows the amount of confidence the inhabitants of the High Peak have in the owners of the soil. His Grace the Duke of Devonshire is an extensive owner in the Peak, and possesses the entire confidence of the Peakerils.

"As ploughmen the High Peak men are not to be compared with the border men; but the Peak men can build a dry stone wall much better than a border man could. Border men are a better educated and more intelligent class, with far more mother wit and gumption about them, and what I would call a more religious class, especially north of the Tweed. Their families are in a corresponding position to their parents.

"There are plenty of schools about here, but there is not that earnestness among the parents and the parish ministers here that you find in the north. The cause of this lamentable fact ought to be sought out and cured, now that church questions are so much the rage of the hour.

"In the border counties women are extensively employed in agricultural labour. On a farm of 500 acres, where large quantities of turnips are grown, there will, at certain seasons, be found from 20 to 30 women workers, who work 10 hours per day, and formerly got 10*d.* per day, but now raised to 1*s.* In

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Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland, and north of the Tweed, women do most of the field work, excepting the ploughing and other horse labour, and indeed they do their share of driving horses. I saw, only a week ago, women driving horses in the roller in Berwickshire, preparing turnip land."

STONEY MIDDLETON.

Population, 608 - Acreage, 1,098.

16. Evidence of the *Lord Denman*, landowner and occupier.—"Many boys are employed at open air work, separating lead from that in which it is embedded, called buddling, from the ages of 12 to 18, at all times of the year, except during a hard frost. A few act as carters.

"Young persons earn from 5*s.* to 8*s.* per week, above ground and below.

"Girls are not employed.

"Women are employed in hoeing turnips and in haymaking.

"The workers (children, young persons, and women) all live in the parish, and have not far to come to their work.

"The hours of work are during daylight in winter, and 10 hours in summer.

"A schoolmaster who was nine years here told me that formerly children left school at 12 years of age, but in the Sunday school several now go on to near 18, and many of those and of the older labourers go to the night school to supply defects of which they are sensible.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, as too little is done by women of all ages, the proportion of arable land being very small, and that not being very well weeded.

"In one instance a drunken mother prevents her children from being clothed well enough to be presentable at school.

"There are three schools; one a dame's school for very young boys and girls, the parish schools (day and Sunday) for boys and girls, and a Wesleyan school, rather on the decline, for boys and girls. The few Romanists attend chapel at Hassop, but as to their education it is separate from that of other children and young persons.

"There are no allotments. Several cottages have a small garden either near them or at a little distance. About 30 cows are agisted from 12th May to 11th October in pastures of owners and of occupiers, and occasionally an occupier or an owner allows a labourer to have a strip or two of potatoes on part of the land on which he is a labourer.

"Milk also is very cheap and good."

TIDESWELL.

Population, 3,512 - Acreage, 10,950.

17. COPY of a LETTER addressed to the Assistant Commissioner by the *Rev. Samuel Andrew*, vicar.

"DEAR SIR,

"OUR population is about equally divided into those engaged in mining, manufacturing, and agricultural labour.

"If any one of these employments predominates I have no doubt it will be the manufacturing class, children and women being less employed in mining and agriculture than in manufacturing.

"The means of education in this parish are now abundant. There is a free grammar school; we have also, at Tideswell, our National schools, connected with the parish church, under Government inspection, containing about 200 scholars, infants, boys, and girls. Her Majesty's inspector's last report, just received, states that the National schools are in a highly satisfactory condition. There is also a day school in a room under the Independent meeting house, containing about 70 children, boys and girls, average age 7. There is a school connected with Cressbrook Mills at Cressbrook, containing a similar number, average age 10. There is another school at Litton Mill, for the "half-timers" working at that mill.

I have just finished another commodious school for infants, boys, and girls (mixed) at Litton, a village of 400 to 500 inhabitants in this parish.

"At Wormhill there is a school for that district.

"The farms in this parish are managed, for the most part, by the families of the small freehold and tenant farmers who hold them, so that any legislation on the employment of women and young persons in agriculture will very slightly affect this parish.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"SAML. ANDREW."

CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH UNION.

BUXTON.

18. Evidence of *Mr. Samuel Turner*, bailiff to the Duke of Devonshire.—"A great many men in this neighbourhood are employed in lime burning, which they do by the piece (so much per ton for burnt lime); these men earn from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 4*s.* a day when in full work. The coal for burning the lime is obtained in the district, and employs a good number of men, who get from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.* a day.

"Farms in this district are small, and few farmers keep more than one serving man, who is lodged and boarded in the house, and has from 16*l.* to 18*l.* a year, hired from Christmas at statute fairs.

"Most farms are within the compass of a farmer and his son. Where a farm servant does not lodge in the farmhouse he gets 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week and his meat. There are very few farm labourers who live in their own cottages and board themselves. Labour is in great demand, and wages are high in consequence. There is very little corn grown; some oats and turnips for their own consumption.

"We have a good many occupiers of a cottage and a few acres who keep one or two cows. These men are labourers as well, and are well off, fully as well off as a man who farms 30 acres and who is not a regular labourer. A man who occupies less than 100 acres has great difficulty to make a living, as land here is chiefly grazing land. Men who have no land can 'lay' a cow for 20 weeks in summer for 4*l.*; their difficulty is to get food in winter. Most cottages have a small shippon. We have a farm of 800 acres, which only requires a cowman and boy; about 50 acres only are arable, and the rest is used for summer lay for rearing young stock."

CHESTERFIELD UNION.

19. At a special meeting of the *Board of Guardians for Chesterfield Union* held on the 5th of June 1869, 31 out of 40 elected guardians being present, the following resolution was carried unanimously, viz.:—

"That, in the opinion of this Board, it is highly desirable that all children should be able to read and write before being employed in agriculture, and that if they are unable to do so they ought not to be so employed before 10 years of age."

20. Evidence of *Mr. M. F. Mills*, land agent, &c.—"The population of this district is so much employed in the collieries and mines that the information I can give you will not be of much value as bearing upon the points treated in your circular. Women rarely do any field work, and most of the boys work in the pits. It is a great favour to get a woman to come into a hay field. Harvest is got through by the aid of Irishmen; comparatively few Irish, however, come now to what used to come, and their absence causes a great demand for reaping machines. I don't suppose we have one Irishman now for six who used to come. Farms are small, and the ordinary labour is carried out by the family and servants who live in the houses of the occupiers.

"Agricultural labourers' cottages are above the average, and belong to the landowners, and are held directly from the landowners, except on large farms, where one or two cottages are let with the farm.

"The difficulty of letting cottages with the farms is that the farmers are induced to let them to colliers at a high rent, and trust to get their labour elsewhere.

"I have been at work building cottages for 30 years, and I cannot now build a sufficient cottage with three bedrooms under 120*l.*, and that only where bricks can be obtained at cost price, say 16*s.* per 1,000.

"A labourer is best placed where he has just sufficient land to keep a cow, and that we encourage. Where I can I give a man two or three acres to make hay of to keep his cow in winter, and provide a general cow pasture for summer at 3*l.* 10*s.* for 20 weeks (May 17th to October 10th). This works remarkably well, especially among mechanics. I think 20 poles quite sufficient for a spade-cultivated garden or allotment.

"The ordinary rate of wages is 15*s.* a week; unmarried men, hired by the year and living in the farmer's house, have from 10*l.* to 20*l.* and their food; 16*l.* would be about the average of full men. During the last 25 years wages have risen from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a week, in consequence of the demand for labour in the coal and iron mines. All labour, mining and agricultural, has risen about 30 per cent. during the last 25 years.

"The occupiers of farms under 100 acres on the coal-measures are no better off than labourers; few of them can read or write."

STAVELEY.

Population, 7,513 - Acreage, 10,442.

Cultivation about one-half arable.

21. *Mr. R. W. Crawshaw*, occupier and guardian.—"Boys are never employed in this district, viz., North Derbyshire, in agriculture under 12 or 13 years, and only in exceptional cases under 14 years.

"Girls are not employed.

"Women are not employed.

"The distances the children, young persons, and women go to their work are generally only short, and in most cases the labourers' cottages are built on the farms. This is particularly the case upon the Duke of Devonshire's estates, which comprise a great portion of this division of the county.

"The hours of work of men are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., allowing an hour for dinner and a quarter of an hour at 9 o'clock in the morning.

"It is certainly not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land in this district.

"There are very good schools for all parts of the parish, and all under Government inspection. Proportionately the schools are more appreciated and better attended by agricultural labourers and their children than by any other class of labourers.

"The condition of agricultural labourers' cottages is generally good; they are sufficient in number for the supply of the labour required; they are, as has been stated above, mostly well situated on or close to the farms, and as the rents are merely nominal, and in most cases the men are rent free, keeping lodgers is not allowed; consequently cottages are not overcrowded, and are generally large enough.

"All farm cottages have good gardens, and they are, as a rule, kept in very good order.

"I wish here to make a remark or two on the manner of hiring young farm servants at statute hiring places. I think it very prejudicial to their interests morally and in every way, and it is much to be desired that some other mode could be adopted. They are, as it were, apprenticed and kept tight all the year, then let loose without any control, young men and young women all congregated in public houses, and the result may be better imagined than described.

"Hired servants from 14 to 20 years of age get from 8*l.* to 20*l.* per annum. The rate of wages for day labourers is on an average 15*s.* per week, for horsekeepers, who have longer hours, 18*s.*, and a foreman makes about 1*l.* This is exclusive of any extras; they make in harvest about 40*s.* extra, and in piecework generally, such as hoeing turnips, &c., they make extra wages; they have also potatoes grown for their own consumption, the farmer finding land, manure, and labour, the man only seed, and coal carted free of charge."

21*a*. Evidence of *James Longmate* and *Samuel Broughton*, farm labourers.—"We have 16*s.* a week upstanding wage; we get no milk and have no cows. In harvest we get some extras, but not much. We pay 1*s.* a week rent for our cottages and gardens; they are very good cottages, and are let to us by the master; he has them with the farm."

(The perquisites which these men had in addition to the upstanding wage of 16*s.* were thus reckoned by the master:—

	£
Potatoes, three pecks planted, worth say -	2
Harvest, extra pay - - -	2

The cottages were very good, let by the landowner with the farm, and would, with the garden, command a rent of 2*s.* 6*d.* a week in Staveley parish, so that the labourers gain in that respect also.—G. C.)

21*b*. Evidence of *M. Higginbottom*, groom and farm labourer.—"I have 16*s.* a week and a cottage and garden; I buy milk from my master. I have one child, a girl of 15; she has been out at service for nearly two years; she began at 5*l.*, but I must get her raised to 7*l.*; it takes 7*l.* to keep her in clothes and shoes, and she's dressed nothing gaudy neither. She went to school till she went to service; she can read well, and write fairly. Children are kept longer at school now than when I was young."

21*c*. The *Rev. R. Roy* says, "I do *not* think it desirable to prevent boys working on the land at certain seasons and at certain kinds of work, *e.g.*, bird tenting, potato setting, turnip singling, harvest work, and potato getting.

We have an infants' school and mixed Church of England school, which are fairly taken advantage of.

Our difficulty is the indifference of parents to *insist* upon regularity of attendance.

21*d*. Register of the children of the agricultural labouring class attending school in the township of Haudley in the parish of Staveley, as given by the Rev. R. Roy:—

In Summer.

	On the Register.	In average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	8	7
Between 10 and 13 -	2	2
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	7	7
Between 10 and 13 -	8	7

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	8	8
Between 10 and 13 -	5	4
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	7	6
Between 10 and 13 -	8	6

MANSFIELD UNION.

AULT HUCKNALL.

Population, 686 - Acreage, 3,730.

22. Evidence of *Mr. J. J. Rowley*, occupier, author of the prize essay on "The Farming of Derbyshire," (see Royal Agricultural Society's Journal, 1853).—"Young boys from 9 to 12 years of age are employed

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a few weeks in spring and autumn in tending birds; wages from 6*d.* to 8*d.* per day.

"Girls are only employed during harvest.

"Women are employed only during harvest.

"There is a scarcity of cottages in my district; a rural population has not been encouraged, and a scarcity of hands in a busy season is the result. Teammen work from 6½ a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer; in winter from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. without bait. In summer one hour and a half at noon is allowed for bait.

"I do not think it is desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. Boys under 13 are unfit for agricultural labour, they can only be useful in tending birds and leading horses in the harvest field; this is not to be called work.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females in this parish or district.

"There is an endowed school under good management. The advantage is accepted by the parents of young children; later on, poverty obliges the young persons to help in the family support.

"Very few cottages have been built in the parish by the owner. They are not conveniently situated for the labourers, who have to travel several miles to and from work. The cottages have good gardens near the dwelling, but no allotments.

"The wages of labourers are from 14*s.* to 16*s.* a week. Young men hired into the house will command, with board and lodging, from 8*l.* to 12*l.* and 16*l.* a year; they are engaged at statute fairs held in neighbouring towns.

"New milk is difficult to obtain by the labouring class, but they can generally get skim milk.

"The cultivation of the parish is mixed, but chiefly pastoral, the land of a medium quality. On the larger estates farms have been enlarged since the publication of my essay on 'The Farming of Derbyshire,' in 1853."

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE.

23. *Mr. John Shaw*, land surveyor, freeholder, and occupier, says, "South Derbyshire is in great part a pastoral district.

"Boys are to a limited extent employed from 10 to 11 years of age in light work during spring and summer, and as plough boys or farm servants from about 13 or 14.

"Girls are only employed as household servants, excepting sometimes in harvest; they go out to service early.

"Women are not generally or extensively employed, except in weeding corn in spring, and in harvest work in summer.

"The hours of work of women are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"I do not think any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land is necessary in South Derbyshire.

"No restriction is necessary on the employment of females in this division of the county.

"The means of education are National or parochial schools, and in a few instances endowed schools or private schools of landed proprietors. Advantage is *not* taken of these means to the extent which could be wished, although there is a general desire for the children to be 'taught.' This is not attributable, except in a comparatively small degree, to early labour or inability to pay, but I believe it arises from carelessness and negligence on the part of the parents, and in many cases, where it can be afforded, from an indisposition to pay the weekly pence. I know, however, of many instances where great anxiety exists to educate the children, and for which purposes great sacrifices are made. Sunday schools are generally well attended, but not much good is perceived where the children are neglected on week-days.

"Some of the cottages in South Derbyshire are very poor indeed, and in some places they are not sufficient for the supply of labour in the respective localities, nor are they conveniently situated. Some are also overcrowded, and evil results to morality have come under my notice in consequence. Within the last 20 years, however, very great improvements have been made in the cottages in this county, and on many large properties with which I am acquainted a very excellent state of things exist, cottages with all necessary conveniences having been erected, and good gardens having been provided. The allotment system has been also extensively introduced with advantage. There is a great desire generally to improve the condition of the labourer, which is being attended with gradual and perceptible good results."

"The mode of living, rate of wages and earnings, vary very much in different localities. In the neighbourhood of large towns and populous mining districts the wages of an agricultural labourer will be 15*s.* a week, with 'bargain' work in summer, when 18*s.* to 21*s.* will be earned. In some of the outlying districts a low rate of wages prevails of from 11*s.* to 13*s.* a week, with extras in summer, but generally in the purely agricultural districts 13*s.* or 14*s.* a week are the average rate of wages, with extra work and increased earnings in summer. In the first case the weekly earnings of a labourer and his wife and family will average 17*s.* to 18*s.* a week, in the second case about 13*s.*, and in the latter the average will be 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week. In the populous districts and near a town rents are from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a week, and in other districts 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 10*d.* per week.

"The mode of living is generally bread and potatoes, with bacon and cheese, and I believe most families now manage to have a fair supply of butcher's meat."

Belper Union.

24. At a meeting of the *Board of Guardians for Belper Union*, held on the 5th of June 1869, at which the Assistant Commissioner was present by appointment, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"The guardians of the Belper Union do not consider it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which children should be permitted to work on land, inasmuch as children in this union are very seldom so employed under 12 years of age."

25. Evidence of *Mr. Robert Spendlove*, relieving officer.—"We have no inspectors of nuisances. Agricultural labourers in my district (Belper) average 10*s.* a week and their food. The farm labourers' cottages are generally fair, and mostly belong to the landowners."

26. Evidence of *Mr. John Bacon*, relieving officer.—"There is a good deal of mining in my district. A colliery labourer (who had gone to the colleries from other labour) would command from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day. Farm labourers, as a rule, are better off and treat their families better than colliers; their wages are not so high, but they are more regular. Cottages in my district are fair, better in the country than in the towns."

Allestree.

Population, 529 - Acreage, 990.

27. Evidence of *Mr. T. W. Evans*, landowner. "No boys are employed on my farm; a very few are employed in the parish for bird tending in spring, and in August for harvest work. They are from 10 years old and upwards.

"No girls are employed.

"A few women are employed in harvest work, and perhaps two or three occasionally in spreading manure.

"The children, young persons, and women have never more than half a mile to go to their work.

"The hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"It is not desirable at Allestree to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females.

"The means of education are amply sufficient.

"There are two schools under certificated teachers and a good Sunday school; nearly all the children are on the books, and they attend well.

"The cottages in my parish are many of them new and generally good. A few, however, are very bad. They are sufficient for the supply of labour required and conveniently situated with regard to the farms; they are not now overcrowded. The supply of water in the village is good. The good cottages are well ventilated. The situation of Allestree is healthy. The typhus fever is unknown there. All the cottages, with one or two exceptions, have gardens or allotments of land very conveniently situated. I ought to add that Allestree is within one mile of Darley Abbey, and within two miles of Derby, and that many of the inhabitants, especially women and young persons, work in the manufactories and other places. In consequence of this probably fewer than might otherwise be the case are employed in agriculture."

27*a*. Evidence of *Mr. E. Harrison*, land steward to T. W. Evans, Esq.—"The cultivation is chiefly for dairy purposes; not more than one-fifteenth part of the parish is arable.

"Very few boys are employed in agriculture, only about four or five; their ages vary from 12 to 14.

"Girls are not employed in agriculture, they go to the factory.

"A few women are engaged in hay harvest. There is a good school and the attendance is good, I should say.

"The greater part of the cottages are good, say two-thirds of them; there are a few belonging to small freeholders which are not good.

"Very few cottages are without either gardens or allotments.

"Labourers' wages are from 15*s*. to 16*s*. a week."

Hazelwood and Shottle.

Population, 819 - Acreage, 5,054.

28. The *Rev. J. H. Jenkins* says, "Our population was once slightly manufacturing; it is now, with the rarest exceptions, agricultural. Our quarries employ a few men in stone getting.

"Our agricultural labourers get from 14*s*. to 15*s*. a week, or live in farm houses and take home 7*s*. a week. Women are not employed in the fields. Very few children remain at school after they are 11 years old, consequently by the time they are men or women very few retain much of what they learned. The poor think little of education, and are unwilling to pay the small sum required of them, and on the smallest pretence keep their children at home.

"Our cottages are very bad, there is rarely more than one bedroom in them, in which adults and children crowd together. This is partly owing to the circumstance that they belong to small proprietors, who are desirous to get as much as possible at the least outlay. The farms in Hazelwood are small, the tenant farmers poor, consequently they avoid as much possible giving employment to labourers. In winter many are out of work, and they look to harvest as the time of compensation.

"Hazelwood men are celebrated as mowers; they have been known to travel to the south of London, working all the way.

"Unfavourable as this account is, nevertheless on the whole a great improvement has taken place amongst us; the people are better clad by far than formerly, and with sobriety we should be a very prosperous people. Almost every case of poverty is owing to intemperance and its consequent extravagance."

28*a*. Evidence of *Mr. Jos. Goodwin*, farmer.—"Labour can sometimes hardly be got for money in this neighbourhood; this year a man asked me 9*s*. an acre for hoeing beans, and I have had to pay 7*s*. 6*d*. When we can get hands we pay about 5*s*. 6*d*. an acre for hoeing wheat. I have 140 acres, of which 40 acres are arable; I only keep one man besides my son, and he's not a full man; he has 13*l*. and his keep, a full man would have 18*l*. We have no cottage attached to the farm." (These farm buildings are in a wretched state. The farm belongs to the trustees of some charity, and nothing is ever done by the landowners to improve the state of affairs.—G. C.)

Kedleston.

Population, 116 - Acreage, 950.

Cultivation chiefly pastoral, a small portion of green crops grown.

29. *Mr. John Coleman*, land steward to Lord Scarsdale and guardian, says, "Boys are very seldom employed in farm labour under 12 years of age.

"Girls are not employed on the land at any time except a few days hay-making.

"Women are sometimes employed, but not very much in the winter months, principally for hay-making in the summer.

"Labourers have to go from one to two miles to their work.

"Women work from 8 to 4 in winter and from 7 to 5 in summer.

"I would have no boy employed at a less age than 12 upon my farm.

"It is desirable to place a restriction upon the employment of females. Boys and girls should not be allowed to work in gangs together, and boys should be looked after by a man as ganger, and girls by a woman. I think the mixing of the sexes, particularly when some are known bad characters, is very injurious.

"There is a good school, which is well attended.

"In this parish the cottages are nearly all new and good, but in the district I must say they are bad and small, with very poor accommodation for the division of the sexes, and are ill ventilated; they are situated in villages, and the inhabitants have a long distance to go to their work; I cannot say anything in their favour, and as they are short in number in many districts, they are very much overcrowded.

"Most cottages have good gardens, and generally in this district allotments are provided in many places besides the gardens; they are situated as near the villages as practicable.

"The agricultural labourer in this district is in a different position to what he is in many others. The farms are small, and being mostly pastoral, the farmer keeps several men and lads in his house with him, and many farmers only employ extra labour during the busy or harvest portion of the year, and very much of the labour so employed is Irish. In consequence of mills (cotton), mines (lead), and the nearness to the town of Derby, with its immense railway works, almost all the likely young men of this district get to some other and more remunerative employment than agriculture, and I think that before many years are over we shall have a greater scarcity of labour than we now have. On account of the farms being small, and nearly all the farmers being *working men*, they do not employ so much labour as in many districts, and therefore the good labourer who depends upon agriculture entirely is not very plentiful with us. We know but little of the employment of children in the fields, for if the farming of the district is not up to such perfection as some others, I must say the working classes are very much more alive to the benefits of education than in other districts, where the farmer and his men are quite different classes, and not as here, the one in many instances sprung from the other; and it is the hope and struggle to get into a small farm that induces many a labouring man to keep his children at school when they might be pecuniarily benefiting him by work.

"I think there are many more inducements in this district for young men to get away from agricultural work, and therefore they are more careful about education.

"If boys are employed at a lower age than 12 they should be up to a certain standard of education, or should devote a portion of, say, the winter months to

Derbyshire.
Mr. Culley.
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school. Boys who have to go a part of the day at a busy time of the year to school are of no use to the farmer, whose operations are carried on, as a whole generally, and therefore if the boys are absent the whole machine stops."

SHOTTLE.

Population, 427 - Acreage 3,741.

30. *Mr. T. Travis*, occupier, says, "Women and girls are only employed in the farmer's house.

"The labourers' cottages are very inconveniently placed for the use of my farm; I would give a good deal for two cottages attached to my farm.

"I have two young men, who lodge and board in the house, and three men, who get their food in my house and sleep at home; these last have 9*s.* a week except for 14 weeks in summer, when they have 13*s.* a week, their meat, and two quarts of beer per day. I consider the men's meat worth at least 7*s.* a week. A lad of 15 or 16 in my house has 8*l.* and his keep.

30*a*. Evidence of *Mr. Jos. Brookes*, bailiff to Mr. Smedley.—"We hire carters by the year from the 12th of May, and pay them 15*s.* a week, and give them a cottage free, say 16*s.* 6*d.* a week. Sometimes these men have piecework in harvest for a week or so; we have three such men.

"Able-bodied day labourers we pay 14*s.* a week in winter and 16*s.* a week in summer; in harvest they earn about 1*l.* a week for a month; we have 10 such men. An old man has 10*s.* and a boy of 15 has 9*s.* a week.

"We employ no women except occasionally weeding. Our carters live on the farm, and our horses rest two hours in the middle of the day."

SHARDLOW UNION.

ELVASTON.

Population, 500 - Acreage, 2,500.

Cultivation mixed, chiefly pasture.

31. Evidence of *Mr. G. Murray*, land agent, &c. "Boys are seldom employed in this parish under 12 years of age, and women are only employed for a few weeks in hay time.

"Boys make better labourers when early trained in habits of industry; they should begin work not later than when entering on their twelfth year.

"Elvaston parish contains only 600 acres of arable land, the remainder is rich grazing and dairy land, geologically known as the lower diluvian. The whole parish, with the exception of 40 acres, belongs to the Earl of Harrington.

"In this parish there are many cottage holdings of from three to ten acres in extent; this system of small holdings does not work well here, I think it is disadvantageous both to landlord and tenant; many of them are unable from want of capital to keep any stock, and they have been for years past dependent on the sale of hay to pay their rents; this continuous mowing without the application of manures has been gradually impoverishing the land. I have prepared an agreement which precludes them selling the hay from off the land. The labouring classes are all particularly well off, as there are magnificent charities belonging to the parish, amounting to 200*l.* a year, which is distributed amongst the cottagers of the parish. Since the present Earl of Harrington succeeded to the title and estates in 1866 great improvements have been effected, ten new cottages have been erected, and many of the old ones have undergone repairs, and yet there still remains much to be done. All the new cottages are of a superior class; they are mostly built in pairs, and contain living-room, kitchen with copper and sink, pantry and closet on the ground floor, with three separate bedrooms to each; they have each also coal-house tool-house, and watercloset at the back; the plans were all prepared in the office here and the work mostly done by the staff of men employed on the estate. We make our own bricks, purchase the timber at wholesale prices, and have saws and other machinery for converting it at the least cost, and yet we cannot do them at less than 220*l.* per pair; with the present mania for cheap cottages this is by many considered an extravagant price. Cottages can be erected at any price, and may have all necessary requirements to meet the wants demanded by the progress of the age, and yet fail on the score of economy. Each cottage here has a garden attached of from 10 to 15 poles; the rent of cottage and garden is 1*s.* per week. There are also allotments of 20 poles each, the rent of which is at the rate of 4½*d.* per pole; the allotments are as a rule well cultivated and clean, the only difficulty the tenant experiences is that of obtaining a sufficient quantity of manure to maintain the fertility of the soil under so scourging a system of cropping, and unless he can keep a pig or two, to consume the odds and ends and make some manure, the produce soon falls off. The Earl of Harrington is himself a large employer of labour, both in his extensive grounds at Elvaston Castle and likewise on his estate. The labourers employed in the gardens and grounds receive 14*s.* per week; in cases of temporary illness, where the labourer is not a member of a benefit society, he is paid half his weekly wages. There is an enrolled benefit society in an adjoining parish, to which most of the men belong, they pay 1*s.* 8*d.* per month. In case of illness they are attended by the club doctor, receive 10*s.* per week for the first six months, 5*s.* during the second six months, and 3*s.* 6*d.* per week for life if from accident or any other cause they are incapacitated for work. All drainage, road making, brick and tile making, and all estate improvements that admit of measurement or of being let by the piece is invariably done in that way; the men employed on such works earn from 18*s.* to 22*s.* per week. The day men commence work at 6 a.m. and leave off at 6 p.m., with one hour for breakfast and another for dinner, except on Fridays and Saturdays, when they leave off at 5 p.m.; they are all paid at the office at 5 o'clock on Fridays. There is a large schoolroom, with superior schoolmaster's house; the Earl of Harrington pays the master 45*l.* per year, and allows him house rent free with large garden; his Lordship likewise pays a girl 8*l.* per year to teach sewing. The school is now under Government inspection, last year the master received a grant of 23*l.*; the children each pay 1*d.* per week, which also goes to the master. There is likewise a night school during the winter months for those young persons who choose to avail themselves of it, and for which they pay 2*d.* per week for light, and on Sunday there are classes for religious instruction."

BURTON-ON-TRENT UNION.

Population, 41,059 - Acreage, 86,791.

Cultivation mixed, with a large proportion of pasture land.

32. Answer of the *Board of Guardians* to the questions contained in the Commissioners' circulars of inquiry given at a special meeting held on the 10th of June 1869.

"Boys are employed in spring and summer from about 12 or 13 years of age.

"Very few girls are employed in agriculture.

"Women are employed to a very moderate extent.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which children should be permitted to work on the land.

"There are parochial schools in nearly every parish, and the children's attendance is not interfered with by early labour.

"Generally the cottages for labourers are of good quality and healthy; there are a very few exceptions.

"The cottages have generally fair-sized gardens, and in most instances there are allotments allowed to labourers by the principal owners of the parish."

33. Evidence of *Mr. John Shaw*, relieving officer, Repton District of Burton Union.

"My district is chiefly farmed for dairy purposes; the holdings are small, and the farmers' families often

work the farm within themselves; on the larger holdings more labour is employed.

"Young men are usually hired by the year, and live in the farmer's house; lads begin about 12, and get about 4*l.* a year; men get from 12*l.* to 16*l.*

"Married men, who are hired by the week and board at home, get about 14*s.* a week on an average for the year. In winter wages drop to 12*s.* a week, in hay time and harvest they rise to 15*s.* or 16*s.*, and in spring and autumn they vary from 13*s.* to 14*s.*

"Some weekly servants board in the farmer's house, and get about 8*s.* a week in winter, and 10*s.* a week in summer; the board is worth 5*s.* to 6*s.* a week, and the man himself is better off and better fed, but his family suffers, having only the 8*s.* or 10*s.* a week to live on.

"I think the labourers are pretty well off in this county, especially in the north of the county. The winter employment in Burton helps to keep wages up, especially for hired single men, and I don't think the beer allowance of the breweries does so much harm as is usually attributed to it. At the breweries they give labourers 13*s.* a week, and a quart to three pints of beer a day.

"The cottages in my district are moderately fair; nearly every cottage has an oven and boiler, and men working near home get a hot dinner; about half the cottagers keep pigs; and bacon is the chief animal food that is used. Farmers do not object to their labourers keeping pigs, formerly they used to allow them to keep cows in the lanes, now they will not; in each parish three or four cows used to be kept in the lanes.

"Women employed in farm houses as dairy women and living in the house have from 8*l.* to 14*l.* wages; some exceptionally good ones have 16*l.*"

Barton Blount.

Population, 73 - Acreage, 1,150.

34. Evidence of *Mr. F. Bradshaw, J.P.*, landowner. —"Boys are, I think, only employed in seed time as bird tenters; both boys and girls work on my farm and estate, but I think only in harvest on their parents' account; one lad is employed on my farm under the waggoner.

"Except as above, girls are not at all employed. Women are a good deal employed in harvest and in weeding.

"Children, women, and young persons go about half a mile to their work in my parish.

"Women come to their work at 8 a.m., and leave at 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner. Boys as bird tenters come early, and leave with the labourers about 6 p.m.

"As far as this immediate district is concerned, I should not think it desirable that any restriction should be placed on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land.

"This parish draws all its labour from the adjoining one of Church Broughton, where there are schools, and the parents are generally anxious to give their children what education they can.

"There are only a few cottages in Barton Blount, not sufficient for the supply of labour; what there are, are conveniently situated, well ventilated, and well supplied with water.

"All my cottages have good gardens, and I allow my regular labourers some potato ground on my own farms, though they do not live under me as tenants."

Church Broughton.

Population, 651 - Acreage, 2,272.

Cultivation mixed, chiefly pastoral.

35. *Mr. T. S. Radford*, occupier, says, "Boys are not generally employed in agriculture throughout the year before 13 or 14 years of age. Some few are employed occasionally in the spring and autumn frightening the birds off the corn under the above age.

"Girls are not employed in outdoor work; they are employed in household work from 13 to 18 years of age and older.

"Women are employed in the spring, summer, and autumn in light work, perhaps about one-third of the labourers' wives are thus employed. The labourers on my farm have a distance of 1½ miles to go to their work; some part of the labourers get a job when they can, viz., draining or other work at a distance from the parish.

"My men work from 5 a.m. till 6 p.m. in the spring, summer, and autumn months, in harvest they work longer in the evening, in the winter they work whilst it is light.

"I see no necessity to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, as they are not required to work earlier than they are able, and they have a good school, which they attend until they are able to work.

"There is a free school for a certain number, about 20 I think, the remainder pay a trifling sum per week, from 1*d.* to 3*d.*, I believe; if one of a family, 3*d.*; if two, 2*d.*; if more, 1*d.* each. The school is generally taken advantage of.

"Some of the cottages are good, some moderate, some scarcely fit for habitation, they are quite sufficient for the labour required; some of them are very inconveniently situated with respect to the farms, mine for instance, all my labourers being 1½ miles from my farm. I do not know that they are overcrowded; they are well supplied with water; some of them are small and close, but mostly healthy.

"The cottages generally have gardens, and there is a quantity of land let in allotments, perhaps six or seven acres, belonging to the vicar of the parish.

"I have osier beds on the banks of the Dove, at Etwall and Egginton; the peeling season is from the end of April to the beginning or middle of June; in the peeling season I employ all the hands I can get, women and children, mothers bring their babies in cradles with them, whole families work together, the mother breaks the peel (draws the willow through a break), and the children peel. They do it by the bundle, some families will earn 4*s.* or 5*s.* a week. One woman I employ can peel about two bundles a day, at 6*d.* a bundle (size of bundle, 38 inches). The women I employ in light farm work I pay 5*s.* a week, 6*s.* a week in harvest. In this parish I could get as many women (married) as I like, in the next parish (Egginton) few women work out, they have no public-house at Egginton, and the families are better off.

"I hired waggoners by the year, Michaelmas to Michaelmas, at from 12*l.* to 14*l.* a year, and their keep. Men keeping themselves, and not hired by the year, have 14*s.* a week for 39 weeks, and 16*s.* for 13 weeks in summer, when they also have luncheon and supper, and beer if working long hours; I give my men about 300 yards of a drill of potatoes.

"In the lambing season and calving time I find the want of cottages a very great inconvenience.

"Where farmers have convenient cottages they don't have men in their house, and some farmers find food for all their men, giving them 8*s.* a week and their food.

"At Cole Orton, in Leicestershire, I pay 13*s.* a week throughout the year, and 1*l.* for Sunday work, giving the same potato ground; they set as many potatoes as one load of dung will cover."

Egginton.

Population, 355 - Acreage, 2,289.

Cultivation, chiefly pastoral.

36. *Mr. J. C. Nichols*, schoolmaster, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture from 8 years of age.

"Girls are only employed during osier peeling.

"Women are principally employed during osier peeling.

"Women work from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

"Boys work from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

"Children should not be employed in farm labour under 12 years of age.

"There is a good school endowed by Sir Henry

Derbyshire.
Mr. Culley.
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Every, Bart., it is taken advantage of in a middling way, there is no cause for the children's non-attendance at school other than farm labour.

"The cottages are tolerably good; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required; they are conveniently situated with respect to the farms, and are well supplied with water."

36*a*. Evidence of *Mr. Bullock*, occupier.—"About here (South Derbyshire) men are hired by the year from old Michaelmas day, on the borders of Leicestershire from Martinmas, and in North Derbyshire from Christmas day.

"Men have from 8*l*. to 16*l*., with board and lodging. Good men can command about 14*l*. 13*s*. a week is the winter wage for day men; for 13 weeks in summer they have 10*s*. a week, besides meat (five meals a day) and beer.

"The whole population turn out osier peeling in early summer.

"Boys from 10 to 13 are employed in spring and autumn, planting and picking potatoes, and gathering stones; girls of the same age are employed in the same work.

"One or two women are employed on some farms.

"Men work from 6½ a.m. to 5½ p.m.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"There is a good school, which is taken advantage of at all times when the children are not employed, which is the only cause of non-attendance.

"Our cottages are of medium quality, all, without exception, have garden or allotment ground."

36*b*. Evidence of *Edwin Dicken*, labourer.—"Labouring men about here have from 12*s*. to 15*s*. a week. A good many men go to Burton in the winter, where they get 13*s*. a week and beer, and many of them would be out of work in winter if they didn't get work at Burton in the breweries, and if it wasn't the beer it would be a good job for them to get work there, but it spoils some of them getting to drink so much beer. Two or three years ago labourers used to put their cows out in the roads in summer, and help them through with grains; now they are not allowed to turn them into the roads, and so they can't keep them, it's a good job for a labourer to have a cow for his wife to look after and get milk for his children. Some small tradesmen, joiners, and such like can put their cows into a field of Sir Henry Every's in summer, but I don't think any labourers do."

Hilton.

Population, 719 - Acreage, 1,620.

37. Evidence of *Mr. George Lucas*, master of endowed school.—"Boys are employed in agriculture in my parish from about 10 years old, in spring, summer, and autumn.

"Girls are not employed.

"Only a few women are employed in weeding and hoeing corn, picking stones, and haymaking.

"It is desirable to restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 13 years old.

"It is desirable to place restriction on the employment of females.

"There is an infant school and an endowed school in the township, besides private schools; they are generally well attended.

"The cottages are in fair condition; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required. They are not conveniently situated with respect to the farms. They are not overcrowded, and are generally well supplied with water and well ventilated."

37*a*. *Mr. J. Hudson*, occupier, says, "The following are the wages of my men, who are hired by the year:—

A waggoner has 15*l*. and his keep.
A cowman „ 12*l*. „ „
A lad of 15 „ 2*l*. „ „

Day men average 14*s*. a week for three-fourths of the year, and from 14*s*. to 16*s*. a week, with beer, in hay time and harvest; when working long hours they get luncheon and supper; I always give them supper on Saturday night to keep them out of the public house.

"There are no cottages on my farm; one of my labourers, who has to be on my premises at 5 a.m. to milk, has to walk two miles to his work.

"Some labourers from about here go to Burton in the winter; they get no higher wages than we give, but as much beer as they like, and about three years kills them."

37*b*. *Mr. Jos. Docksey*, occupier, says, "Boys from 11 to 12 years of age are employed in spring crow tenting.

"Girls are not employed.

"Women are employed to weed corn in the spring.

"It is desirable to restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 11 years."

"There is a very good endowed school, the children take advantage of it in a great measure. Some parents neglect sending their children to school.

"Some of the cottages are very good, others very poor; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required; they are conveniently situated with respect to the farms; they are not overcrowded; the water supply is very good, and they are generally well ventilated.

"The gardens are good, and all the poor belonging to the parish have a quarter acre allotment ground."

37*c*. Register of the children of the agricultural labouring class attending the Hilton endowed school.

In Summer.

——	On the Register.	Average Attendance.
Boys:		
Under 10 - -	22	18
Between 10 and 13 -	14	5
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	5	5
Between 10 and 13 -	2	2

In Winter.

Boys:		
Under 10 - -	30	24
Between 10 and 13 -	28	22
Girls:		
Under 10 - -	7	7
Between 10 and 13 -	5	5

Scropton.

Population, 520 - Acreage, 3,340.

Cultivation chiefly pastoral.

38. *Mr. S. Faulkner*, occupier and guardian.—"I employ two or three women in summer weeding and haymaking; some work by the piece (by the thrave) shearing in harvest; by the day I pay them 1*s*. a day. In harvest a woman can earn 2*s*. 6*d*. a day. In harvest I can get pretty nearly as many women as I like. Our labourers have 13*s*. a week for day work for 39 weeks, and 14*s*. a week for 13 week in summer; these men also get piece work, earning by mowing and shearing say 4*s*. a day The youngest lad I have by the year is 16, sometimes in sowing time I have a younger boy or two for team driving.

"Some married women work about four months in the year at 1*s*. a day. Some of our men go to Burton in the winter, but they give so much beer it soon ruins them; if it was not for the beer the winter work supplied by the Burton breweries would be a blessing to our labourers, who sometimes cannot find farm work in winter."

APPENDIX B.—HERTFORDSHIRE.

Table A.

Labour Returns for Spring Quarter, as given by 18 Occupiers in Herts.

Union.	Parish.	Extent of Farm in Acres.			Nature of Soil.	Course of Husbandry.	Males.						Females.						
		Arable.	Pasture.	Total.			Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Ware	Thundridge	292	179	471	Clay and gravel.	4 course	—	—	—	4	12	16	Two or three married women occasionally.						
„	*St. Margaret's	220	44	264	Gravel and clay loam.	„	—	—	—	8	16	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hertford	*Bennington	792	209	1,001	Gravel and loam.	- -	—	1	5	8	40	54	—	—	—	—	10	—	10
„	Bengeo	196	29	225	Heavy and light.	5 course	—	1	2	2	7	12	None, except in hay time.						
„	Hertingfordbury	190	500	690	Light gravelly soil.	- - -	—	—	1	3	9	13	—	—	—	—	1	1	2
„	Little Berkhampstead.	80	86	166	Stiff	4 course	—	—	1	2	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Stapleford	500	50	550	- - -	„	—	—	6	4	12	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Tewin	536	100	636	Gravel	- - -	—	—	3	4	12	19	About six to ten women in summer.						
„	Watton	80	449	529	- - -	- - -	—	—	1	3	25	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hatfield	Hatfield	310	110	420	Bad	- - -	—	—	2	4	14	20	—	—	—	—	1	1	2
St. Alban's	Harpenden	310	60	370	Useful clay land.	5 course	—	—	2	3	14	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Redbourn	148	12	160	Clay on chalk	„	—	2	—	3	8	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	Sandridge	490	41	531	Gravel on chalk.	„	—	—	1	11	23	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
„	St. Stephen's	298	42	340	Gravel and clay.	„	—	—	—	4	6	10	Seldom employ any.						
„	Wheathampstead	330	32	362	Gravel and loam.	4 course	—	—	1	6	15	22	None, except in hay time.						
Hitchin	Stevenage	320	28	348	Mixed	4 and 5 course	—	—	—	4	12	16	A few women in hay time and harvest.						
„	*Willian, &c.	850	150	1,000	$\frac{2}{3}$ light ; $\frac{1}{3}$ heavy.	- - -	—	—	8	7	35	50	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
Buntingford	Wallington	800	70	870	- - -	- - -	—	—	7	4	19	30	Eight women in summer.						
Total of 18 Farms		6,742	2,191	8,933	- - -	- - -	—	4	40	84	286	414	—	—	—	—	19	2	21
Deducting Earl Cowper's and Mr. Abel Smith's farms, which include a good deal of park ground, 16 arable farms give—																			
16 Farms		6,472	1,242	7,714	- - -	- - -	—	4	38	78	252	372	—	—	—	—	18	1	19

* These farms are not altogether situated in the parishes of St. Margaret's, Willian, and Bennington.

Hertfordshire.

Mr. Culley.

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TABLE B.

Showing how the Employment varies during the different Seasons of the Year (extra Harvest Hands excepted) on the Farms given in detail in Table A.

These Farms extend over 8,933 acres, of which 6,742 are arable and 2,191 pasture.

	Males.						Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
In Spring	—	4	40	84	286	414	Exclusive of women who only work in hay time and harvest.				19	2	21
„ Summer	—	2	45	84	289	420					20	2	22
„ Autumn	—	4	39	83	288	414					20	2	22
„ Winter	—	2	37	83	285	407					18	1	19

TABLE C.

HERTFORDSHIRE SCHOOL RETURNS.

Name of Union.	Name of Parish.	Population.	Acreage.	In Summer. On the Register of some School. Boys. Under 10 Years of Age.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	In Summer. In average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	In Winter. On the Register of some School. Boys. Under 10 Years of Age.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.	In Winter. In average Attendance. Boys. Under 10.	Boys. Between 10 and 13.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. Between 10 and 13.
Hertford	Bayford	297	1,632	24	9	30	17	16	6	21	13	24*	9	30	17	16	6	21	13
„	Bramfield	191	1,540	17	3	13	12	15	2	12	11	17*	3	13	12	15	2	12	11
„	Stapleford	226	1,319	29	—	27	5	22	—	24	3	29	—	28	4	22	—	23	3
„	Tewin	547	2,615	46	8	40	10	34	6	23	7	36	7	32	8	30	6	19	7
„	Watton	864	3,499	30	13	47	40	20	12	40	30	29	14	36	40	22	11	22	38
Hitchin	Shephall	234	1,142	17	1	15	9	14	1	12	7	16	3	16	11	13	1	12	7
Ware	Thundridge	394	1,600	18	5	22	10	16	5	20	9	18	5	22	10	13	5	16	9
		2,753	13,347	181	39	194	103	137	32	152	80	169	41	177	102	131	31	125	88

* The winter attendance for Bayford and Bramfield was not given, but was said to be the same as for summer. In the other returns the summer and winter attendance were both given.

1. LETTER to the Assistant Commissioner from *Mr. Thos. Sworder, Coroner for Herts.*

SIR, Hertford, 28th June 1869.

I SEND at your request notes of two cases of inquests, held on the bodies of boys employed in driving carts in agriculture, to prove that boys aged 11 years are not fit to drive carts. Indeed, they are often so small at that age as not to be able to reach the halter on the horse's head, and consequently they can have no control over a blind or unruly horse.

I am, &c.

George Culley, Esq., Assistant Commissioner. THOS. SWORDER, Coroner for Herts.

6th September 1867.

2. Remarks made by the coroner at an inquest held on the body of George Fisher.

The coroner remarked that he believed a Bill had passed or would pass shortly for the purpose of extending the Factory Acts to agriculture, and would prevent such young persons as the deceased from being employed with horses or put in positions of danger.

The deceased was not 12 years old, and it appears he went to work at 5 in the morning, and would naturally become very tired and glad to ride when he could, and he, the coroner, was afraid that he was not able to control the horse he was driving, which was not only blind, but was an old fly horse, and accustomed to go faster than cart horses generally do.

The deceased too was going down hill at the time of the accident, and was consequently less able to control him, and probably in endeavouring to stop him with one rein he pulled him on to the near bank, which upset the cart and horse and killed the deceased. The coroner urged upon all employers of labour the moral, if not legal, responsibility that rested upon them, in seeing that children were not put in positions of danger in doing the work allotted to them.

THOS. SWORDER,
6th September 1867. Coroner for Herts.

6th September 1867.

3. Inquest at Royston on George Fisher, 11 years old. Was employed in driving cart in harvest. Drove loads as well as empties. Blind horse. Boy rode on shafts contrary to order. Went to work at 5 in the morning, and this took place at 5 in the afternoon (12 hours).

17th July 1868.

4. Inquest on Wm. Phipp, aged 11 years. Was employed in driving a horse and cart.

Coroner commented on leaving a horse and cart in charge of so young a boy.

HERTFORD UNION.

Resolution of Board of Guardians.

5. At the weekly meeting of the Guardians of the above Union, held at the Shire Hall, Hertford, on Saturday, the 26th June 1869,—

"The question whether it is desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys and girls should be permitted to work on the land, and if so, at what age the limit should be placed, was taken into consideration after special notice sent to all the guardians, when it was resolved that it is the opinion of the board that no boys be employed in agricultural labour under 10 years of age, or at 9 if they have a certificate from the manager of the school that they have made sufficient advance in reading and writing to admit of their leaving school at that age."

6. Evidence of *Mr. D. Peck*, relieving officer, Hertford Union, Watton district.—"The worst cottages in my district are in Aston, Datchworth, and Bennington. The best cottages in my district are in the parishes which belong to Mr. Abel Smith, he owns the whole of four and part of a fifth parish.

"The wage for day work just now in the north of my district is 11*s.* a week, towards Hertford it is 12*s.*; this was the rate of wage during last winter; if bread was dearer the farmers would probably raise the wages 1*s.* a week. Besides farm piecework, such as harvesting, mowing, hedging, and hoeing corn and turnips, men get piecework in the woods, barking and cutting faggots. An average able-bodied labourer ought to make from 13*s.* to 14*s.* a week for the year round when the day-work wage is at 11*s.*

"Our labourers have neither pig, nor cow, nor poultry, when they are thrown out of work they come immediately to the rates, all they think about when they have money is drink. In harvest men can earn 24*s.* a week, and they seem no better during that season than any other, they drink the difference and get ill on it. Boys leave school at 10, and go to drive the plough at 2*s.* 6*d.*"

7. *Mr. Thos. Odell*, surgeon and medical officer of Hertford Union, speaking for some of the parishes round Hertford, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture from 8 to 10 years of age in the spring, summer, and autumn, according to the number of the family; in winter they go to school, or in some parishes to a night school.

"Girls are not generally employed.

"Women are employed in haymaking, field weeding, stone picking, &c.

"The labourers sometimes go two miles to their work.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and boys work from 6 a.m. to 5 and 6 p.m.

"I think 10 years old would be a very good age as a limit at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, the boys going to night schools during the winter.

"I certainly think it desirable to place a restriction on the employment of females in agriculture.

"There are the National and free schools, which the children cannot take advantage of in large families, being wanted at home to help.

"Some cottages are in a very bad state. Water can generally be had from springs near. Fresh air is not so freely admitted as it should be.

"Owing to the custom of sending all the milk from this county to London, the labourers' families are deprived of a very nutritious article of diet."

BAYFORD.

Population, 297 - Acreage, 1,632.

Cultivation mixed.

8. The *Rev. C. Thornton* says, "Boys at 9 or 10 years of age are employed from May to September minding sheep and cows, &c.; between 10 and 13 they are employed throughout the year.

"Girls are not employed in farm work, nor women to any great extent.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Boys should not be employed under 10 years of age.

"There is a National mixed school, which is under Government inspection, and which is fairly attended.

"The cottages in this parish and neighbourhood are generally in fair condition, and sufficient, I think, for the supply of the labour required. They are, in this parish, conveniently situated, and none of them (to my knowledge) overcrowded.

"They all have gardens or allotments."

BENGEO.

Population, 1,791 - Acreage, 3,047.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

9. *Mr. J. B. Brandram*, occupier, guardian, and chairman of Herts Chamber of Agriculture, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture at all ages and at all times of the year.

"Girls are not employed.

"Women are employed occasionally in weeding and haymaking.

"The labourers have for the most part a distance of less than a mile to go to their work.

"The hours of work of men and boys are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with half an hour for breakfast, and one hour for dinner.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner. When haymaking, they work later and are paid more, with an allowance of beer.

"I think it is desirable that some restriction should be placed on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and while at the same time I should be inclined to fix that limit at the age of 10, yet I feel that there are circumstances connected with growth and education which ought to be taken into consideration with a view to allowing certain exceptions.

"The means of education are good, and consist of National schools for boys and girls, an infant school, and mixed schools in the hamlets of Tunwell and Waterford. The labouring class for the most part take advantage of them.

"The condition of the cottages is generally good, and they are, I think, sufficient for the supply of the labour required. They are pretty conveniently situated with respect to the farms (my own men, with one exception, live within half a mile of the homestead). I do not think the cottages are overcrowded, and they are fairly supplied with water. With regard to ventilation, as I have never slept in one of them, I cannot give an opinion.

"The cottages have all gardens.

"The general rate of wages in the parish is 12*s.* a week for day labourers, and 1*s.* per week extra for carters. The wages of boys vary from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, and again, of older lads, from 5*s.* to 9*s.* and 10*s.* per week.

BRAMFIELD.

Population, 191 - Acreage, 1,540.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

10. The *Rev. L. Deedes*, rector, says, "Boys are employed in farm labour from 8 years of age.

"Girls are not employed.

"Women are employed in haytime and in the spring picking twitch.

"The labourers have about half a mile to go to their work.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner.

"I would restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 10 years.

"There is a good school, with a first-rate certificated mistress, which is well taken advantage of.

"The cottages are good; they are sufficient for the supply of labour required, are conveniently situated with respect to the farms, are not overcrowded, and are well supplied with water, and well ventilated. All the cottages have gardens or allotments."

Hertfordshire.
Mr. Culley.
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HERTINGFORDBURY.

Population, 699 - Acreage, 2,586.

Cultivation chiefly pastoral.

11. *Mr. E. Cousens*, sub-agent to Earl Cowper, says, "No girls are employed in agriculture. Women are usually employed in thistle picking and haymaking.

"There is a very good school in the parish supported by Lady Cowper, also an evening school in winter.

"Generally speaking, the cottages are good, and conveniently situated; they are not overcrowded, and are well supplied with water.

"All the cottages on Lord Cowper's estate have good gardens adjoining the cottages.

"Farm labourers' wages are as follows:—First-class men (shepherds, cowmen, and head ploughman), 15*s.* a week, and 21*s.* a week for harvest month.

"Second class (ploughmen and stackyard-men), 14*s.* a week, and 21*s.* a week for harvest month.

"Third class, 13*s.* a week, and same harvest wage as above.

"Women have 10*d.* a day, except in hay time, when they have 1*s.*"

11*a*. *Mr. J. C. Allen*, occupier, says, "There is a boys' school and a girls' school, and also an evening school for boys and adults during the winter months, which is well attended. The Countess Cowper provides coffee, bread and butter once a week.

"The cottages are generally good, but not sufficient for the labour required. They are conveniently situated for the farms, and lodgers are not allowed.

"All the cottages in the parish have good gardens or allotments of land."

Mr. Allen, who is a large employer of agricultural labour in this parish, as well as Bennington parish, in the same union, was kind enough to extract from his farm books, for the use of the Commission, the following examples of the earnings for 12 months of different classes of adult labourers, taking the 12 months ending May 1, 1869:—

Name and Description of Labourer.	Earnings for 12 Months.			Average per Week.		
	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
1. Collins, bailiff, formerly labourer	74	0	0	1	8	5¼
2. Bush, working bailiff, formerly labourer.	54	12	0	1	1	0
3. Chapman, works on the farm and drives the engine, formerly day labourer.	54	12	0	1	1	0
4. Edwards, gardener, formerly labourer.	48	2	0	0	18	6
5. Pike, groom, formerly labourer	44	4	0	0	17	0
6. Smith, shepherd - - -	43	5	0	0	16	7½
7. Young, „ - - -	40	3	8	0	15	5
8. Milton, labourer, and feeds thrashing machine.	40	0	2	0	15	4½
9. Tyler, labourer, and thatches -	39	15	1	0	15	3½
10. Cakebread, common labourer -	38	0	9	0	14	7½
11. Hollingsworth, „ „ -	37	1	7	0	14	3
12. Milton, „ „ -	36	6	6	0	14	0
13. Tyler, „ „ -	36	6	6	0	14	0
14. Peddell, horsekeeper - -	37	12	6	0	14	6
15. Warford, „ - -	34	15	6	0	13	4½

Nos. 10, 11, 12, and 13 were not picked men, but represent the average of above 20 such men (common labourers) employed by Mr. Allen. They average, as will be seen, 14*s.* 2½*d.* per man. The day-work wage of the district was dropped from 12*s.* to 11*s.* a week immediately after the harvest of 1868, so that these ordinary labourers, who earn an average of 14*s.* 2½*d.* for the 12 months, exceed the average day-work wage (11*s.* 6*d.*) for the year by 2*s.* 8½*d.* a week.

Mr. Allen employs none but married women, and of these 10 on an average. They are paid 9*d.* a day, working from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour's rest. In hay time women are paid 1*s.* a day, and in harvest 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

The hours of work for men on Mr. Allen's farms are from 5½ a.m. till 5½ p.m., with one hour and a half allowed for meals.

The following are examples of piecework wages paid by Mr. Allen during this summer (1869):—

Mowing meadow hay at Cole's Hill farm, 3*s.* 9*d.* and five pints of beer, or 5*s.* without beer, per acre. Of this hay a man could cut about an acre in the day. On Bennington farm, Mr. Allen was paying at the same time 3*s.* 6*d.* and four pints of beer per acre.

For clover hay he had paid 2*s.* 9*d.* and four pints per acre, where a man could cut an acre and a half in the day.

For reaping and tying wheat last year (1868) Mr. Allen paid 12*s.* to 15*s.* an acre. Giving the men his reaping machine it cost him 9*s.* an acre, and greatly eased the men.

To the man going with the reaping machine in harvest Mr. Allen paid 90*s.* and beer for the month.

11*b*. *Mrs. Fitz-John* says, "My husband is a farm labourer; he has 12*s.* a week. We have five children; the two eldest are boys, 10 and 12 years old, and they are at work, minding cattle and sheep; they get 2*s.* 6*d.* and 3*s.* a week now, but they will be out of work in winter."

11*c*. The following is the Assistant Commissioner's note on Hertingfordbury:—"There are a good many very poor cottages in Hertingfordbury, but none of the bad ones I visited appeared to belong to the landowners. There are seven or eight very bad ones on a hill in the village, where there has been and is yet a good deal of typhoid fever. All these cottages have their offices almost against the back door of the cottage, and the well used by all the inhabitants of the cottages in which there is or has been typhoid fever is just below the block of cottages and offices. These cottages are, some of them, occupied by farm labourers, others by railway workers, and the rent of a poor cottage with one small bedroom is 2*s.* 3*d.* a week."

LITTLE BERKHAMPSTEAD.

Population, 450 - Acreage, 1,689.

Cultivation chiefly pasture.

12. *Mr. B. Young*, owner and occupier, says, "Boys are employed during the summer months; their ages vary from 12 to 16.

"Girls are not employed; and women are only employed in the hay harvest.

"Labourers have under a mile to go to their work.

"Hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"No restriction is necessary as to the age at which children should work on the land.

"There is the parish school, which is well attended.

"The cottages in the parish are generally bad and overcrowded; they have all gardens or allotments."

STAPLEFORD.

Population, 226 - Acreage, 1,319.

13. The *Rev. W. H. Oliver*, rector, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture at about 10 years of age all the year round.

"Girls are not employed.

"Our women are only employed in haymaking and in harvest. Six or seven of them are employed in stone-picking and weeding.

"The labourers have less than a mile to go to their work.

"The hours of work are irregular in hay time and harvest. When ploughing the day ceases at 2 p.m. The rest of the year the day's work is from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., out of which two hours are taken for meals. Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at weeding and stone-picking.

"I think 12 would be the best age to which to restrict boys' labour; this would be young enough for them to learn their business, while additional scholarship would make them more apt at their work.

"There is no evil arising from the employment of females in this parish.

"There is a day school, conducted by an uncertificated mistress, attended by all or almost all the children in the parish from 2 years old till they go to work. There are two or three boys who attend Watton boys' school.

"In this parish the cottages are very good, sufficient for the supply of labour required, and conveniently situated. Four new cottages have three bedrooms; all the rest have only two. The evil results to morality in the two-bedroomed cottages is undeniable for growing families. The cottages are well supplied with water, and well ventilated.

"The cottages have all good gardens, of 20 or 30 poles, adjoining their cottages.

"The parishes of Stapleford, Bramfield, Watton, the agricultural part of Bengeo, and half of Datchworth, belong to Abel Smith, Esq., M.P., who takes great pains that his cottages are good and the cottagers well cared for."

13*a*. *Mr. H. Dorrington*, occupier and guardian, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture from 10 to 12 years of age all the year round.

"The education is so good in this parish that there is not a single instance, to my knowledge, of a young girl being employed in agricultural labour. Servants' wages are so high that on leaving the 'training school' they readily obtain 8*l*. to 10*l*. a year, which increases to 18*l*. I have known young girls in this parish under 20 refuse good situations and 16*l*. per annum.

"The hours of work of men and boys are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"I do not see that it is desirable to restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the and, as you seldom see a boy at work till he is 11 or 12 years of age.

"No restriction is necessary on the employment of females. About this part only a few married women go out weeding the corn for about a month in spring.

The means of education provided for the children of agricultural labouring class are the parish school, night schools during the winter months, and a training school for girls, from which they readily obtain situations.

"The cottages are first class. All the cottages belong to one landlord, Abel Smith, Esq., M.P.; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required; they are conveniently situated with respect to the farms. *No* lodgers are allowed, unless by special permission. The cottages are *well* supplied with water, and are well ventilated.

"The gardens are first class, and thoroughly well cultivated.

"Hiring about this part is quite out of date. Weekly wages in all cases. Men earn 2*s*. per day of 12 hours; if over 12 hours they earn 2*d*. an hour extra. Boys earn 6*d*. to 8*d*. a day, and 2*d*. an hour over 12 hours. Young men earn from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. a day, with 2*d*. an hour after 12 hours."

Tewin.

Population, 547 - Acreage, 2,615.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

14. *Rev. H. J. Daubeny*, rector, says, in answer to a circular of inquiry,—

"Boys are employed from 8 years of age, usually during spring and autumn.

"Girls are not employed.

"Labourers' wives are generally employed in hay time and harvest, and sometimes in stone-picking and weeding in spring.

"Boys should not go to work before they are 11 or 12.

"A free school for all is provided by endowment from Earl Cowper's family, and is taken advantage of with few exceptions.

"Some old cottages have been taken down, and others are rebuilding. We have sufficient, and they are fairly supplied with water. No evil results of overcrowding have come to my knowledge.

"All cottages have gardens, and many have allotments also.

"There are 80 cottages in the parish."

Watton.

Population, 864 - Acreage, 3,499.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

15. The *Hon. and Rev. L. Barrington* says, in answer to a circular of inquiry,—

"At about 10 boys are employed, and from that time are rarely out of work.

"Girls are never employed in agriculture.

"Women are not generally employed, excepting in hay time and harvest, and in the latter only when their husbands take piece-work; they also weed.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"As far as this parish is concerned, I think restriction as to the age at which children should be employed is unnecessary.

"There are three schools for boys, girls, and infants, all well attended, and efficient. Indifference of parents is the only thing that interferes.

"The cottages owned by Mr. Abel Smith, which form by far the greatest part, are excellent, and I believe sufficient for the labour required *generally*. One or two farms are rather isolated. The cottages are not crowded. Restriction is placed on the tenants in regard to numbers and lodgers. A lodging is provided for single men at a moderate charge. Immorality, when it occurs, is not from crowding. The supply of water is fair, but not universal, and some are dependent on neighbours' pumps or must go to a distance to the river or public pump. The houses are generally well ventilated.

"*Almost* all the cottages have good gardens, and if not, there is more ground in allotments than is really requisite, at a very moderate rent, and the rent of the cottages is *very low*.

15*a*. *Abel Smith, Esq., M.P.*, landowner, says, "In very few cases boys under 10 years of age are employed in farm labour in this parish, and in these cases for a part of the year only.

"Girls are not employed in farm labour, and women only in weeding and haymaking.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and have about a mile to go to their work.

"I think it is desirable to restrict farm labour to boys over 10 years of age. It is not desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females as employed in this neighbourhood.

"Our schools are under Government inspection, and are very well attended by the children of the labouring class.

"The cottages are good and sufficient for the supply of the labour required. They are conveniently situated with respect to the farms; they are not generally overcrowded, are well supplied with water, and are well ventilated.

"All the cottages have good gardens or allotments of land.

"At piece-work labourers earn from 15*s*. to 20*s*. per week; ordinary labourers, 11*s*., 12*s*., and 13*s*. per week; from 20*s*. to 30*s*. per week during hay and corn harvests."

15*b*. *Mr. J. B. Woollatt*, occupier and guardian, says, "Boys are not generally employed under 10 years of age; from that time they work constantly on the farms.

"Girls are not employed.

"About one-fourth of the labourers' wives go out for two months in the year weeding and haymaking.

"Men work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; boys the same. Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except in hay time, when they work till 7 p.m.

"No restriction on the labour of children is required.

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"There are two schools, generally well attended by the children of the labouring class.

"The cottages are good and sufficient for the labour, and conveniently situated generally; all have good gardens.

"Wages are as follows:—Ploughmen, 13*s.* a week; day labourers, 12*s.* In the summer they have about 2*s.* extra, and earn about 5*l.* 5*s.* during the harvest month, exclusive of beer, which is also found."

HATFIELD UNION.

16. *Resolution of Board of Guardians*, June 17th, 1869.

"The Board are not of opinion that it is desirable to fix an age for the employment of agricultural labour."*

17. Evidence of *Mr. W.N. Sladden*, relieving officer.—"In half of this union the women and girls plait straw, boys generally go to field work.

"The female plaiters are very useless for all domestic work; they can't even put a patch on their husband's clothes, and they can't earn more than an average of 2*s.* a week just now where they have families.

"The guardians do all they can to discourage plaiting, and try to get the parents to send their girls to service. In the workhouse the matron prepares the girls for domestic service, and many have succeeded well.

"There are some good and some very bad cottages in the union; on the whole I cannot report favourably of them."

HATFIELD UNION.

Population, 6,189 - Acreage, 23,027.

18. The *Hon. and Rev. W. C. Talbot*, vice-chairman of Board of Guardians, says, "Boys are employed at various ages, beginning at, say, 9 years, at all seasons of the year, though chiefly in hay and harvest times.

"Girls are rarely employed.

"Women are chiefly employed in haymaking and harvest.

"There is the National school, which is very well attended.

"I cannot answer generally for the union; in my own parish the cottages vary very much; some are very good and some very bad. In the town of Hatfield there are many cottages deficient in ventilation and in water supply. The town cottages certainly not well situated with respect to the farms. I do not believe the cottages to be overcrowded. There is a considerable amount of drunkenness and some immorality, but this I attribute to the congregation of cottages rather than to overcrowding of inhabitants.

"Many cottages have gardens, but not all."

HATFIELD.

Population 3,871 - Acreage, 12,619.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

19. *Mr. W. J. Webb*, occupier and guardian, says, "Boys are employed as young as 10 years old bird keeping in October and November, and again in February, March, and April; but boys of 12 and 13 are useful all the year.

"I do not know of any girls being employed.

"Women are employed to the extent of one to 100 acres.

"Men work from 5½ a.m. to 5½ p.m.

"Women from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"I do not think it desirable to restrict the age at which boys should work on land.

"Not many of the cottages are conveniently situated with respect to the farms.

"Ploughmen earn 14*s.* per week.

"Hedgers earn 13*s.* per week.

"Shepherds earn 14*s.* per week.

"Day labourers earn 12*s.* per week."

NORTH MIMMS.

Population, 1,095 - Acreage, 4,925.

Cultivation mixed, about one-half arable.

20. *Mr. R. W. Gaussen*, landowner, J.P., and chairman of Hatfield Union, says, "Boys are not usually employed on farms before they are 13 or 14 years old, except in spring, when younger boys are employed for a short time to keep birds off the corn.

"I do not know of any case of the employment of girls under 13 in agricultural labour.

"Women are employed in haymaking and harvest, and in spring to weed the corn.

"I cannot answer generally as to the distance labourers go to their work, but I should think in this parish not far. I myself have for many years provided cottages on the spot for my principal labourers, and have found the system answer well, but it is not generally adopted in the neighbourhood. With the exception of hay time and harvest the employment of women and girls in agriculture is but little, and at those seasons they can generally get work close at home.

"I hardly think it would be desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. Of course it would be better if the boys could be kept at school longer, but their wages for a few weeks in spring are a great blessing to their families. I think encouraging the night schools would be of more benefit than restricting the labour in this parish.

"I do not think it would be desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, as hardly any female children are employed in agriculture here, and the women and older girls only in hay time and harvest; they most of them work at straw-plaiting in their own cottages.

"In this parish there are a boys' school, a girls' school, and an infant school, all well attended, but the girls stay at school rather older than the boys. There are two or three night schools.

"The cottages are fair, of course some worse, according to owners. In my own parish I know of no very flagrant case of overcrowding, though it is not very easy to prevent it.

"Most of the cottages have gardens, more or less."

ST. ALBAN'S UNION.

21. *Resolution of Board of Guardians*, July 2nd, 1869.

"This board are of opinion that it is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which children should be permitted to work on the land."

22. *Mr. Thomas Moore*, relieving officer, says, "The worst cottages in this union are in the open villages, but they are better here than in the union I left in Dorsetshire (Bridport Union), and wages are much better here; there their best price was 9*s.* a week, here a carter gets 14*s.*, sometimes 15*s.*, and men get 12*s.* a week for day work.

"The labourers don't care about educating their children; not many farm lads of 15 or 16 can read or write."

HARPENDEN.

Population, 2,164 - Acreage, 5,061.

Cultivation, four-fifths arable, one-fifth pasture and wood.

23. *Mr. R. Sibley*, occupier and vice-chairman of Board of Guardians, says, "Boys are employed from 10 years of age and upwards in the summer and from 13 in the winter.

* This resolution was carried by a majority of three to two as against a resolution in favour of restricting labour generally to children over 10 years of age, with an exemption for those over 9 who can read and write, the only tenant farmer who voted being in favour of the restriction above named.—G. C.

"Girls are not employed, and only a very few women work out in the hay time and harvest.

"Labourers work 10 hours.

"I do not think any boys should be allowed to work under 10 years of age, and between that age and 13 I think the boys ought to go to school in the winter.

"There are six schools, viz., three British and three mixed National. No child under 8 years old has above one mile to go to school. I am certain the parents take advantage of the schools for the boys, but that many of the girls are kept at home during the straw plait.

"The cottages belonging to the landed proprietors are in a good state; some belonging to private speculators are very small. The cottages are very well situated for the labour on the farms. Many are overcrowded by having only two bedrooms; where there is another room a lodger is generally taken in, and the rents have increased 40 per cent. in 20 years, with the exception of the cottages belonging to the landed proprietors.

"Nearly all the cottages have small gardens, some much larger than others, and there are a great many allotments near the village well cultivated. I believe all the cottagers can get allotments if they bear good characters.

"Shepherds earn 15*s.* a week.
"Carters „ 13*s.* „
"Day labourers „ 12*s.* „

with the exception of their earnings in hay time and harvest, which amount to about 3*l.* per annum more. More weekly wages can be and are earned by piecework.

"I am sorry to say we have 34 public houses and beershops."

23*a*. *Mr. J. B. Lawes*, landowner and occupier, says, "Boys from 8 to 12 years of age are employed in crow keeping after wheat sowing in spring and in autumn for about six weeks.

"No girls are employed.

"Women are hardly employed at all, straw plaiting being more profitable.

"Labourers go half a mile to their work.

"Hours of work are from 5½ a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer, and all daylight in winter.

"I see no reason for restriction as to the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, but I think every boy employed should at a certain age be compelled to pass a certain examination in reading and writing.

"There is a National mixed school and a British and Foreign for boys, girls, and infants. Altogether over 500 children are educated. The plait takes away the girls.

"The cottages are bad and insufficient for the wants of the labourers. They are tolerably well situated; they have plenty of good water from the chalk; they are scattered over a large area.

"A good many cottages have gardens, there is also about 20 acres of land devoted to allotments, divided into 160 gardens, with a club-house in the centre, where the labourers can have their beer."

23*b*. Evidence of *Mr. John Govan*, bailiff to Mr. J. B. Lawes.

On the value of labour in Herts as compared with Ireland and Dumbartonshire, where he has had experience in the employment of farm labour.

"Farm labourers here earn on an average for 12 months 12*s.* a week, the same class of men in Dumbartonshire would receive 15*s.* a week, and in Ireland 10*s.*

"I consider that labour is considerably dearer here than in the West of Scotland per acre, and it is also my opinion that it is even dearer than in Ireland, for although the Irish labourer, if left to himself, is one of the dearest in the world, if well looked after he can go through a wonderful deal of work."

REDBOURN.

Population, 2,043 - Acreage, 4,515.

24. *Mr. H. Edwards*, occupier and guardian, says, "The cultivation is chiefly arable, in five-course husbandry.

"The whole of the boys from 9 years of age are employed, chiefly in the spring, bird-keeping and weeding.

"Females are not employed, excepting a few days in the summer haymaking.

"Labourers have about two miles to go to their work. They work from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"No restriction is necessary as to the age at which children should be employed on the land, as they only do very light work, and are never employed under 9 years old.

"Those parents who choose to send their children to school, and most of them do, have the advantage of a public school, charge 1*d.* a week, and the parish is well attended to by kind ladies, who frequently pay the schooling if the children are absent from want of means.

"The condition of the cottages is very bad, particularly those connected with farms. They are crowded, and the moral results are deplorable. They are pretty well supplied with water; they are insufficient in number for the supply of labour required.

"Nearly all the cottages have gardens; there is very little land occupied by allotments."

SANDRIDGE.

Population, 833 - Acreage, 5,766.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

25. *Mr. J. Cox*, occupier and guardian, says, "Girls are not employed in farm labour, they are engaged in straw plaiting from a very early age. Women, too, are chiefly engaged in plaiting. A few are employed on farms in weeding in summer.

"Men work 11 hours a day, and women nine.

"It is not desirable to restrict the labour of boys on farms, as they rarely go to work before they are from 10 to 12 years of age.

"There is a good and well-conducted parish school, and the average attendance is from 80 to 90 per day.

"We have some good and some bad cottages; they are improving. We have a good supply of labour, but all are employed.

"Most cottages have allotment ground. Able-bodied labourers have from 11*s.* to 14*s.* a week; boys from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*"

ST. STEPHEN'S.

26. *Mr. John Gomme*, occupier, says, "Boys are chiefly employed in summer, and seldom under 12 years of age.

"Girls are not employed.

"A few women are employed in summer weeding, and during the hay harvest occasionally.

"I do not think it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land.

"There are three schools, and I believe most of the children avail themselves of the privilege. The parents do all in their power to promote the education of their children.

"The cottages are in good condition, but they are not sufficient for the supply of the labour required. I have no cottages on my farm, and the greater number of my labourers have more than a mile to come to their work.

"There is a deficiency of garden ground to most of the cottages. In one part of the parish the cottages have an allotment of land about one and a half acres. With regard to the parish of St. Stephen's, the poor are assisted by coal clubs raised by a subscription of the owners of the land and others; the coal is sold at a reduced rate, and taken home to the cottagers by the farmers gratuitously. And there is also a clothing club similarly assisted, and a loan of blankets during the winter months."

Hertfordshire.

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WHEATHAMPSTEAD.

Population, 2,017 - Acreage, 5,033.

27. *Mr. C. H. Lattimore*, owner and occupier, says, "The cultivation is generally tillage upon four-course, five-course, and other irregular systems.

"The land in this parish, being principally arable, is adapted for wheat, and also for all other kinds of grain, turnips, &c. When well cultivated with root crops and fed off by stock, it requires a great outlay for labour. I find that I can employ all the year four men and one boy to every 100 acres of arable land. The average employment, however, is less.

"A certain number of boys are constantly employed with sheep and horses all the year, their ages varying from 12 to 15. The periods when younger boys from 9 to 10 years old are employed are in spring bird scaring, and in summer weeding in gangs with an overlooker, where the land is pestered with charock and weeds.

"Girls under 18 years are very rarely employed in the fields at any time; the only time would be in haymaking and binding corn in harvest.

"A few farmers employ women to weed their corn, but in wet seasons this is not at all desirable, as they break down the corn, and generally get laid up with colds, &c. They are employed in haymaking and at harvest occasionally.

"Whenever I employ women (for haymaking only, they reside close to their work. I have known instances of women going a mile and a half to their work, and returning that distance in the evening.

"Men and boys work 12 hours per day, if over that time they are paid proportionately.

"Women work from eight to nine hours per day, and extra time in hay harvest. From their eight or nine hours one hour and a half is deducted for meals.

"I think boys ought not to work on land under 9 to 10 years of age, as they are unable to earn anything by work; still they get an insight and acquaintance with the rudiments of their occupation by a moderately early contact with it, and it would be well to unite industrial training with intellectual cultivation.

"It seems desirable to prevent the employment of any females in agriculture under 14 years of age. In this part of the county the occupation of females is in plaiting and in domestic service, but they have evinced of late years a strong dislike to restraint or discipline of any kind.

"There is a National school, built by public subscription, to which the poor are admitted at 2*d.* per head, but as great efforts are made to push forward those pupils who obtain a Government allowance, the lower class of attendants make but little progress. A child of one of my labourers was an attendant for nearly a year without learning his letters. The teachers appear to know but little of arithmetic, and are incompetent to teach the children either to practise or to respect industry!

"The number of the cottages is ample, but modern cottages, run up by builders on speculation, are very small and crowded; as to their site, they are rather congregated in the villages than near to the outlying farms, from whence labourers have to travel, say, one to two miles night and morning. These new speculative erections are unfavourable to morals and ventilation. This district is well watered from a river running through it.

"I think the labourers are well supplied with gardens and allotments, so that they generally decline to accept waste ground.

"The wages of different classes of farm labourers are as follows:—

"Ordinary able-bodied labourers, 11*s.* a week and beer.

"Bailiffs and herdsmen, besides perquisites, 15*s.* a week.

"Shepherds, besides perquisites, 17*s.* a week.

"Boys, 3*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.*, with beer.

"In 1868 ordinary labourers were paid 12*s.* a week, and other labourers' wages were higher in proportion."

27*a*. The following are *Mr. C. H. Lattimore's* answers to questions which I proposed to him.—G. C.

Question 1.—Are the purely agricultural counties, such as Herts, Bedford, Oxford, and Berks, overcrowded with population?

Answer.—"The population of the four named counties have doubtless a constant tendency to increase beyond the prospective demand for their labour."

Question 2.—How far could the overcrowded state of the labour market be relieved by higher cultivation?

Answer.—"From experience I estimate that a higher mode of cultivation (consequent to a state of leases with security, compared to annual tenancies at rack rents,) would require an increase of 10 to 20 per cent. more labour upon the land."

Question 3.—How far do you think improved education will tend to thin the labour market and improve the quality of labour?

Answer.—"An industrial moral education, including reading and writing and the first four rules of arithmetic, would induce the reflective portion to think, compare, and calculate their existent prospects with other chances of improving their condition, thus inducing them to make personal efforts to qualify for an improved position.

"It appears to me that we have no *properly qualified* teachers of either sex *at present.*

"The love of imitation is *the first* and most powerful impulse of the youthful mind, which is always more disposed to imitate *the acts* of its teachers than to value their *abstract* lessons. For instance, if the female children were to see their mistress *dust, scour,* and *clean* up their schoolrooms continuously (instead of leaving such duties to a charwoman), they *would* be taught to respect and practise domestic duties more than they would by 50 *parsonic homilies* on the importance of industry; while they now conclude that such offices are *degrading* and beneath the practice of *educated* people.

"The present system, under the clerical influence, is *artificial, imperfect,* and expensive. The majority of the children make but little progress, while the results tend to fit them for no *active* or *responsible* positions.

"It *would* be a happy exchange to encourage industrial habits for *chanting* to the *goose-step!* As all things become easy and pleasant to those who understand them, children might thus be made fitter to occupy situations of domestic *trust* and usefulness where in all probability their future lot in life is cast.

"*Winter* and *night* schools are extremely valuable in enabling the children to retain their learning, which they are so apt to lose without some encouragement to retain. A good book might be written to show how education has been improved in Scotland."

HITCHIN UNION.

Population, 25,603 - Acreage, 64,847.

28. *Board of Guardians.*

Answers given by the Board of Guardians for Hitchin Union to questions asked in the Commissioners' Circulars of Inquiry, June 29th, 1869.

1. "Boys are occasionally employed to assist in farm work from 7 years of age; they are rarely taken into constant work under 10 years. There is very little demand for the younger boys during the winter months.

"Neither girls nor women are employed in farm work.

"Usually the children live near the work where they are employed.

"Farm labourers work 10 hours daily.

"In this district no abuse of children's labour is known to exist, consequently there is no necessity

to restrict the age at which they may work on the land.

"Most parishes have National schools, and some have also schools on the British system. Parishes which are entirely without are usually within reach of neighbouring schools. In consequence of the employment of children in plaiting, and also the indifference of their parents to the value of education, there is much neglect in sending children to school. There are plaiting schools in most of our parishes, to which children are sent from 3 years old; in many of these neither reading nor writing is taught, the object being to extract a large amount of work from the children. These greatly interfere with the attendance at the educational schools. This neglect on the part of the parents is increased by the temptations offered at the beer-houses, where the men often spend what their families can ill spare, and consequently children are so badly clothed as to be refused admission into the schools established for their benefit.

"The cottages are in many cases much overcrowded, and the morality of the labouring class in some districts is very low, as the registrar's return of illegitimate births will testify. In several of our parishes houses are badly supplied with good water; and proper ventilation is apt to be neglected.

"In most of our parishes the poor are supplied with gardens."

29. Evidence of *Mr. W. Strickland*, relieving officer. —"Wages of able-bodied labourers vary from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week. There are more at 10*s.* than 12*s.* By piece-work they can add, on an average, for the year 2*s.* a week to the day-work wage.

Boys begin to drive the plough at from 10 to 11 years of age.

Lads in some places are hired by the year from Michaelmas, but the custom is disappearing. The wage is paid weekly, with a retaining fee of about 1*l.* at Michaelmas.

"Lads of 16 get from 4*s.* to 7*s.* a week.

"The labourers' cottages are generally in open villages, and many of them bad. The worst are in the back lanes of towns such as Baldock and Hitchin. There are very bad cottages also in Stevenage, Weston, and Clothall.

"In Codicote the cottages are very good, and Mr. Hancock is building very good ones at Willian."

Shephall.

Population, 234 - Acreage, 1,142.

Cultivation:—Arable, 750; pasture, 222; woodland and waste, 170.

30. The *Rev. Wm. Wortham*, in answer to circular questions, says, "Boys generally go to work about 10, and sometimes return to school during the winter.

"No girls are employed on farm labour, and women rarely, except for haymaking.

"Women work from 8 till 5.

"I see no reason to place any limit on the age at which children should be employed in farm labour.

"There is a day school, which is very regularly attended.

"Six men are sufficient for 100 acres of mixed cultivation, and we have sufficient cottages in this parish. Twenty-eight cottages have two bedrooms, and six have but one. We have no cottage with three bedrooms. Two or three cottages are certainly overcrowded, and no doubt this want of accommodation as to bedrooms is productive of great evil. On the whole, however, our cottages are fairly good; they are about equally divided as built of brick or lath and plaster. All but four have gardens, and all have outhouses. For water, most of the villagers come to the parsonage pump. The cottages belong chiefly to the landowners, and the rents vary from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a week."

Stevenage.

Population, 2,352 - Acreage, 4,434.

31. *Mr. John Smith*, occupier and guardian, says, "The cultivation is chiefly arable, and on the four-course system; a crop of oats is, however, sometimes taken after wheat.

"Boys are not often employed before 12 years of age.

"No girls are employed; a few old women are employed in weeding and haymaking.

"Labourers have not more than a mile to go to their work.

"Men work from 5½ a.m. to 5½ p.m., the women as a rule come at 8 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"It is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which their boys or girls should be permitted to work on the land.

"We haveevery good National schools, and also an infant school.

"The cottages are tolerably good, and quite sufficient for the labourers, but the rent is much higher than in those parishes where they are on the farm and the property of the owner, the cottages here being generally the property of an indifferent party.

"Most of the cottages have gardens.

"The average wages of able-bodied farm labourers here is about 12*s.* a week, with the exception of hay time and harvest. Strong lads and old men earn 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, and ploughboys 4*s.*"

Willian.

Population, 281 - Acreage, 1,854.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

32. *Mr. Chas. Sworder*, occupier and guardian, says, "Boys are employed in agriculture from 10 years of age.

"Girls are not employed.

"About six or eight women are employed for two or three months in summer, weeding and haymaking.

"Women work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"I do not think it desirable to restrict the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land.

"There is the village school, which is fairly attended.

"Some of the cottages are very good, others very bad; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required, and conveniently situated. Some take in lodgers, some are well supplied with water, others are deficient.

"Most of the cottages have gardens or allotments.

"Ploughmen and horsekeepers earn from 14*s.* to 15*s.* per week; shepherds and stockmen earn from 15*s.* to 16*s.* per week; machinists, &c. earn from 16*s.* to 18*s.* per week; ordinary day labourers earn from 13*s.* to 14*s.* per week; besides beer at times.

Buntingford Union.

Wallington.

Population, 238 - Acreage, 1,950.

Cultivation chiefly arable, about 140 acres pasture, and 45 woodland.

33. *Mr. Hugh Rayner*, occupier, says, in answer to circular of inquiry,—"Boys begin work from 9 to 12 years of age, and are employed all the year round.

"Girls are very rarely employed till 13 or 14 years of age; principally weeding and picking twitch, all light work.

"About 13 women are employed in the parish, and these only in suitable weather in the summer.

"The labourers have sometimes a mile to go to heir work, but generally speaking it is close to their tomes.

"It is decidedly undesirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. How is the parent to maintain the children if they remain at home till 11 or 12 years of age? They must begin early, otherwise they are not fitted for agricultural labourers.

"There is a good school and a regular governess, of which they all take advantage. There is also a night school in the winter months for boys that are employed on the farms, at which nearly all attend.

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" The cottages are good and more than sufficient for the labour required; they are close to the farms.

" Those cottages which have not good gardens have an allotment close at hand.

" Shepherds earn 12*s.* per week.
" Carters „ 11*s.* „
" Day labourers 10*s.* „

" But this does not include extra harvest wages. Mowing or work that is generally done by the kine or bargain, at which men usually earn one or two shillings a week extra.

" The cottages, where they belong to the estate, are generally let at 40*s.* or 45*s.*, when in reality they are worth from 4*l.* to 5*l.* each a year."

WARE UNION.

ST. MARGARET'S.

Population, 93 - Acreage, 382.
Cultivation chiefly arable.

34. *Mr. W. Heard*, occupier, says, " Labourers work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

" It is not desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be employed in agriculture, as they are only used to lead horses at plough, and they are generally 12 years of age and upwards.

" It is not necessary to restrict the employment of females, as only a few married women are employed.

" There are schools for boys and girls in the neighbourhood which are well attended.

" The cottages are very good and well situated with respect to the farms; they are not overcrowded, and are well supplied with good spring water.

" All the cottages here have gardens attached to them.

" The wages of agricultural labourers are from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a week usually. Boys' wages are from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week."

THUNDRIDGE.

Population, 394 - Acreage, 1,600.

Cultivation chiefly arable.

35. Extracts from a return by the *Rev. Thos. Woodward*, vicar.—"There is in this parish a better class of labourers who keep their boys at school till they are 12 or 13, and an inferior class who send their boys to labour at 7 years old in a few instances, and at 8 or 9 as a rule; few of this class keep them at school till 10 years old.

" Girls are not employed in farm labour as a rule, and women only to a small extent in light work, not in a manner to injure health or morals. They have no great distance to go to their work.

" Women work from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

" I think there are difficulties in the way of placing any restriction on the age at which boys should go out to work, as in the case where labourers have large families. The tenth birthday, I think, ought to be the limit, if any be fixed by law.

" So far as the question applies to this parish, I do not think it necessary to place any restriction on the employment of females. The young are not employed, their education is good, and the work done by married women is not injurious. There are very few of them employed at all. I fear that other districts do require some such restriction.

" There is a mixed school for boys and girls and an infant school; also a night school for young men taught by myself. The girls take good advantage of school, the boys of the labouring class do not, they leave it so early for labour.

" Some of the cottages are very good, the smaller number are bad; they are sufficient for the labour required; they are conveniently situated with respect to the farms, but there are not rooms enough in many cottages for the separation of the sexes. Most cottages have good water near them. Ventilation is little attended to in the bedrooms.

" Cottages out of the village have gardens attached to them. There are allotment gardens provided by R. Hanbury, Esq., at a small rent for the villagers."

35*a*. Return by *Mr. R. Hanbury*, landowner and occupier.—"In this parish some go to work at 7 or 8, and so on; a few remain at school till 12 or 13 years old.

" Girls are not employed.

" Women are very little employed, and not in work injurious to health or morals.

" It is desirable to limit the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land to 10 if at all, but there are difficulties in the way.

" There are plenty of schools. The girls take good advantage of them and are educated enough; many of the boys do not, and leave with very little education.

" The cottages are sufficient for the supply of the labour required; the rooms in many are not numerous enough to admit of the separation of the sexes. There is water enough; ventilation is badly attended to.

" All the cottages have gardens or allotments."

EVIDENCE accompanying Mr. BOYLE'S REPORT.

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SOMERSETSHIRE.

WILLITON UNION.

1. Meeting of Board of Guardians at Williton, Feb. 15, 1869 ; the Rev. Robert Poole, Vicar of St. Decumans, Chairman of the Board of Guardians in the chair. Present also, Sir Peregrine Acland, Bart.; Sir Alexander Hood, Bart.; J. Blommart, Esq.; Messrs. Kedner, Monksilver, Vice-Chairman; Oatway, Withycombe; Charles Dibble, Clatworthy; Lethbridge, Bicknoller ; Lutley, Kilton ; Corner, Sampford Brett ; Southcombe, Stringston, &c., &c.

General sense of the meeting as regarded boys. Boys employed very young, beginning first at 8 or 9, bird-keeping, but that is not regular work ; it lasts for a few months, and then the boy leaves off work again, and can go to school if he or his parents wish it. In the present low state of the wages parents cannot get on with a large family, unless they send them out into the fields as soon as they are old enough to earn a shilling or two. The wages in the district are very low, but as the union extends from near Bridgwater to the Devonshire border, there is room for increase ; thus, near Porlock the money wages are from 7*s.* to 8*s.*, about Stowey, 10*s.* ; but that is not to be taken as a criterion of the full amount of wages. Cider, which is another full shilling, is given also, and there are many other perquisites, especially in the west, such as firing, the run of a pig, grist corn cheap, &c. Farmers cannot afford to raise wages, unless rents are lowered ; and in the present state of eager competition for land, landlords are not likely to lower their rents. The consequence is that to eke out the subsistence of the family, a child is sent to work as soon as ever he can earn anything, and by making 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* by bird-keeping, he can support himself, free of expense to his parents. It is not the farmers who want them out, so much as the parents ; though on this subject accounts are contradictory ; Mr. Corner, of Sampford Brett, one of the largest farmers in the union, said that the parents sent out their young children to oblige him. At the same time it is an object to a farmer to get his work done as cheaply as possible, and if he has a large farm, he will require many young bird-keepers ; of course the younger the child the cheaper his labour. Bird-keeping is generally done by boys, but little girls are employed too ; in some districts just as frequently as boys. It is not a usual thing for parents to come and ask as a favour for work to be given to boys, but it is generally given as soon as they are old enough for it. A farmer will generally employ the child of one of his labourers as soon as he thinks he is up to some work. Birdkeeping has to be done all the week round ; a boy cannot have a holiday from it on Sunday. The gentlemen present did not at all approve any plan of preventing boys under 12 from working out ; the general sense seemed to be that if that were done the labouring class could not get on. A sturdy boy of 11 wants more food and clothes than his father on 8*s.* a week can afford to give him, while he is living in idleness, and making nothing towards the common purse. The Rev. Mr. Poole said that compulsory education is a dream, you cannot introduce it, unless Government votes money to pay the parents for work the boys might have done, had they been sent out to work early instead of going to school ; and to do that all over the country would require millions.

The women employed are mostly labourers' wives. It is often expected, when a farmer gives or lets a cottage to a labourer, that his wife should, if able-bodied, go out to work in the busy times. Their regular rate of wage is 8*d.* a day, of course more in harvest. Many farmers when hiring a labourer will

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ask if his wife is able-bodied. From two to four are employed on a farm of 200 acres; but seldom in regular work; they come out more for a job, such as turnip cutting, hoeing, weeding, &c. Mr. Corner says that they are the cheapest labour you can have; many of them will do almost as much as a man, and their pay is half as much. Widows will work sometimes, but unmarried girls are scarcer. Very often a girl who has left her place because she does not like it, will come back and work out; or a girl who labours under any deformity or physical defect, that does not incapacitate her from work. As a rule though you will not find above one or two in a parish; most girls go to service. Out-door work makes them rougher certainly, but as a rule, their characters do not suffer from it, though many come out to work, who have "had a misfortune" in service or elsewhere.

The farmers seem to consider their people well off in spite of the lowness of wages. Mr. Corner, who has a farm near Bath, where he gives 12*s.* a week, reckons his men on his Sampford Brett farm better off than those near Bath, though they only get 10*s.* a week, and perquisites. As a rule food is cheaper than near large towns.

Cottages in the district vary very much; on the outskirts of Dunster and Porlock are some very bad. The larger proprietors have been doing much in the neighbourhood lately for bettering the habitations of the poor.

2. *J. Blommart, Esq.*, Willett Hill.—Thinks that farmers ought to have each two cottages under them, one for the carter, the other for the shepherd or herdsman. If he has a large farm, he might have three or four, such as one for each of his carters, one for the herdsman, one for the shepherd. Thinks that the ordinary labourer ought to hold directly of his landlord. He has just been getting his own cottages into hand. Of course the farmers do not like it, they think the labourers are too independent as it is.

3. *Rev. Robert Poole*, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Williton, Vicar of St. Decumans, Watchet.—Reckons Watchet and Williton perhaps the two best and most flourishing parishes in the union. Watchet being itself a seaport, a good many of the men are sailors, and a good many more are occupied in getting up the iron, which comes down from Brendon Hill, and is exported from Watchet. On the whole, however, it is decidedly an agricultural parish; a great many agricultural labourers live in the village, and go out to work in the farms around, and almost all their wives go out too. The women must go out to work when wages are so low, it is a great object to them to add 8*d.* a day to the husband's earnings; 8*d.* a day is the regular pay for women. Men's wages are 9*s.* a week and cider, but no perquisites in this parish. The time when the greatest distress is the first few years after marriage; they keep company a few years, and end by marrying very young without calculating that they have no furniture or other provision; they end by being in debt for many years, and often never get clear. Just after marriage the husband is earning his 9*s.* a week, and the wife with frequent children coming can probably earn nothing; but when the children get older, and the wife can go out and earn 4*s.* a week, and perhaps two boys 2*s.* 6*d.* a week each, it is their own fault if they are not comfortably enough off. It is only in a very exceptional case that a girl will go out to work, they generally go out to service very young, say 12 or 13, that is as soon as they can be trusted with a child; they go then to live entirely at the farm-house. It is a good thing that they leave the crowded cottages so young. As a rule boys live on at home, making money for the family, until they marry, which they generally do very young. Sometimes, however, they leave home and go away to some other parish, where they are taken into somebody's cottage as lodgers.

Mr. Poole is very strong on the subject of improper cottage accommodation; he says, it will soon be a problem how men are to live on such low wages, and yet in a cottage suitable for family habitation. No one can make cottage property pay without asking a far higher rent than the tenant can afford. Crowding in cottages is the source of all the immodesty and immorality in country parishes; a large family of boys and girls, huddled up in one room, even if nothing worse comes of it, must see a great deal they had better not. The worst part of it is that the lodgers often sleep in the same rooms as the daughters of the family. Some of the cottages in Watchet are very bad, but as to most open parishes, the Union Chargeability Act has been of great benefit; formerly cottages were pulled down in the close parishes near, when of course the worst characters were turned out, and they came and settled themselves in Watchet, and such like large parishes. But that is changed now, and there is a growing feeling everywhere besides, that it is right to have a sufficient number of cottages on the farms for the supply of labour required, so that the labourer may not have a long walk to and from his work.

It is the parents who wish the children to go out so young, not the farmers.

4. *Rev. J. Warren*, Dunster, has been here only nine months. Was in Hampshire before. Thinks that though actually money wages here are so low, the people are better off than they are in Hampshire, they have so many privileges and food is cheaper.

5. — *Ponsford, Esq.*, Bardon, Williton, agent to G. Luttrell, Esq.—Is an advocate for free trade in cottages, that is, would like to have all cottage tenants hold directly of the proprietor, not of the occupier; for he thinks that the farmers have too great a hold over the labourer, if he hires his cottage of him; and in some cases, if not liberal-minded, the farmer will grind down the labourer. The late Colonel Luttrell held this same opinion, and would have wished, if possible, all the labourers on his estate to hold directly of himself; the present proprietor too is fortunately much of the same opinion, though inclined to let two cottages with the farms, with the idea of one being provided for the carter, the other for the shepherd.

Always tells Mr. Luttrell, he must expect to lose by cottage property; no man can be liberal as regards such property, and yet make a profit out of it. Yet in a man of large landed property he looks upon owning such possessions as fulfilling a duty. For instance, the other day induced Mr. Luttrell to buy some cottages that were for sale in Dunster, let at that time by the outgoing proprietor at a much higher rent than he could ever suggest to Mr. Luttrell to ask. Of these cottages two were valued at 5*l.* yearly, for these he gave 80*l.* or 16 years' purchase, and besides repairs that were at once called for, he thought it right to reduce the rent to 3*l.* At Minehead, on the other hand, where the cottages on the Luttrell property are considerably better than those in Dunster, he has lately had to raise the rent, some possessed of considerable accommodation having been let as low as 30*s.* per annum. All the cottages now built on the property are built with three bedrooms. Capital stone is easily procured, and they are roofed with slate found on Sir W. Trevelyan's property, Nettlecombe way.

The wages on the property vary from 7*s.* to 9*s.*, but this must not be taken as the total received by the labourer; cider is given, and there are many perquisites besides. Recollects on one occasion visiting a labourer's wife at her cottage, and finding fault with her because two of her boys were in rags. "I "cannot help it," she said, "my husband has only 7*s.* "a week."

"And how much out of that do you pay for your "cottage?—Oh, we get that rent-free from the farmer.

"That's a nice garden you have got round the "house; what do you pay for that?—We get that "rent-free too.

"Fine pig in the orchard yonder; who does he "belong to?—To us.

"What do you pay for the run of him there?—"Nothing.

"Whose bullocks are those?—Farmer ——'s, as "my good man works for.

"Who minds them?—My good man.

"And he gets something for that?—One shilling a "week.

"Does he get any cider?—Three pints a day."

All of which added together very nearly doubles his wages.

The cottage question is the great question with labourers. You must make his home comfortable and then he will return to it after work. If he has a wretched cottage, what more natural than that he should prefer to go to the public-house, where he will find a warm room and cheerful fire? but if he has a comfortable home of his own, he will always come back.

The great farmer in Williton employs seven or eight females, of whom some are married, some big strong girls. It is not at all an uncommon thing for girls about here to go to work, picking and cutting turnips and mangolds. If they do not go into service they usually take to dress-making, which they begin at 10 or 11 years old; those who go to service usually go at 11 or 12. These two occupations pretty well divide the younger girls. As a rule the worst class are those who take to dress-making. A great part come to grief; of those who go to service a good many perhaps will come back and take a turn in the fields; it does not deteriorate them; but many of those who have had a misfortune come back, and if there is difficulty about getting another place, will take a turn at field labour.

6. *Mr. John Birmingham*, steward to Sir Thomas Acland, Selworthy.—On a farm of 200 acres in the Porlock valley a farmer employs perhaps four men and two boys about 15, perhaps one younger boy to work about the farm, such as minding pigs, &c. In bird-keeping time one or more younger boys are hired on the job for perhaps three months; the age for that employment is from 8 to 10, after which a boy generally gets regular work. A little girl is employed as often in bird-keeping as a boy. They are paid 4*d.* a day, 2*s.* 4*d.* a week. The schools are pretty well attended from Michaelmas to Lady-day; after that the parents like to get the children out to work. In this district there is another and peculiar employment, the "whort harvest," which takes nearly every woman and child in the country out for some weeks in the summer to gather whortleberries on the mountains. Very few girls work out, perhaps one or two in a parish, and those generally who are fit for nothing else. They generally go out to service at 14 or 15; but perhaps a girl, who has been badly brought up, is not liked by her employers, and comes home; being then unable to take to anything else, she works out in the fields.

Among the women it is chiefly the labourers' wives who work out; the farmer expects a labourer's wife to do so, if she is able-bodied. Their standard wages are 8*d.* a day, and they generally work on an average three days a week. They make hay, clean turnips and mangold, and pick the smaller turnips; there is no hoeing. They work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with two breaks, one from 10 a.m. to 10.30 for luncheon, and from 12.30 to 1.30 for dinner. If near home they go home to meals. Would not wish to restrain women working in the fields. A boy is not much use till he is 13 years old, the farmers do not care about having them younger; it is the parents who wish them to go to work.

The men's wages on Sir Thomas Acland's property are 10*s.* a week, and no cider given. He also gives no perquisites, except that he allows wood-firing nearly all over the valley at a very cheap rate—100 fagots for 2*s.* 6*d.* 200 fagots would last the whole winter. They have to pay for haulage themselves. They have to pay for cottages at the rate of 2*l.* 4*s.* a year, for a cottage with three bed-rooms and wash-house. A tradesman, if he hires one of the same cottages, pays 3*l.* a year. Mr. Isaac Clarke, miller, gives the same wages. Mr. Edmund Clarke, 8*s.*, cider, and grist corn. This latter is the average wage in the valley, if a farmer gives corn and cider, but some give 7*s.*; generally, however, to a man scarcely able-bodied, whose work being of less value, naturally is left to one of the smaller and poorer farmers, who cannot pay so much for it. Out of this they have to pay for a cottage. Pork is almost the only meat eaten; sometimes, however, in the winter, when the farmers kill a sheep, they let the labourers have some of it at 6*d.* a pound, and the mutton so obtained is generally made into broth. Sir Thomas also gives a good deal of broth and arrowroot. There is not a valley in a hundred so well off.

The cottages are generally good, and so too are the gardens. Forty yards of allotment are given at 4*d.* per yard, Sir Thomas paying fencing and rates and taxes. All the old cottages have two bed-rooms, the new are built with three. We have put up six in the last two years. The cost of putting up two good cottages, exclusive of the purchase of timber, which is provided on the estate, is 200*l.* For this we build in each three bed-rooms, with a fireplace in one, a kitchen, pantry, and wash-house, and generally a lobby for tools, &c. They are built of stone, of which there is abundance at hand, and thatched, thatch being a matter of taste. Native slate is 4*s.* a square (10 feet by 10 feet) dearer than thatch, but Bridgwater tile can be delivered on the spot cheaper than thatch. We have not above four cottages with only one bed-room in the whole district. Have only two cottages in Porlock.

No lodgers are allowed unless under special agreement, and in no case allowed when there is a family.

There is no public-house in the district, and consequently a good deal of cider is sold clandestinely. Would almost rather have a public-house than such a system. Most of the labourers prefer having cider to money. It is not an unwholesome drink, except in excess; it is bad to drink more than three pints a day. Most men drink two quarts a day. The value of a pint is about one penny.

The ventilation in the cottages is generally good. Two or three years ago there was a threat of cholera, so went himself all over the cottages, and had casements put in where necessary.

In the hill country the cottages are not so good, but the people are quite as well off. Land is not made so much of there, and it is easy to get a good bit of garden or potato ground. There are more perquisites given too.

In the valley masons receive 2*s.* 4*d.* a day, which is also the regular pay for carpenters, &c. Some old men have their cottages at 1*l.* a week.

7. *Mr. George Tuckett*, Sir Alexander Hood's bailiff, St. Audries.—The wages on the home farm are 11*s.*; giving higher wages we are able to have all our labourers able-bodied men. We give besides three pints of cider, or 1*s.* as a substitute, but they prefer cider—all prefer cider. If 1*s.* 6*d.* were offered instead of cider, they would still prefer cider. They pay rent for their cottage out of their wages; most have allotments, 20 yards for 6*s.* In the parishes of St. Decumans (Watchet and Williton) and Sampford Brett, wages are 9*s.* to 10*s.*; generally 9*s.* with cider, or 10*s.* without. Out of this they pay for a cottage, generally from 1*s.* a week, 2*l.* 12*s.* a year up to 4*l.* a year. All have gardens, most have pigsties, and some have allotments. Some few farmers give grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel all the year round. The other farmers in this parish (West Quantockshead) give very little lower wages than we give; perhaps 10*s.*

Women are not much employed in the neighbourhood, perhaps three women on a farm of 300 acres. Farmers rather expect a labourer's wife to go out in busy times, such as weeding corn and clearing turnips. There is not much weeding, however. They are generally paid 8*d.* to 10*d.* a day. We only employ women a few months in the year, in cutting mangolds, cleaning turnips, &c. We pay them 10*d.* a day, and 1*s.* a day for haymaking. Very few girls go out to work in the fields; some go to service.

The youngest boy at work on the farm is 12 years of age. He gets 7*d.* a day. We have two other boys at work, one receiving 13*d.* another 14*d.* The general pay of a boy in the neighbourhood is 8*d.* to 1*s.* We employ two old men at 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

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There is a great deal of piece-work done now, which farmers and labourers both like better; on this system turnip-hoeing, hedging, mowing, and harvesting are always done. The price given for cutting grass is 3*s.* an acre, and a man can cut in a day from an acre and a quarter to an acre and a half. The price given for cutting corn is 8*s.* an acre, with allowances, a peck of cider; for this price it is to be cut and bound. All this work is done by men; three men go out together, and by division of labour can cut and bind from an acre and a half to two acres in a day, unless the corn is much laid, when of course the process is slower. They work 14 or 15 hours a day. A peck of cider is eight quarts; thus if three men cut and bind the corn from two acres in a day, they have an allowance of 16 quarts, or four gallons of cider between them.

It is a very good cider county; the cultivated land rather more pasture than arable.

All the cottages in the parish are good. Sir Alexander Hood has just put up some new brick cottages by contract. It is rather more expensive here to build in brick than in stone. The brick comes from Bridgwater, and the red tiles also; red tiles are rather more expensive than slate tiles. A pair of cottages can be put up in brick and red tile for 300*l.* For this the rent Sir Alexander asks is 4*l.*, or about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

They are now cultivating a great deal of Brendon, mostly Mr. Lethbridge's property. It is a very wet climate, and will not grow wheat, but does very well for grass and green crops and oats. The Quantocks, which lie just at the back of St. Audries, are drier, but will not grow wheat, though well adapted for oats and barley; they are good for green crops. All the summit is open moor with heather, except where there is oak copse towards Over Stowey. Exmoor sheep and ponies have the run of it, and there are still a few red-deer in Lord Taunton's woods. Certain people have the right of putting stock on, but it is not very profitable. Sheep are not worth so much, when they come down again, as when put on; they are kept there little except in summer. Ponies remain all the year round. Sir Alexander Hood has some Shetland ponies there, which are in a thriving condition.

8. *Isaac Clarke, Esq.*, Selworthy, has land of his own, and occupies some more belonging to Sir Thomas Acland.—The cultivation of the parish is chiefly arable. Women are employed on an average for three days a week, their usual time of work about eight hours a day. In this parish itself there are no girls employed, but it would be desirable to place some restriction on their employment where they are employed. Boys begin to work at 10 years of age, and from that time work all the year round. It is rather too young; it would be better to place some restriction on the age at which they began, say 12 years. There is a good day school both for boys and girls, and they take advantage of it.

"The cottages are generally good, but some of them are, in my opinion, much too small; they are sufficient for the supply of the labour required, and they are conveniently situated. I am afraid some of the smaller ones are overcrowded. They have good gardens, and also allotments of land conveniently situate."

9. *Samuel Norrish*, occupier, Duddings Farm, Timberscombe, and churchwarden.—The cultivation of the parish is mixed—wheat, barley, oats, turnips, mangold, clover; about one-third of the acreage is meadow, pasture, and orchard; two-thirds arable. Boys are very generally employed from the age of 11, but no girls. Would like no boys to be allowed to work before 12, and think that no young females should be employed in the fields at all. As a rule the poor people send their children up to the age of 11; when the children do not attend it arises from indifference on the part of the parents. Schooling is well provided, for there is an endowed school free from all payments. As regards women, about five per cent. of the population are employed. (The population of the parish is 434, which gives 22 women out at work in the fields.) Their hours of work are from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with an interval of an hour at dinner.

In number the cottages are sufficient, and they are conveniently placed; one-fourth of them are in a bad condition, but, with one or two exceptions, they are not overcrowded; they are well supplied with water and ventilated. Gardens are attached to all cottages, with two or three exceptions.

10. *Mr. Risdon*, occupier, Timberscombe, holds 300 acres under Mr. Hole.—Boys generally begin to work at 12. Has two boys keeping birds at this present time, aged about 12 or 13. Employs in regular work two carter boys, and one about the yard. All are supposed to go to school, but the fact is they do not really. There is an endowed school at which the schoolmaster gets over 100*l.* a year, and the parson gets little more than that. There is also a little chapel school, where most children go in preference to the other. Employs no girls. As a rule in this district there are not above two or three employed in a parish. As soon as they are old enough, 15 or 16, they go out to service.

Likes a few women on the farm; in the summer is obliged to have them. Rather expects his labourers' wives to go out in the busy times. About half the women in the village go out, but not for regular work, they are employed for the job. Does not like having them about the steam-engine.

Reckons that a labourer costs his employer about 30*l.* a year. Gives a man 1*s.* a day, *i. e.*, 6*s.* a week, and a quart of cider, valued at 2*d.*, which is 1*s.* extra; also a cottage and garden, and a quarter of an acre of potato ground; grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel all the year round; the run of a pig on a bit of grass, generally in an orchard. Gives also a good deal of task-work, which he prefers, and which the men prefer. They make at it 1*s.* 10*d.*, 1*s.* 11*d.*, or 2*s.* a day for a few days at a time, at such work as hedging. In hay-making time they work 16 hours, 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., and count it a day and a half. In harvesting everybody goes out, the labourers' wives especially; 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* is given for cutting an acre. At this time a man can earn for a fortnight 3*s.* to 4*s.* a day, and a woman 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* The ordinary men's hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; the women begin an hour later, and leave off at the same time. Mr. Hole gives the same wages. Mr. Risdon's father offered his men 1*s.* 8*d.* a day if they would give up all perquisites, but they preferred adhering to the old system. If the people now want more than he gives, Mr. Risdon offers the 1*s.* 8*d.* like his father, but they prefer the old system, and he does not find that they leave him. His farm is mostly grazing; he has two fields of very fine meadow in the valley, but the rest of the farm is on the slope of the hills. Has 15 acres of orchard, out of which alone his father used to pay the rent, but the trees are getting old now.

There is no necessity to put any restriction on the employment of women in agriculture; they do not come out half enough. As for the boys, if there is a good school, would have them kept there till they are 13 years of age.

11. *John King, Esq.*, Cutcombe, farms 400 acres, under Mr. Bouverie, up in the hill country. (The turnpike at Cutcombe on the Dunster and Dulverton road is exactly 1,000 feet above the sea.)—Employs only two boys, of whom the youngest is 12 years of age, the other older. This is rather fewer than the usual number of boys employed; would put the average number at one boy per 100 acres. Few are worked younger than 12, except perhaps on a job, such as bird-keeping for a time. Has six labourers in his employment, the wives of three of whom work in the fields; the wives of the others never do, and reckons that those who work out have the best and tidiest cottages, and have the best character. Young women will not work out, it is the older ones who have been always accustomed to it. Mr. King gives as his regular wages 8*s.* to labourers, and a cottage; also grist corn. He gives no cider, it is not the custom to give it in this parish; it is not a cider country. One or two farmers in the village give 7*s.*, but it is the exception.

12. *Mr. George Risdon*, Higher Marsh, Dunster, farms 210 acres, under Mr. Luttrell, more than half of

which is grass.—Has one small boy employed out at present; he is keeping birds, and is 9 years of age. He only comes on the job. He never went much to school, but he goes now to night-school. Most of the workmen's wives go into the fields at busy times, such as haymaking, harvest, hoeing turnips, weeding corn. All their work is task-work, at which they can make a good deal; for instance gives 5*s.* the acre for hoeing, and a woman might hoe an acre in two days. The men work in summer from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an hour for dinner out of it; in winter they do not begin till 7.30 a.m. The boys work the same hours as the men. The women do not begin work till 8 a.m.

The regular labourers' wages in money are 8*s.*; a carter gets 10*s.* Besides this there are the usual perquisites, such as three pints a day cider; but sometimes in winter, when it has not been a good season, and cider is short, gives three halfpence a pint instead of liquor. Does not give cottage; has only three on the farm, and eight men employed. Those who take one of his cottages pay 1*s.* a week, but those who live elsewhere have only half a mile to come. They get also half their firing, and grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel, all the year round, which of course is a great advantage when the price of corn is above that; if it is under they have no occasion to buy it of the farmer, they can go elsewhere and get it cheaper. If they require barley for their pigs, lets them have it at 4*s.* a bushel, but only allows them to keep one pig. For the run of a pig they pay 3*d.* a month. Gives potato ground, for which they profess to pay, but generally it ends in being given. Would rather give 11*s.* a week than 8*s.* and so many perquisites.

13. *Mr. Badcock*, Dunster, farms 220 acres, of which three-fourths are grazing.—Has in his employ two boys under 15, both over 12. They are regularly employed. If they come to work they are always paid, however bad a day it is. Has children bird-keeping on the job sometimes; for instance at present has a little girl of 11 out keeping birds, but only for a few weeks. Has two women in his employ at present, who come when wanted; they are assisting in the thrashing machine to-day. They are both labourers' wives. In the harvesting four or five women are employed, and they are labourers' daughters as well as wives; often unmarried. But, except in harvest, very few unmarried women work. Farm servants will sometimes leave service and come out for a lark in the summer, perhaps for a week or two. Such girls are not always the best of characters; a steady girl will stick to her place. Has cottages on his farm. None of his labourers come from Dunster or Carhampton. Mr. Luttrell's farms well provided with cottages, all but two have cottages on them; but some farms in the neighbourhood under another proprietor have no cottages, which is a bad system. Have to give 2*d.* a day more to Carhampton men than to those who live on the farm (Carhampton is two miles distant), because they have some way to come, and do not get work done with so much spirit.

Gives a carter 11*s.* and nothing more; a labourer 9*s.* and three pints of cider daily. They prefer cider to 1*s.* more, which has been offered to them. They would take 1*s.* 6*d.* in lieu of cider. Gives no privileges, except perhaps now and then a little wood or a few turnips. The men may take a few turnips and greens if they ask for them, but if too many go, gives a hint to that effect, and it soon stops. Thinks privileges are a bad plan; giving them is a custom that is going out much here. Many young farmers give no grist corn to new hands, but go on giving it to the old hands, who have been accustomed to it, as they do not like to take it away from those who have had it hitherto.

14. *Mr. Gibbs*, Carhampton, occupies a house in the village. Employs three women as a general rule, four in the summer. Of these, oddly enough, two are mason's wives. Masons get far better wages than labourers in summer time, when work is plentiful, but in winter, when it is light, their wives are glad enough to get a job. Labourers' wives do not work out much, but are willing to do so in busy times. All who work on this farm are very respectable, and should say that such is the rule all about this country. They are paid 8*d.* a day and a little cider. They go home to dinner, for which they are allowed one hour in the middle of the day. The farm is close to the village, and all live in the village. Their hours of work are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Young girls work a little now and then. The only other occupation for them is to go to the sea and gather laver. Most, however, go to school till 14, and then go out to service. None employed at present on the farm. Has four boys employed on the farm in ages varying from 12 to 17; none under 12 at present, as it happens. Generally they begin at 10. Boys under that age sometimes go out bird-keeping, generally not alone; they will take a companion, and sometimes do a good deal of damage playing about and breaking down hedges. This especially on Sunday, when there are more of the other children about. Must keep birds on Sunday as well as other days. Very idle about it. One boy went away and told Mr. —— he was obliged to go away, because the birds troubled him so. The school is not very good. Mr. Gibbs's nephew kept a night school, and brought on the boys very much. When he gave it up Mr. Windsor, who lives with Mr. Gibbs, kept it on, but he too had to give it up this year, as he had too much else to do. The attendance averaged 15 to 20 boys; they paid a trifle entrance, and seemed very anxious to learn.

Gives carter and shepherd 10*s.* a week and three pints of cider; gives a labourer 9*s.* a week, and sometimes 2*s.* a day; to older men 8*s.* 6*d.* a week, and to one old man, who cannot do much, 7*s.* They have three pints of cider apiece also, and a little ground let at a reasonable price for potato ground; a quarter of an acre is let among four at the rate of 30*s.* an acre. They live mostly in the village, and pay for their cottage out of their wages, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a week.

An agricultural meeting at Williton the other day fixed on 9 as the age at which boys ought to begin field-work.

15. *Mr. Harding*, bailiff to Mrs. Farthing, Manor farm, Dodington.—Employs only two women, and them only for six months in the year. Gives them 8*d.* a day. Women not much worked, as farm principally dairy and grazing. Has six boys employed, one of 10 and one of 13. There is a little boy employed all the year round in bird-keeping and light jobs, at 2*s.* 6*d.* a week regular wages, and something extra in summer. Always makes a point of finding work for men, women, and boys, if they come, however wet the weather is; there is always something to be done in the sheds, or under cover somewhere. Does all the work that is possible to be so done by task-work. Keeps four men on regularly as task-men, at such work as hedging and hoeing. For 10 months in the year they can each earn as much as 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week. Besides this he has three or four others employed about the stock. Herdsmen receive 11*s.* a week and three pints of cider; shepherds the same, and are given meat during the lambing season. Carters receive 10*s.* and cider, and are given extras in the haymaking and harvest, that bring up their wages for that time to little short of 1*l.* a week. They get seven pints of cider, while haymaking and harvest last, daily, and meat once a day. They work from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., but, as it is by task-work, it is their object to make the day as long as possible. Does not give cottages, but has five on the farm, which are let with a garden at 1*s.* a week. Has one new one on the hill, built by Sir Peregrine Acland, his landlord, which is let to him with the farm, and for which he charges 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Gives no corn; if men ask for any, always sends them to the mill to buy it at the current price. Does not give firing regularly, but lets men, engaged in pulling down a hedge, appropriate all the dead wood. Allows a labourer to keep a pig in his own (the farmer's) sties.

16. *Mr. Oatway*, Withycombe, also occupies 240 acres under Mr. Luttrell.—The first regular work boys do is driving horses, but few begin to do that under 12 years of age; what work they do when

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younger consists in bird-keeping. Women work very irregularly. April and May are the months in which they do most work, chiefly weeding. All years when turnips are plenty, not like this year, they can earn a good deal of money cutting turnips, sometimes 1*s.* a day, often more. Gives a shepherd 10*s.* a week, a carter 9*s.*, an ordinary labourer 8*s.* Besides this they get three pints of cider daily, and potato ground, and grist corn. No cottage, they have to pay for that out of their wages. Gives a great deal of task-work, which he prefers giving. At this present time, when land is being much improved, cutting down hedges, and draining going on, there is a good deal of work that is better done by task. At hedging or draining men earn from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 3*d.* a day; in harvest time they can earn as much as 4*s.* or 5*s.* Surprised to hear how low Risdon of Timberscombe's wages are; his labourers have the reputation of being better off than any in the neighbourhood.

17. *Mr. Kedner*, Monksilver, vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians, occupier.—A good man expects 9*s.* Out of this he has to pay for his cottage a moderate rent, 30*s.* to 2*l.* per annum. Cider is given. The carter and the shepherd get their houses frees. As a rule the cottages are not good, but they are conveniently situate for the farms. Mr. Notley is the principal proprietor. Very few cottages have more than one bed-room, and there are some very long families; mentioned especially the case of a sawyer, with a large family, and but one bed-room for all. Sometimes there are as many as seven or eight sleeping in one room. As a rule they are in pretty good repair; want of size is all there is to be complained of; some are copyhold, and these are always the worst. The farms in the parish are from 100 to 200 acres in extent. There are a few cottages on the farms, and the labourers who have the luck to have them are always the best off.

18. *Mr. Chas. Dibble*, occupier, Clatworthy, gives 8*s.* a week, and a house with a very good garden; gives some cider, but not given generally in the parish; gives turnips, and grist corn at 6*s.* a bushel, also run of a pig in one of the fields, either in pasture or orchard. This is a custom not as general as it used to be; it used to be a very general custom for the pig to have to pick up what he could get in the road. Boys go to work early; they generally leave school at 8 or 9, and are taken to live on the farms; most of them have been to school before. They then get regular employment for most of the year, such as weeding, &c.

19. *Mr. Lethbridge*, occupier Bicknoller.—Bicknoller is a small parish under the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; was managed badly, but is being improved now. The wives of the labourers work nearly all the year round, but no other women work. This has been a bad year for them, owing to the failure of the turnips. Boys go to work young; say at 10. The women are obliged to send them as soon as they can earn anything, so as to help out their own and their husbands' wages. One mother told the clergyman the other day, when he remonstrated with her about not sending her boy to school, that if he would pay what he could have made by working while at school, she would send him. Gives 9*s.* regular wages, generally gives a house; if not the labourer can get one for 1*s.*, sometimes as low as 6*d.* Besides this he has a quart of cider; once offered 1*s.* 6*d.* a week instead of cider, but labourers as a rule prefer cider; potato ground given too, at 6*d.* a yard.

20. *Mr. Corner*, Sampford Brett, occupier, farms 600 acres under Sir Alexander Hood, and has a farm of 500 more near Bath, under the Prince of Wales.—Gives more employment to women than most farmers in the neighbourhood, it is the cheapest kind of labour you can get. You can get them to work here; all through this country they work a great deal, but on the Bath farm, you cannot get them to work at all. They get 9*d.* ordinarily, in harvest, 14*d.* The work is digging turnips, or thistles, helping threshing, &c. Used to have a first-rate lot of women, but all the old lot are gone away now; some were married, some were not. One married and then went away. Had two first-rate women, but they transgressed; one who came to work for many years had three illegitimate children. Has only three in constant work now, of whom one is a widow, one a married woman, the other unmarried, but is 35 years of age, and deaf and dumb.

The youngest boy he has employed is 10 years of age, and they run up to 16. They work all the year round; there is always something or other for them to do. Besides these there are the bird-keeping boys, "who are taken away from school for a short time "by their parents to oblige me." They begin at 2*s.* a week, and go on up to 4*s.*

Gives his shepherd 11*s.* 6*d.* a week; one of his carters 12*s.*, and the other and the herdsman 11*s.* each; a labourer receives 10*s.* a week. No cider given. Wages are paid, whether they are wanted or not; there is generally something for them to do. In the way of perquisites, gives anything that is wanted in the way of turnips, straw, &c. At his farm near Bath he gives 12*s.*, and no perquisites at all, and reckons his men better off at Sampford Brett than they are there. One who went up to the Bath farm, with an idea of bettering himself, chose to come back again. He has only three cottages on his farm at Sampford, of which he lets one for 1*s.* to a labourer; he gives one free to a shepherd, and the other to the man who looks after the bullocks. If there is a good feeling between the landlord and farmer, it is very good to have the labourer hold his cottage directly of the landlord, if there is not such feeling, the case is very different.

21. —*Lutley, Esq.*, Kilton, occupies a farm under Mr. Luttrell; has practised as a physician.—Occasionally employs a small boy for bird-keeping, would not employ a little girl; does not think it fit work for them. Very seldom has a woman employed, as a rule; thinks it makes a woman rough, still it does good to health in some cases.

Wages get higher as you get further east. Gives himself 10*s.* and a cottage worth 5*l.* a year; has two very good ones, with four bed-rooms in one, and three in the other; they belong to Mr. Luttrell. Gives wheat at 6*s.* a bushel, and three pints of cider, which is rather more than is given in the neighbourhood; does haulage for his people, and gives a bit of mutton now and then. Gives a good deal of piecework, such as in cutting corn and grass, hedging, and making out reed for thatching. Reckons his men cost him on an average 15*s.* a week. Offered once the same wages as Sir Peregrine Acland gives, and no perquisites, but found that the men preferred the old system. Gives high wages, in order to keep his men honest, but does not believe all the same that he gets any more work done than others.

22. *Mr. Southcombe*, Stringston, occupier, gives his carter 10*s.* a week, and cider; his labourers 9*s.* a week and cider. Does not give a cottage; can rent a cottage for 1*s.* a week.

23. *Thomas Hill*, confidential man and shepherd to George Tuckett, St. Audries.—Came down to work here from Cutcombe, where he was 16 years with Mr. Oatway. Was never so well off as he was at Cutcombe; had two fat pigs, 11 or 12 score each.

24. *Jane Winter*, farm servant.—Was born and brought up at Cutcombe. Father got 7*s.* a week, mother 8*d.* a day; and had to pay for cottage. No cider given, or other privileges; a farmer never lets his labourers run a pig in an orchard; the people at Cutcombe joined to hire a bit of waste by the side of the road, and paid for it to run their pigs. Self and brothers and sisters were brought up very hardy; mother always made a point of sending us to school, but were very often sent out to play between school-times instead of having our dinners, as there was nothing for us to eat.

25. *Thomas Pearse*, aged 11, very ragged, from Carhampton.—Was keeping birds, which he manages to do by hallooing; birds go and settle elsewhere; follows them and halloos again; his sister with him, aged 13, was not employed, but had come out with

his dinner, and was staying with him. (They were loitering about the road, and did not seem to be doing much.)

26. *Mrs. Cook*, Porlock.—Husband works for Mr. Norton, has been ill for some time. Eldest boy, nearly 12 years of age, works for Mr. Rawle; was brought up to dress-making herself, never goes out to work in the fields, except in the summer, when she goes binding while her husband reaps. Has seven children, all at home, the boy is the eldest, the eldest girl is 8 years old. Cannot afford to go out to work, has so many children, must stay and look after them. Has only this room and the one above it; not much room for so many; pays 1*s.* 3*d.* rent for the cottage. (Seemed a respectable women and nice children, all seven were at home, the eldest boy just come in from work, the youngest a baby. They were at dinner off broth and bread; the broth looked weak and watery, but was not tea-kettle broth.)

27. Cottages at Porlock, visited with Rev. E. Yarde.

Mrs. Cook's cottage, only two rooms, family, husband, wife, and seven children, with only one bed-room. (See above.) Cottage next door, the same size, but vacant now, as one side of the wall had been blown down, and showed the interior sufficiently; it consisted of only two rooms, one above and one below, and the windows were too small to give proper ventilation. Mrs. Stoate's cottages were of the same size, both of them empty when visited. Out of one them a husband, wife, and three children had just been turned. Most of the cottages in the village bore rather a miserable appearance, especially in Castle Street, and few had more than two bed-rooms; most however are built of stone, which is very plentiful, and roofed with thatch.

28. Cottages at Dunster, visited Feb. 10, 1869.

(1.) *George Lang*, labourer; one room downstairs, and a small back-house, and two upstairs; family, husband, wife, and four children; rent 3*l.* 10*s.*

(2.) *James Lang*, pig-killer, and of irregular work. Two good rooms downstairs, and two good over them lives in a bit of the old workhouse that was divided into cottages. Family consists of husband, wife, two daughters, and grandmother. Has a small garden at the back.

(3.) *Wm. Lang*, mason and parish clerk. Two good rooms downstairs, and three upstairs, with garden at back. Rent 4*l.* Family, husband, wife, and three children. One lodger.

(4.) —— *Penny*, miller. Has one good room downstairs, and two above it; no garden. Family, husband, wife, and four or five children. Rent 5*l.*

(5.) *Wm. Davey*, carter. Two good rooms downstairs, and two above; large roomy thatched house close by the river, down to which an excellent garden runs. House not quite high enough above the river, which sometimes comes up to the door. Rent 4*l.* Family, husband, wife, and three children, of whom one a daughter at home with a broken finger, also small child, a love-child, child of the daughter.

(6.) *Joan Tucker*, and her son, a labourer. Has one room downstairs, and small entrance room, and two rooms above; small garden. Only inhabited by mother, son, and grand-daughter. Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* or 4*l.*

(7.) — *Gill.* Very bad cottage, one room above, one below. Rent 3*l.* Family, husband, a labourer, wife, who goes out to work in the fields, and was out when we came; a son also out at work, and a daughter about 15 or 16, and very untidy, who was at home taking care of her blind grandmother. In all five persons in cottage. No garden.

(8.) — *Michell*, labourer. Two rooms upstairs, one below. Entered by the same door as cottage just preceding, and has same staircase. Very bad cottage, rent 3*l.* 10*s.* Family, husband, wife, son, and a lodger (young man); a child ill with measles lying on settee, daughter of a daughter of the occupier, who lives opposite with a large young family.

(9.) — *Osmard*, labourer, married daughter of occupier of cottage next preceding; has one room above, one below, and no garden. Rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* or 4*l.* Family, husband, wife, four children.

(10.) — *Court*, machine-wright. Has a wretched looking house, nearly bare of furniture. Drinks. One room above, one below; no garden. Rent, 3*l.* 10*s.* or 4*l.* Family, husband, wife in rags, five or six children, all at home.

29. Sir Alexander Hood's cottages.

Extract from journal, Feb. 13, 1869.—Went to see some of Sir Alexander Hood's cottages; all have three bedrooms. He showed me a pair that had been adapted from an old farmhouse divided into two. When the farms are enlarged, some of the old farm-houses are turned into labourer's cottages. They had each three bedrooms, with a detached wash-house, and boiler between the two. Had had to put up partitions, and divide the big rooms upstairs, as the old farm-houses had generally big bedrooms, and few of them. One of the cottages had the old staircase, which was wide and airy; downstairs was a large kitchen, and another room. The other cottage had one of its bedrooms downstairs, with nothing over it, the two bedrooms upstairs being over the kitchen; close by was a very good cottage, made out of an old farm building, very clean and tidy, well kept and a good size. It had a good kitchen and pantry, and a wash-house adjoining, and three bedrooms upstairs; it had been a good sized linhay, so made a large cottage. In it lived the miller at Sir Alexander's farm, and his wife worked on Sir A.'s garden. The windows were large, and ventilators had been put in, but they were seldom used. There is generally great carelessness in cottages about airing rooms, the house door being used for the purpose oftener than the window or ventilator prepared for the purpose.

Went afterwards to see a pair of Sir Alexander's new cottages, which he built by contract, of Bridgwater brick and tile for 300*l.* the pair, and lets for 4*l.* apiece. They are exactly alike. The cottage into which we went had a good kitchen and a small back room, with washing apparatus, boiler, &c.; there was also a small pantry and a lobby, very narrow, and no space lost anywhere. Upstairs were three bedrooms, all opening on to the top of the stairs, one used as a dressing-room, because the family is small. It was very neat and well kept inside; outside no attempt at architectural beauty, though neat. It is Sir A.'s principle to break the roof as little as possible, as every break in it is a weak point; but what is lost in beauty is gained in strength and durability. Outside at the back a brick wall divides the premises of the two cottages; there is a tank for rain water, and a tap of spring water; at the extremity of the wall is an outbuilding, back to back with one belonging to the other cottage. These outbuildings are also built of red brick, and cost about 50*l.* or 60*l.* out of the 300*l.* They consist each of a store-room, and a privy, with a separate door to the outer on the further side from the cottage. There is a cesspool on the left-hand side, which opens with a stone trap. Each cottage has a good vegetable garden between it and the road, from which it stands back, and also behind.

Feb. 14. Extract from journal.—Visited with Sir Alexander Hood two cottages in Stringston, which he has converted from their old shape. They were just finished, and seemed comfortable; but the people who had been put into one temporarily, while their own cottage was being repaired, asked, if when the repairs in the old one were finished, they might go back to it, as it was more roomy; their old cottage which was close by was thatched, and looked half fallen down. Repairs were going on. The new cottage, in which we saw them, had been entirely re-done, had three bedrooms, and was roofed with tiles.

Feb. 15. Extract from journal.—Visited with Sir Alexander Hood some of his new cottages in Sampford Brett. He has varied these by making a passage right through from the front to the back, which makes

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them more airy, and by putting the boiler inside. Prefers having the boiler outside, however, as it is a bad thing, whenever it is used, to fill a small house with steam.

30. *Rev. J. M. King*, vicar of Cutcombe.—The parish has an area of about 1,120 acres of green ground, part water-meadow, part old pasture; and 5,811 enclosed acres, under the five-course system, *i.e.*, corn, roots, corn, grass, grass. Boys are employed regularly from about 10 years of age; previous to that occasionally, in keeping the birds off new-sown ground. No legislation is advisable in their case. "Girls may be said to be never so employed; women "are regularly employed, if they choose to work, and "farmers much prefer the labourers whose wives "do so. The practice is, however, going out, much, "I think, to the detriment of the women themselves "and their families. I am very positive on this point. "Restriction on the employment of the young women "may, I think, be necessary, but I have never had to "deal with such cases." Women's work is always close at hand; they work 8 hours a day. 8 a.m. to 12, then go to dinner, and work again 1.30 p.m. till 5 p.m.

"The condition of the cottages varies from new "and good to old and wretched; most have gardens "if not all; the supply of water is better than the "ventilation." The turnpike is a disgrace; will tell the highway board that the Commissioner's attention was attracted. Only one old woman lives there; she begged not to have it pulled down, so they put it in order for her. The ragged children seen there were her grandchildren, who live elsewhere. The cottages are not commonly overcrowded, but there is not a proper division of the sexes: immorality exists, but not to a great extent, and I do not consider that it arises from overcrowding.

"Having had a very long and intimate acquaintance "with the habits of the labourers, I think I am able "to speak with some degree of accuracy. The prin- "cipal immorality exists among young people about "to be married, who think there is neither guilt "nor shame in such conduct; we, the clergy, are "powerless till the masters and mistresses will take "it up, and show their condemnation by positive "marks of displeasure. When marriage is not con- "templated, as in the case of girls at service, "employers ought not to permit the parents to "receive the girl at home, and then take her again as "if nothing was wrong, the parents taking her child. "Much might be done by one strict rule imposed "upon occupiers by owners of land:—No illegiti- "mate children to be born or reside in any cottage "on my property." The farmers will all take the girl back again as if nothing had happened.

So little harm do they see in this form of immorality that they will quote Scripture against you in their favour. "Let them do what they like. They sin not; let them marry." Mr. King's predecessor, 34 years ago, offered a new dress to every woman not married pregnant, and it was only claimed once. The wife of a clergyman at a neighbouring parish offered to fit out the bedroom, with wash-hand stand, dressing table, &c., in every new establishment where the woman was not married pregnant. She thought she had found a case at last and fitted out the rooms accordingly; but only two months after the marriage almost the first use the basin was put to, was to christen a baby.

There is not a child who cannot read and write in the parish. There is an endowed school, and full advantage is taken of it. It was endowed by a gentleman to whom Timberscombe belonged, and Mr. King himself was formerly a trustee, but the trustees are now over-ridden by the Charity Commissioners. Besides the endowed school Mr. King has a school of his own in an outlying district. He has one boy who came back at 14 after doing field-work, from a wish to get more schooling. Miss King has a class of boys and young men on Sunday, which they attend and well, but no such school would be attended, unless taught by a lady; lads of 22 come. She has also a Sunday class for the older girls.

31. *Rev. Cyril Wood*, vicar of Stogursey or Stoke Courcy (area 6,000 acres, population about 1,500, cultivation mixed).—Impossible to answer statistics accurately about the number of women and children employed in field labour. In the spring the work is agricultural, weeding, ploughing, &c., in summer haymaking; children and young persons (males) are employed in harvest; women take little part except gleaning; if they do work then it is chiefly in putting the sheaves into stacks. Their usual hours of work are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an interval of 30 minutes for breakfast, 60 for dinner; the journey to work being included in the hours of work. A few live at some distance, but say an average of three-quarters of a mile. They do not work hard enough to hurt themselves, and never heard of any ill treatment; must have heard had such existed as an acknowledged custom. Is not in favour of any restriction on boys' labour; the supposed evil rights itself; boys are of no use unless physically qualified to be of use; would not recommend any restriction on children and young persons working, but they ought to attend the Sunday and night schools.

Would not restrict female labour. "My observa- "tions in Stogursey lead me say that as far as I have "seen, female agricultural labour is not (necessarily "or even probably) detrimental to morals. In general "here one sees several women weeding, and if there "be a man with them, he is probably the husband, "father, or son of the woman, or some one of "them."

Does not consider the Factory Act or Print Works Act compatible with farm labour. The night school and Sunday school instruction are sufficient, considering the position in life of the agricultural labourer, to keep up and improve what they have learnt at the day-school before they were fit for work. The poverty of the parents hardly affects the school attendance at all. There are charities, benefit from which is made to depend on punctuality of school payment. Nor does the distance much affect the attendance; the greatest distance any come is between 2 and 3 miles; they would not come on a very wet day. There are outlying dames'-schools for the younger, who cannot walk the distance. There are not a couple of dozen boys and girls, neither at school or at work, and such as there are, are children of drunken parents. No general efforts are being made for the industrial training of girls—the vicar's wife does something in this way; but circumstances do not admit of this being a public concern. Mr. Wood feels very strongly about the girls. They have by the Government system to learn grammar, geography, &c., and only two hours three days a week needlework, which is not near enough. At Mr. Wood's school in Oxfordshire, where he was before, and which was not under Government, they had four hours a day needlework. Present system faulty; girls grow up unable to make clothes, and become useless wives, so that men have a great extra expense in having their wives' clothes made by dress-makers. One woman told him that she could not afford to send her child; the present system actually deters children coming. In like manner boys are taught a quantity of things that make them unfit to go out and work; they should learn farming.

With regard to cottage accommodation, "it must "suggest itself to every thinking man that there "ought to be three well-separated bedrooms at least "for every family. I think there are sufficient such "cottages, but it by no means follows that the said "large families are the occupiers. Very few are "really crowded. The cottages have in general one "living-room and two bedrooms, with a back kitchen "or wash-house; the gardens are of moderate size; "water supply very good. The drainage is tolerable. "but in some particular localities might with advan- "tage be improved. They belong chiefly to the land- "owners, not to the middle class or tradesmen."

Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class at day school in the parish:—

	Boys.		Girls.	
	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Under 10.	Between 10 and 13.
On the register of school.	39	4	43	12
Average attendances in winter (October to May).	30	3	29	7

In summer the average would be just two-thirds of the above.

This table is purely of the children of agricultural labourers; does not include the children of smiths, masons, sawyers, carpenters, &c. The total on the books is 226, the average attendance about 155.

32. Memorandum given by *Mr. Ireland*, schoolmaster, Stogursey. Total on books 226, average attendance 158.

Sunday School.

	Boys.			
	Class 1.	Class 2.	Class 3.	Total.
Number on books -	24	15	48	87
Average attendance -	18	11	31	60

	Girls.			
	Class 1.	Class 2.	Class 3.	Total.
Number on books -	30	33	38	101
Average attendance -	21	12	20	53

Day School.

	Boys.			Girls.			Infants.
	Class 1.	Class 2.	Total.	Class 1.	Class 2.	Total.	
Number on books -	45	45	90	44	43	87	49
Average attendance -	35	33	68	30	25	55	35

33. *Rev. Cyril Wood* (continued):—Has an evening school open 20 weeks in the year, from October to March; two hours, three nights a week; reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, and religious teaching by the vicar. It would adequately supply the deficiencies of the day-school, if all who need the teaching attended it. The chief causes of irregular attendance are—(1), indifference; (2), distance of home from school; (3), objections of some farmers to allow boys out from 7 to 9 p.m.

Number of scholars in night-school 55.

On the Register.		Average Attendance.	
Under 12.	Above 12.	Under 12.	Above 12.
4	51	3	20

The Rev. Cyril Wood trusts that deep attention will be given to this memorandum:—"The Govern- "ment system does not induce parents to keep their "children at school. What is the use of grammar "and the 'ologies' to a girl who has to be a plough- "man's wife, especially when really useful things, "such as all kinds of needlework, are necessarily "neglected?"

Mem. by the Rev. Cyril Wood:—I cannot find "that the employment of women in agriculture re- "sults from the scarcity of male labour. I gather by "inquiry that from time immemorial men's work and "women's work have been considered as essentially "different from one another; that men may be "*out of* work, while women are *at* work; that women "have always done such work as they were physically "able to do. Their pay is of course less than "men's."

34. Letter from Mr. John James Ireland, schoolmaster, Stogursey, to Sir A. Hood, Bart.

"Feb. 14, 1869.

"Since September 1865, 21 boys (of agricultural labourers only), have left this school for work, 11 under 10 years of age; 10 over 10 years of age. Out of the 10 over 10 years of age, five were only a few months more than 10 years old. All the other children, who have left, were children of smiths, shoemakers, masons, fishers, carpenters, &c., &c.

"At present in school. On books:—

Boys. Girls.
39 under 10 years of age. 43 under 10 years of age.
4 over " " 12 over " "

"Average attendance:—

Boys. Girls.
30 under 10 years of age. 29 under 10 years of age.
3 over " " 7 over " "

"This is agricultural children only; the grand total of 226 on books is made up in a great measure by children of smiths, shoemakers, &c.

"You will see that of the 12 girls of agricultural labourers over 10 years of age (on books) the average attendance is only seven. This is the class of children kept at home so much while the mother works. The girls of the mechanics, artizans, &c. are irregular, where there are several children in one family; and the boys of such parents are frequently absent in the summer, but fairly regular in winter.

"The evening school would more adequately compensate for the deficiency of previous schooling, if a better attendance could be obtained from those boys who are most ignorant. Some live in farms a considerable distance from the school, and the farmers (in some cases) do not approve of their boys being absent from their farms so late as 9 o'clock in the winter. The indifference to education is very disheartening, or I would suggest a night-school, say at Stolford, or some such place.

"I remain,
"Your most obedient servant,
"JOHN JAMES IRELAND."

35. *Mr. Ireland* complains very much of girls being kept at home to mind younger children, while mothers are out at work. Sometimes one girl is kept, sometimes another, so that no girl in the family keeps the right number of days; which makes the school come out badly in the Government examination.

36. *Rev. Charles Sainsbury*, Wootton Courtenay (population 350. Acreage 3,000 acres, cultivation mixed).—Puts the total of women, young persons, and children employed in agriculture at 56; thus distributed,—

Males.				Total Males under 18.
Under 8.	From 8 to 10.	From 10 to 13.	From 13 to 18.	
—	1	10	12	23

Females.				Over 18.		Total Females.
Under 8.	From 8 to 10.	From 10 to 13.	From 13 to 18.	Married	Unmarried.	
—	—	—	1	30	2	33

In spring, the employments are picking meadows and weeding wheat.

In summer, women are employed in harvest and haymaking.

Somersetshire.

Mr. Boyle.

k.

In autumn, digging potatoes and apple-picking.
In winter; not much done—turnips dug for sheep.
"The mother cannot attend to her domestic duties "as she ought, if she goes out to work; and is "obliged to keep at home from school an older child "to look after any too young to be at school. The "wages are low in actual cash, and the wives are "expected to earn the children's clothes, men pro- "viding rent, food, and boots; they are glad conse- "quently to earn some money by field-work. In our "parish girls do not go out to work. I cannot venture "an opinion as to the *prohibition* of female labour "altogether; yet would gladly see it abandoned by "mothers of families." As regards the boys, "unless "the wages were higher, it would be hard to restrict "the age to a higher figure than 11" for beginning field-work. "Neither the half-day or alternate-day's "act would suit agricultural districts; a require- "ment that the children should attend so many times "at some time of the year would be more prac- "ticable."

There are 63 cottages in the parish, of which 17 have but one bed-room apiece. "The want of proper "bedroom accommodation is obviously injurious to "the morality of young people—*this is the great evil "of our cottages.* The rooms are large but uncom- "fortable; in about 11 cottages, floor of small stones; "houses old and shabby, and not in good repair very "frequently. Rent from 3*l.* to 5*l.*"

17 cottages of which rent is paid to the squire.
16 let with the farms; rent paid to the farmer.
17 belonging to farmers.

—	Boys.			
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Over 13.	Total.
On register of the school, summer -	41	11	4	56
" " winter -	47	11	6	64
Average attendance, summer -	35	2	1	38
" " winter -	38	9	5	52

—	Girls.			
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Over 13.	Total.
On register of the school, summer -	31	3	6	40
" " winter -	35	3	9	47
Average attendance, summer -	25	3	4	32
" " winter -	20	4	3	27

There are very few boys or girls who are not either at school or employed. There are 12 boys growing up with insufficient education, of whom five cannot read or very little; they may yet have some schooling. There are seven girls similarly situated, inclusive of servant girls at farm-houses, who do not belong to the parish.

There is a night school open about 22 weeks, from Sept. to April, at which reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. It is open three nights a week for two hours each. Attendance on the books, 13; average school attendance, 7. Very small, because not inclusive of boys attending both day and night-school; inclusive of these there have been between 20 and 30 lads of 12 and upwards on the register. Still average then only 10. It does not supply the deficiencies of the day-school. The principal difficulty in the way of maintaining an efficient evening-school is "the nature of the employment of boys and young "men; their work requiring them to be engaged at "the time of the school."

37. *Rev. Edward Cox,* Luccombe (population, 500; cultivation mixed). (Mr. Cox, though absent, was good enough to fill up a circular).—Boys are employed in the fields from the age of 9 or 10, for bird-tenting, earlier. Girls are employed occasionally from 11 to 12; no young women; wives of labourers occasionally; hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in winter. Would not let boys begin work before 11 or 12 years of age. There is a charity-school at 1*d.* a week, of which the greater number take advantage. The cottages are tolerably good, and conveniently situate; they are not overcrowded, most of them well supplied with water, and good gardens. There are also cottage allotments.

38. *Rev. Mr. Leigh,* locum tenens for Mr. Cox, has only been at Luccombe two months.—Nearly all the women work out, and girls up to 13 or 14, when the best part of them go to service; some others stay and marry in the parish, but most go away to service, and marry from their place. Wages for men, 7*s.* and 8*s.*; women, 4*s.*; boys, 2*s.* 6*d.* Cider is given, but not a cottage. All cottages are in the village, and they have to pay 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*; good garden with the cottage. Run of a pig given. For food they seldom eat meat, except pork now and then; they have good potatoes, sometimes "better than my own." Herrings from Minehead are hawked about, and make a cheap and good food; they buy them, often as cheap as 2*s.* 6*d.* per 100, and salt them. The women dine at home on bread and tea. The school is almost deserted in potato-time and whort-time.

39. *Rev. Edward Yarde,* curate of Porlock (population, 835; acreage, 6,000, of which 1,300 are arable, the rest moor and wood; not sufficient meadow; arable in the valleys, and large numbers of sheep run on the hills.)—Boys from 10 years upwards are employed, part all the year round, part by the job; begin by driving horses. At 10 they pick stones, keep birds, plant potatoes, pick apples, pick acorns for the pigs. Acorns are very abundant in the extensive woods belonging to Sir Thomas Acland. Girls are very seldom employed; occasionally from 10 years of age to 13 in bird-keeping and potato-planting. They generally go to service at about 15 in the farm-houses. Many go away from the parish, to Bristol, and elsewhere. A good many young men go too; there is also much emigration, but the population is increasing.

Few women are entirely employed in agriculture; very few labourers' wives—there are not six in the village who go out. There is no weeding, and men hoe the turnips. Mr. Rawle, the principal farmer, who farms about 700 acres, employs only two, one regularly, and the other perhaps four days a week. During harvest many go out, and look forward to it. They reckon five harvests here, which last from June to November, hay, whort, corn, acorn, apple. Women and children nearly all turn out for the whort harvest; whortleberries, for which they get 3*d.* a quart, are, as well as acorns, a great source of income in this parish. Almost the only other employment of women is cutting turnips for sheep. Disapprove of female labour; the girls get vulgar habits, and it makes them slovenly and unfit for domestic duties. Five out of six are better in-doors; the wet ground is bad for a girl at all weakly. They go on courting very long, and then marry just in time to save themselves; then it is all right; to have an illegitimate child is a disgrace; about one in 20 perhaps are illegitimate.

Wages in country, 8*s.* and a cottage, and a quart of cider.

Wages in village, 9*s.* and a cottage; rent generally about 15*d.*; a quart of cider.

During harvest some job-work, but introduction of machines limits that now.

No boys should be allowed to work on the land under the age of 10 years. If sent to school from 5 to 10 years of age, they can learn quite enough; but there are several large families in the village to whom such a rule would be a great loss. Much of the work in the hills is done in light carts, which such a young boy is just wanted to drive. There is a Church day-school, supported by the landowners, which has a master and mistress, and is largely attended; also a Wesleyan day-school, fairly attended. There are one or two families can do nothing with; their children neither work or come to school; not above six or seven such children, and all under 12 years of age.

The cottages are sufficient in number, but wanting in proper number of rooms; many with only two rooms. Sir Thomas Acland's are the best, and larger than the others. A good many of Colonel Blathwayte's are on lives, always a misfortune in cottage property; he only came into the property a short time ago. There is also a parson's manor, which is unusual; 150 acres, which he has the power of letting on lives only, a source of emolument, but in a bad state, as cottages are only run up for the time being. The cottages are always overcrowded when there is a large family. Few of them have gardens, being in the village, and many are without allotments; but there are several fields of allotments belonging to Colonel Blathwayte.

40. *Rev. Theodore Muller*, rector of Selworthy (population, 434; acreage, 2,227; cultivation mixed.) Boys are employed in field work at the age of 8 to 10 years all the year through; and a very few girls at the same time in bird-keeping. Deplores boys being taken away so early to keep birds, and for the various harvests, which are the same as at Porlock, including the whort-harvest. Would like to see the German system carried out, *i.e.*, all children forced to go to school from 10 to 14, and parents punished if they do not send them. No child ought to leave school under 12 or 13 years of age. In Germany there are good schools, supported by funds provided for education; the money for which was taken at the time of the Reformation, instead of being handed over to private individuals, as in England. There are few rich people, but no poverty such as we have. Each tradesman in the town has his allotment outside, sufficient to maintain perhaps two cows and a horse. Girls generally go to service at 14 or 15.

There are two infant schools and a mixed national school; but the national school is not so regularly attended as the infant school, owing to the early employment of the bigger children. There are some first-rate cottages, and others being improved. Sir Thomas Acland is the proprietor.

41. *Rev. A. H. Fownes Luttrell*, vicar of Minehead (small market town, population 1,495; acreage 3,971; cultivation chiefly arable, but mixed).—Boys are employed in agriculture from 10 years old; a very few may be employed younger, merely for bird-keeping, a short time in autumn and spring. Girls are not employed. It is not desirable that boys should be permitted to work on the land for any purpose earlier than 9, but at 10 they should be allowed to be earning something towards their maintenance; does not see how agricultural labourers with long families could live without such help. Boys can learn quite enough from 5 to 10 years of age. Mr. Luttrell is not in favour of over-education, keeping boys at school till 11, when they become educated above their station. Those who go out and work are much the best; the others get idling about and do no good. (Mr. Luttrell showed me some very good specimens of writing by a boy of 9, quite as good as others by a boy of 12; so it is difficult to form general rules of what a boy knows at a particular age). There are some children who do not go to school, but few; and in those cases it is fault of lazy parents. It is not desirable to employ girls in agriculture, as there cannot be proper supervision to guard against contamination. Women work to a very trifling extent, not worth mentioning, except at hay-making, when a few go out.

There is a very good school for boys and girls, with a master and mistress to superintend each, and other schools kept by private individuals, besides dames' schools. The children generally take advantage.

This being a small town, with three hamlets, there is fair accommodation for the people, no one has to go more than a mile to work. The cottages are old, but generally well ventilated, and supplied with water. Overcrowding has been attended to within the last few years, and in a great measure prevented. Rent was formerly very low, but has been slightly raised since Mr. Luttrell succeeded. Few of the cottages are very small, but they used to be dreadfully overcrowded; very often the occupier would underlet two rooms to a newly-married pair, and as the family increased overcrowding began. There are very good gardens, and a capital allotment field of 15 acres, conveniently situate.

Wages 8*s.* or 9*s.* and cider. No cottage. People round poor, but somehow do not seem so. Money is always forthcoming for the clothing club and benefit society. In the clothing club subscriptions vary from 1*d.* to 6*d.* a week. The benefit society is open to all the adjoining parishes, but only Wootton makes much use of it. There are 280 members, who subscribe 6*d.* a month. For that they can have 6*s.* a week if ill for six weeks, after that 3*s.* a week. When they die they get 3*l.* for funeral expenses, and each member subscribes a shilling. Can be admitted at 13 years of age. It is self-supporting, and if the funds are in good order, money is often found for an anniversary.

42. *Rev. W. P. Michell*, curate of Carhampton (population 706; acreage 5,195; cultivation mixed). Boys go out to service at 9 years old, to drive horses and carts, but many are employed at a younger age for some parts of the year in keeping birds from the corn-fields, &c. They begin as early as 6 years of age. Bird-keeping takes them for a month now (Feb., March), a month in November, and a month about harvest-time. It is the parents' fault mostly, a farmer thinks himself bound to take a labourer's son as soon as he is old enough. No boy should go out to service till he is 10 or 11 years old instead of at 9 years old, as at present. If you have a good school a boy can learn quite enough by 11. He should not begin work later; if kept at school later he will not settle to manual labour, and gets into idle habits.

Girls are not employed to any great extent, nearly all go out to service as in-door servants. All who go out are in the worst families, *i.e.*, those that have never been educated. There are about four families in which the children have never been inside the school. Women are employed in agriculture to a considerable extent; most of the labourers' wives, who are not kept at home by ill-health or infants, work in the fields. No restriction is necessary on their going out; they are not inferior to other women; it does not lower them in manner. Some masons' wives go to work. "I believe the employment of young "females in agriculture in this district will soon come "to an end of its own accord." Most of the women when married are going to be confined. There are very few illegitimate children. Mr. Mitchell has baptized two in the three years he has been here. It is considered a misfortune rather than a fault. There is always drunkenness in a cider country.

There is a Church of England school, and a Wesleyan. The latter has the upper hand now; the school had been much neglected for many years. With few exceptions the children come to one or other. The only cause that as a rule prevents their attendance is their being employed in the fields, when the corn is first sown, and again when it is ripening. The parents are anxious to get their children taught.

"The cottages are bad. There are enough for the "labouring population, but very few have sufficient "bed-rooms, and the bed-rooms they have are low "and ill-ventilated. They are conveniently situate "with respect to the farms;" there are many two-roomed cottages, and some crowded. Late owners did little, but Mr. Luttrell is beginning to improve. There were a few lodgers, when the church-tower was building. "Most of the cottages have gardens "attached, in addition to which the squire of the "parish (Mr. Luttrell, of Dunster Castle) is about to "divide a field into allotments for the use of the "labourers. This field is conveniently situate, is "large, and the soil good. I believe it is also his "intention to improve the dwellings of the poor."

Somersetshire.
Mr. Boyle.
k.

43. *James Martin Huggins*, schoolmaster, Crowcombe (population 550).—Is master of an endowed school under the Carew charity, which clothes and educates 15 boys, besides giving free education to the rest of the parish. Has 10 boarders in his own house, farmers' children. There are 106 on the books, of these 50 are from Crowcombe itself, the rest from the neighbourhood, as there is no school near. Few stay above 10, and then they go to the farms. They are taken away earlier for a time for mazing (picking up acorns), driving cows, bird-keeping, and are not at school more than half the time. Consequently they forget a great deal; there are few who do not come at all. It is more the fault of the parents than farmers that the children are taken away. The parents are very careless about sending them; would value the education more if they paid a little. There is also an endowed girls' school, at which 1*s.* a quarter is paid; it is Dr. James's foundation. Number of scholars 27.

The cottages are good, none with only one bedroom. Mr. Carew and Sir Robert Harvey are the two landlords; the latter pulls down most of the cottages when they become dilapidated, and so people go out of the parish. Mr. Carew has hardly enough, and the farmers are obliged to get labourers from elsewhere.

44. *Schoolmistress*, Sampford Brett. — Has 75 children on the school-books; average attendance, 54. Boys go away mostly in the summer to keep birds for about four months. Has two of 13 years of age in the school, but one is the son of a tailor.

45. *Schoolmistress* at St. Audries, or West Quantockshead.—Has 48 children on the books, all but four of whom come regularly. Girls stay till 15, and then go out to service. Boys are taken away altogether at about 9 to work about the farm, bird-keeping; but are always glad to come back for a few months. They come to Sunday school up to 15. Had a night-school of quite young men for several years. Attendance eight.

Dulverton Union.

46. Letter from Mr. A. S. Lovelace, occupier, parish of Winsford.

Winsford, Dulverton,
February 19, 1869.

Sir,

I am sorry I was from home when you called here on Monday, as I should have been glad to have answered any questions that you might have wished to ask me, as far as I was able. The printed paper I will fill up in a day or two as correctly as I can, and forward as requested.

In reply to your questions respecting the labourer (the Rev. Mr. Anderson, Winsford, and Mr. T. Acland, M.P. had told me that Mr. Lovelace had offered one of his men 12*s.* in lieu of 9*s.* and perquisites, and the man had refused it), I must say that I never expected (when stating it to those gentlemen, whose names you have mentioned), that it would spread so far, but as I stated to them I am ready and pleased to state to you; I did offer a labourer in my employ at Lady-day last 12*s.* a week, after we had agreed in the usual way, which was as follows:—

	s.	*d.*
Cash per week	9	0
Cottage and about 15 perches of good garden rent-free	1	0
Thirty perches of potato ground, 30*s.* (nearly)	0	7
One quart of cider a day, from Lady-day to Michaelmas	0	6
Keep of a pig	0	3
Wheat, ¾ths bushel a week, at 6*s.* a bushel (market value 7*s.*)	0	9
	12	1

In addition to those privileges I agreed to allow him to join the other men in cutting the grass and corn, which he did, one-third of 35 acres grass, and one-third of 50 acres corn; the potato ground is clean, *i.e.*, free from weed, well manured, and the potatoes are ploughed in; their fuel is hauled free of cost; their cider is not, as Canon Girdlestone has said by the Devonshire labourers, so bad that it makes them ill to drink it, but good cider, bought at 6*d.* per gallon. (Mr. Lovelace is on the hills above the cider country). This man, who is a carter, gets three pints whenever he goes off the farm with his team any time of the year. The wheat, which I have valued at 7*s.* per bushel, was worth at Lady-day 8*s.* and 8*s.* 6*d.* per bushel, and is now worth 6*s.* 6*d.*, good red wheat weighing 62 lbs. per bushel; therefore you will see that I have not over-rated the privileges. In case of his having accepted the 12*s.*, I should have charged him 3*l.* a year for the cottage and garden. There are other ways in which he is benefited, such as corn for fattening his pig, butter, milk, &c., but this I do not wish to enter into, because it was not in the agreement; I do it for encouragement, as he is a steady and honest man; he has been with me since Lady-day 1860. I consider any other men are equally well paid, they get the same privileges with 1*s.* a week less money, and are at piece-work half their time; my shepherd lives in the house, and gets 5*s.* a week and washing done.

I shall be glad to answer anything you may wish to ask me respecting my own farm, this parish, or the neighbourhood, so far as lies in my power.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
A. S. Lovelace.

P.S.—The carter's name is James Needs.

47. Extract from circular filled up by Mr. A. S. Lovelace, Winsford.

Population of parish 576; acreage 8,656, chiefly pastoral; a large portion of the parish is common land, uninclosed. No boys under 12 years of age are employed, the youngest employed on farms in this parish are servants, consequently employed at all times of the year. No girls employed, and women only in hay or corn harvest. In this district if a farmer has not sufficient cottages on his farm for the labourers, he keeps them in his house. No need to put any restriction on the employment of women and children.

48. *Mr. Hardinge*, occupier, Highercombe, Dulverton (about two miles from Dulverton).—Women don't like coming out to work; get them generally corn weeding and picking stones on the grass. They won't come regular; if you want women, have to go to Dulverton for them. Has just agreed with a man taking one of his cottages that his wife is to go out to work. They work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; receive 8*d.* a day and 1½ pints of cider.

Has no boy working under 12, they are no use younger; likes a man better with horses, cannot trust a boy. Sometimes gets a little boy to go along with the plough, pays him 2*s.* a week. Mr. Hardinge's brother (who has an adjoining farm), is three miles from any place, employs boys; sends his labourers' boys out to work as soon as they are old enough. They begin bird-keeping for their meat. Boys are necessary; it is the best plan, but they do it very carelessly, and you must put a man to watch the boy. Boys here all go to school.

Has two cottages on his farm; Sir Thomas Acland is building him two new ones; gives 4*s.* 6*d.* to a man who lives in the house. Wages 8*s.*, house rent-free, run of a pig, wheat 6*s.* a bushel (gives it to one family, a long family, at 5*s.*), firing "like I have," 30 yards of potato ground, ready cultivated and manured; cider one quart (carter three pints, and 1*s.* a week more); comes up to 12*s.* or 13*s.* Would willingly change the present system for 12*s.* or 13*s.* They have a good deal of task-work too, at this they earn 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* a day. They also get meat given them in harvest. They are better off on these hills than any place. It is not hard to get labourers, they are much better off than they are in Dulverton, where those who live there have to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* for a cottage per week. They are better off here than they are at

Wellington, whence Mr. Hardinge came; it is the general case all over the hills. Labourers would not live in this climate unless they were comfortably off. Fair wages are not an injury to any farmer. Another advantage they have is that Sir Thomas Acland allows them annually to cut 1,000 of turf on the hills.

Mr. Hardinge came in again next morning to say that in winter he gives labourers 8*s*., carters 9*s*.; in summer, labourers 7*s*., carters 8*s*. "They like an "extra shilling in drink in the hot weather."

(N.B.—I was particularly recommended to make acquaintance with Messrs. Lovelace and Hardinge by Mr. T. Acland, M.P., on whose father's property they hold farms).

49. — *Warren, Esq.*, clerk of the Dulverton Union, and magistrate's clerk.—The union has only a population of 6,000, and an area of 50,000 acres, of which 12,000 belong to Lord Carnarvon, and nearly as much to Sir Thomas Acland. The cottage accommodation on the estates used to be very bad, people living in the villages and going out long distances to work; but Lord Carnarvon has built some new cottages on his estate, and good ones; Sir Thomas Acland is doing the same. The general bad state of the cottages may be attributed to so many being on leases for lives, the case at *Exton*, which is a miserable parish with a good many hovels; *Winsford* is an exceptional case; there some 12 of the best cottages are let on leases for lives.

There is really little employment for women and boys in a pastoral country, which this is; what work there is for women is chiefly turnip hoeing and turnip cutting, and a little corn weeding; but there is but little wheat, and they do not care to weed oats; turnips are necessary for the sheep, as it is a pasture country, and the usual system is to grow alternate oats and turnips. The country partakes the nature of Somerset less than that of Devon, having rich water meadows in the valleys, a Devonshire characteristic.

Wages never less than 8*s*.; what Canon Girdlestone says is quite true, but he should have gone calmer to work. The privileges consist of (1) cider, 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*., which is a great deal when wages are low, for one man in the family to spend on his drink. There is not so much drunkenness in the village as there used to be; there are a good many public-houses, but several cannot now even support themselves. Spirits were drunk just as cider; (2) cutting brushwood for firing; formerly there used to be squatters on the moor who sold turf all over *Dulverton*, and very cheap, but that has gone out; (3) run of a pig in a field; (4) grist corn and tailing, but that is hardly an advantage; (5) a perch of potato garden. They have to pay for their cottage out of their earnings, from which, if they hold of the farmer, he deducts 1*s*. In Dulverton cottage rent is 3*l*. to 4*l*., the cottages are very bad and crowded on the outskirts, with often only one bed-room, many of them belong to the man who lives there, often to a man who owns a small block, and will not or cannot afford to do anything for them.

Dulverton is purely supported by agriculture and its market. *King's Brompton* is the parish that takes most relief, but is improving. It is under many proprietors, Lady Carnarvon does most good there. *Exton* is very wretched, it had no resident landlord, but a new one has just come in, and is inclined to do good and improve. *Hawkridge* is very small, about 60 people. *Withypool*, very wretched, belonging to several owners. *Exford*, a neat little parish, belonging partly to Sir Thomas Acland, partly to Mr. Clark; the late rector, just dead, did much for it.

50. *Mr. Hammond*, relieving officer, Dulverton Union.—Women and boys work little; only in turnip time, and not much of that this year, owing to severe drought. Vagrancy is much on the increase; received over 50 vagrants this quarter; the average used to be under 10. Vagrants come from all and any class; soldiers, miners, mechanics, labourers, &c. (I found this a very general complaint at nearly every union I visited in the county).

51. — *Trevor, M.D.*, Dulverton.—All that Canon Girdlestone says about this country is quite true. Wages are little more than 8*s*. a week in money, with privileges, such as three pints of cider, run of a pig, sometimes on the road! a bad cottage, grist corn, &c.; farmers are ready enough to give corn at 6*s*. a bushel, when that or anything lower is the market price. If it is below the market price, they generally have none left. It is a natural consequence of such low wages that all the best women go out to work to help their husbands, all their cottages are the neatest and tidiest in the village, as a rule, theirs being of course the most well-to-do families. The idle women make the excuse of having a child, not to go out and work; if you see a woman dawdling about the village with a child, you may be sure she is an idle woman. Work is by no means bad for them; wetting their petticoats does not do them any harm; for boys work is the best thing in the world. The clergy complain of their leaving school at 11, but Mr. Trevor does not himself hold with this new-fashioned education, and all that geography. Every school has a map of the Holy Land, and every good boy can tell how many feet the Dead Sea is below the Mediterranean; but they don't know any English geography; can quite believe Canon Girdlestone's story of the people he sent to Yorkshire, asking whether they had to cross the sea to get there. Their English geography only extends to where Brendon hill rises, and an intimate acquaintance with where every stag in the county lies.

The state of morality is very low; it is all very well for women being afraid of sending their boys to towns, but there is quite as much temptation for them in the country. They very often do not marry till the child is just coming. Recollects as an instance of the feeling of the people on the subject, that he went one day to the confinement of a farmer's wife eight days after she had been married. He called in at another house on his return, and mentioned to the woman of the house, where he had been. She turned and pointed to her daughter, a girl of 19, and said, "Why she was born when I had been married three months, and I was 'most ashamed of that." A short time ago a woman of 35, who lived in one of the best of the villages with her old father, her uncle, and a cousin, came to the union to be confined of a child by the uncle, and did not seem the least ashamed of the connection. Some time ago a proposal was made at the South Molton Union with a view to checking this evil, that all women who came to be confined of an illegitimate child, should wear spotted gowns instead of striped. The late Lord Fortescue, and other men of influence, took it up, and a special meeting of the guardians was held to consider the subject. One of the farmer-guardians, however, got up and said that if this were done, it would be only just that the fathers should wear spotted jackets too, and winked at some of the younger ones; so the affair went off in a laugh, and nothing was done.

Cottages are very bad in the district generally, specially in Withypool, where there is no one resident above the rank of a farmer. Cider is not bad for the health; it is often given at Exeter hospital instead of wine, but that may be in consequence of an old tradition.

52. *Rev. Henry J. Taylor*, curate of Dulverton (population 1,552; acreage 8,339; cultivation mixed).—Scarcely any Dulverton women are employed in agriculture, they will not go out. They get washing and charing in the town, and they prefer their boys going out to any work but farm-work, at which they think they are over-worked. A woman can make more by washing than she can in the fields. When a farmer takes a labourer, he asks if his wife can go out to work, as he wants her in turnip-time, haymaking, and often in the house. A family of father, mother, and son can earn a lot in harvest, the father cutting,

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k.

mother gathering, and son sheaving; they are paid by the acre. No restriction is necessary on the employment of women or boys; scarcely any girls are employed at all.

There are some bad cottages in the village, but they are getting better. The supply is ample, and Mr. Taylor knows of no instance of overcrowding, nor have any evil results to morality come under his notice. Some have only two rooms. Lord Carnarvon, who has rebuilt his farms, bought some cottages the other day, and went all over them; he has since improved them, adding to some, and dividing rooms in others. Till lately he had not enough cottages on his farms, but he has now. Cottages are mostly on the farms, but some Dulverton people go out to work three miles distant in neighbouring parishes. As a rule, the labourers who live on the farms are best off; they get a cottage rent-free, in the town they pay 4*l.* or 5*l.* for one not near so good; in the country they get a garden and the run of a pig, not so in the town. For potato gardens labourers pay 1*d.* (?) a yard; it used to pay them well enough formerly before the potato disease, but scarcely pays now, as they do not get so much out of it as they used. A small garden is generally given with the cottage, potato garden is an extra thing, for which rent is paid, manuring and carriage being done by the farmer. The people subscribed 600*l.* to buy a bit of land to be divided in gardens, and it lets at 24*l.* per annum, 4 per cent. interest. If those who require a bit are more numerous than the subscribers, the surplus may be let to non-subscribers. This does not look as if the people were poor.

There is a very good parochial school, of which advantage is taken. There are 160 on the books; boys are generally taken away at 11 or 12 years of age. Parents do not grudge the pence, but think it time they should begin to earn something.

53. *Rev. W. P. Anderson*, Winsford vicarage, diocesan inspector. (Population of Winsford, 574; acreage 8,537, of which 2,706 are uninclosed. Cultivation mixed; rather more pasture than arable; tolerably good, not high farming).—"One or two "women are generally employed on each farm, the "children employed are in service in the farmhouses, "except sometimes for bird-keeping. The women "are chiefly wives of workmen on the farms, and they "are expected to work out by the farmer who hires "the husband. Hardly any unmarried women are "so employed except at harvest time. In spring the "employments are pulling turnips, planting potatoes, "and bird-keeping; in summer, hoeing and hay-"making; in autumn, bird-keeping and harvest; in "winter, pulling turnips." "Out-door work tends "to make women rough, the conversation amongst "people working in the fields is often rough, and "where young unmarried women go out to work, "it leads to immorality. Yet there are cases in "this parish of the most tidy married women working "out, and also of the most idle, dirty, and gossiping "staying at home. Whatever may be the case in "other parishes, I do not think there is here any "need of restrictions on the employment of females, "but speaking generally I think it would be well "to prohibit young unmarried females from working "in the fields altogether, excepting as above" (harvest time). "I would have no boy employed under the "age of 12, boys and girls should all be kept at school "till they are 12 at least."

The existence of a school depends very much on the clergyman working in it a great deal, and stirring up the people to send their children to school, if he does so, they will come, and the parents will not mind their being punished, even caned, if necessary. The school is well attended, the schoolmaster a clever man, he is a native, which is rather a disadvantage, "no man a prophet in his own country." (Mr. Anderson showed me his book of school attendance, which did not seem to be affected much by out-door work). "With the exception of a few boys taken off for "bird-keeping, and in the time of harvest, the attendance at school is not affected by children who live "at home being employed in agriculture; but there "are some young apprentices to small tradesmen, "who would be greatly benefited by the first regulation of the Factory Act, half a day at school, and "half a day at work." The extent of the parish little affects the school attendance, little girls of 8 and 10 years of age coming three miles to school. Most parents can afford to send their children. There are hardly any children neither at school nor work, except infants; "about three families are not sent "to school by their parents as well as they ought to "be. It is difficult to say how many are growing "up with insufficient education; very few actually "belonging to the parish; there are farm servants of "both sexes, who come from other parishes, with "very little education. They are a constantly "changing element of the population."

Table of children at school in the parish of Winsford.

On the Register.

	Boys.			Girls.		
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.
Summer - -	25	5	30	29	8	37
Winter - -	23	12	35	22	13	35
Average Attendance.						
Summer - -	12	3	15	16	4	20
Winter - -	17	9	26	14	8	22

N.B.—"The number on the books gives the number of children fairly educated rather than the average attendance, because different children are absent at different times."

Mr. Anderson himself keeps an evening school from November to March for two hours three nights a week, at which he has had 17 present. He teaches writing, arithmetic, and reading, the latter including Scripture and English geography. "It helps some "young men, apprentices, and lads at work, also "keeps them out of mischief;" they forget very much. Some who come to be married, declare they cannot write, and come to the night school afterwards and turn out to be able all the time to write well. They are stupid and afraid of making of mess of it, and will only put their mark. A good many young men go away, chiefly to towns, where they get on well, being steadier than town boys. They are sharp enough too.

Mr. Anderson reckons wages at 12*s.* altogether. Mr. Lovelace of Leigh, a tenant of Sir Thomas Acland, to whom all the parish belongs, offered a labourer 12*s.* to give up all his perquisites, and he refused it. They get 8*s.* in money, a cottage (house rent is about 2*s.*); cider not so much as in other parts, as it is not so plentiful here, the run of a pig and grist at 6*s.* a bushel. Sir Thomas gives them the right of cutting what turf they want on the moor, and they get a good deal of wood besides. A woman makes so little it is hardly worth her while to go out to work.

"Most of the farms have one, two, three cottages on them; the number sufficient, but many have only one bed-room, and those are necessarily overcrowded. They are valued at from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year, the labourer receiving so much less wages in money; most of the agricultural cottages belong to the landowner, and are let by the tenants of the farms to their workpeople for a nominal rent. The old cottages are rudely built and badly floored, the size of the sitting-room is generally large enough, the windows too small, the ventilation not bad; there

is hardly any drainage except the natural surface of the ground; the bed-room accommodation is insufficient; water supply good; gardens attached to most of the cottages, outhouses bad. The progress of increasing accommodation is very slow, a few better cottages have been built lately.

"I cannot say that the morality or health of the "poor is perceptibly affected by the bad accommo- "dation, their comfort certainly must be." Some eight or ten of the cottages have but two rooms, and there have been some bad instances of overcrowding. A husband, his wife, six children, and a pair of old people, living all together lately in one such cottage, were moved into a new three bed-roomed cottage. They said there was not room in the new cottage for the old people, who remained behind in the old; the fact was that the new bed-rooms were small; in the old cottage, though there had been but one bed-room it was very large, and they did not appreciate the advantage of separate rooms. The state of morality is fair; there have been only two illegitimate children born in the village during the last nine years, but one or two more have been born at the union. They generally marry when a child is expected, but sometimes in farm service the boy will bolt. The girl either comes home to her parents or goes to the union to be confined; the old people keep the child and seem just as fond of it as of a grandchild born in lawful wedlock, and the neighbours consider it in the light of a misfortune. Mr. Anderson stops certain privileges of women whose children are born too soon after marriage, such as the clothing club, &c., and finds it has a beneficial effect. *Exford*, higher up the valley, is worse.

54. *Rev. Alexander Tate*, vicar of King's Brompton (population 929; acreage 8,810; cultivation mixed, chiefly pastoral, becoming more so; a large quantity of woods supplying bark every year).—"Girls are not "generally employed in out-door work; they are "taken as household servants into farmhouses at "about the age of 12. Married women are employed "in such work as hoeing turnips, weeding corn fields, "and gathering in the root crops. The employment "of mothers of large families necessitates keeping at "home one of the elder children who ought to be at "school, and in this way is undesirable."

There is no need to restrict the working of boys. They go to work generally at about 11 or 12; they plant potatoes in April, make hay in July, harvest August and September. "There are two day "schools of which the principals are elderly men, "one dame's school, and one infant school. The "main causes of irregular attendance are the "truant disposition of the children, and the extreme "indifference of the parents on the subject."

"The cottages have been greatly improved since 1850, partly through a higher sense of duty on the part of the landowners, partly by the appointment of inspectors of nuisances. They are conveniently situated; overcrowding and want of ventilation are the exceptions; they are abundantly supplied with water; almost all have good gardens within a reasonable distance."

55. *Rev. F. King Warren*, rector of Exton (population 410; acreage 4,124, one rood, 24 poles; cultivation mixed).—"Boys from 12 upwards are very "generally employed in the parish all the year round. "They live at the farmhouse. Boys under 12 are "employed occasionally in bird-keeping and harvest- "ing. It is desirable that they should not be "allowed to go to work under 12, as the small "sum earned by boys under 12 does not at all "compensate for loss of schooling." Their pay is only 2*d.* or 3*d.* a day, which hardly pays for wear of clothes. Farmers are beginning to think, too, that if there is not a man to watch a boy, he does no work. They object rather to education; one said the other day that they know more than the farmers. Sometimes a mother takes out her children to help her in a turnip contract. "Except in bird- "keeping time no young children are kept from "school by labour; the indifference, neglect, and "idleness of the mothers is the cause of bad atten- "dance." They get offended in case of punishment or reproof and take the children away. "There is "a dame's school supported by the principal landowner "of the parish, to which the children can go without "payment, but not half of them take advantage of it." Young lads go off a good deal to the railway.

"Girls under 14 are very rarely employed in field "labour. Girls from 14 upwards, if they happen to "be out of a place, are occasionally employed in "harvesting, and very rarely in weeding. The "labourers' wives are generally employed in weeding, "pulling turnips, picking stones, and harvesting." Nearly every married woman works. Their cottages are much dirtier than those of the women who stay at home, and they are a rough set; but "no "harm or very little arises from their employment "in agriculture in this parish, except that when the "mothers are at work, the elder girls are kept from "school to look after the home and the baby, if any." The union does not allow relief to widows, if able-bodied, so they must go out.

The wages are 10*s.* to 12*s.*; there are mines about, which raise the wages. Grist is included. Cider given, but it is not a cider country; no cottage; a good cottage and garden lets for 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* There is not much wheat grown, barley and turnips; and it is a great breeding country.

"The cottages are pretty fair, and are quite sufficient in number and fairly situate with respect to the farms. No cottages are at present overcrowded, except one or two occupied by miners. A year ago a great deal of harm arose from the overcrowding of cottages occupied by miners, but we have fortunately succeeded in turning them out. The mines are in a neighbouring parish. The cottages are well supplied with water, well ventilated, and very few without a good garden. All the cottagers can obtain a convenient allotments."

56. *Rev. Joseph Jekyll*, rector of Hawkridge and owner, Tarr Steps, Dulverton. (Population of parish 390; acreage 7,200, of which arable and pasture 2,840, commons 4,000, woods and roads 360).—"The culti- "vation is chiefly pastoral, and the rent is made from "Exmoor sheep and the Devon cattle; all produce "consumed on the same. The land is divided into small "tenements, and each holder does the work on his "farm by his family and in-door servants. There are "not more than 20 out-door labourers in both parishes "(Hawkridge and Withypool), and they are employed "in inclosing commons. Boys and girls are employed "only in summer during the four harvests, namely, "turf harvest, hay harvest, whortleberry, and corn "harvest," at which times nearly every man, woman, and child turns out. Turf harvest comes first, in May, whortleberries in June (they get 2½*d.* a quart for whortleberries), hay in July, harvest in September. More corn is being grown now and women also are employed to cut turnips. No restriction necessary on the employment of either boys or girls in this district. It being a pastoral district there is little work for either women or children.

Labourers generally earn 2*s.* a day in summer, not so much in winter. There is a great deal of piece-work to be had owing to the fencing and clearing now going on. Mr. Knight bought 25,000 acres of moor about here when sold by government; and for fencing and clearing they get 2*s.* a day. When Mr. Jekyll farmed himself he always gave 2*s.* a day to his men, and he farmed extensively at one time. The glebe is large and he doubled the value of it; he lets it now. But for the 2*s.* a day he used to get the best labourers. The usual wages for an ordinary labourer are 9*s.* a week; he gives that to two old men he still employs, whom he pays as if able-bodied. Labourers also get the run of a pig, as much turf as they want, a limited quantity of cider in summer, for there is not much here, and milk in the winter. The land on

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the hills is far better than people give it credit for being, and there is very good water meadow in the valleys, let at 3*l.* an acre, which near a town would be worth 5*l.*

"I have a dame's school at Hawkridge, which is "well attended by all the children up to 13 or 14 "years. I had also a day school in Withypool from "1836 to 1856, which was very well attended. The "farmers subscribed to it for a time, but as soon as "their own children were educated withdrew their "subscriptions, and left me to support the school, "which I was obliged to give up for want of means." There are a good many dissenters there, and they got up a school and asked Mr. Jekyll to join. He said he would if they would teach the Church catechism, but they declined and so he would have nothing to do with it. Considers Withypool an immoral place, a good many poachers there.

"The cottages are good in Hawkridge; only moderate in Withypool; they have gardens and allotments conveniently situate."

Wellington Union.

57. "General impressions of the district of Wellington Union, bordering on Devon.

"Diary, Jan. 27, 1869.—Few women are employed in agriculture. As wages rise, which they have done actually within the last six months, according to the information of the Rev. Mr. Kitson of Hemiock, the women find they have enough to stay at home. Wages on the hills are about 1*s.* lower than at Wellington, but at Wellington their being high is due to local circumstances, there being extensive serge factories in the place, which employ a large number of hands, including women and children. In-door work too is to be got for women, such as needlework, washing, &c. Further east, as at Milverton, wages are lower again, it being a purely agricultural district; they are much the same as on the hills, 8*s.*"

Hardly any girls are employed—they prefer in-door work, such as embroidery, dressmaking, which farmers deplore, as it makes them superior to being farm servants, and useless as labourers' wives. They like getting away to the towns, and if they return, return with habits contracted that make them of no use in the country. A farm servant makes the best wife—a servant in a gentleman's family is liable to have contracted luxurious habits. Both women and boys are less employed on the hills than in the valley. Boys are little employed under 12; sometimes for bird-keeping; they are not necessary for leading the plough horses, as most of the district being on the sandstone, the soil is light, and only two horses are required to plough, so that reins can be used.

58. *Charles H. Fox, Esq.*, Wellington, who was good enough to put at my service papers of wages which he had collected from all parts of the kingdom, and who is intimately acquainted with the condition of the poor of this district, remarks, that although the people live close on a railway, by which it would seem that when discontented with their wages they might easily move elsewhere, they are so helpless it never occurs to them to move unless the way is made smooth for them, by some one taking all the arrangements into his hands, and settling where they are to go to. Thus though 12*s.* are to be earned within two hours' railway of Milverton, where they only earn 8*s.*, they will not move on the chance of work. An engagement must be made for them before they start; they will not go to Yorkshire simply because they hear that 15*s.* a week is to be earned there. They are not particularly attached to the soil, but the men who have once married and settled down will not move—the boys and young men, and young women only go.

59. *W. Ayshford Sanford, Esq.*, Nynehead Court.—The most to be inquired into in this district will be in the Wiveliscombe district, on the slopes of Exmoor, where there are few resident squires, and the people are consequently very much in the power of the farmers; getting in that part of the country in many instances only 7*s.* a week. Many of them come down to get work in the valley, and there is a sort of system of migration going on, the valley people moving off to get work elsewhere. In the valley the new arrivals are contented to work for 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week. Cider is given, and is reckoned at 1*s.* weekly; it is a great cider district; every one in the village has a garden of about one-fourth of an acre, where vegetables are grown; some few grow corn, but that is discouraged. The Wellington people have allotments. There is a large factory there belonging to the Fox's; it formerly led to much immorality, as men and women left off work together, and came out in the dark evenings, when they would pair off together. This was represented, and an alteration made, women being let out ten minutes earlier. This has had the desired effect, as they go off straight home. The parishes about are fairly well off for cottages, and there is no immorality. Formerly a good many women used to come to swear children at sessions, and there are but few now. There is a greater feeling against anything of the kind between farmers and their servants, and it is going out much. Very few children are born within nine months of marriage. The rule is for married women to work in agriculture—no girls.

Cottage property is a bad speculation; cannot build one under 100*l.*, or let it over 4*l.* per annum, and that it is no return for a landlord, who has to pay repairs out of this rent. Would like to see a state of things where cottages could be let for 7*l.*, which would be a fair return, but to get that the labourers' wages must be 14*s.* or 15*s.*

The school is a free school, very small, but it is a small parish. The attendance is 40, and there are no boys admitted after nine years of age. Those who wish for more schooling have to go to Wellington, a mile distant. The Rev. Mr. Walrond has a night school, to which boys are admissible after leaving the other.

60. *Mr. Gidley*, Chipley, bailiff to E. Ayshford Sanford, Esq.—Calculates the shepherd's wages at 14*s.* 10*d.* per week; 41*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* per annum, rather more.

	£	*s.*	*d.*	
Cash, 11*s.* per week - - - -	28	12	0	per ann.
3 hogsheads of cider (3*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*) -	3	9	4	„
Wood (6*d.* per week) - - - -	1	6	0	„
Potato ground (6*d.* per week), house, and garden - - - -	3	18	0	„
1*l.* extra in harvest, 1*l.* extra in lambing, with coffee and sugar during lambing - - - -	2	0	0	„
	41	5	4	

Head carter:—11*s.* per week.
House and garden.
3 hogsheads of cider per annum.
Wood, 5*d.* per week.
Sunday meals (1*s.*)
Pint of ale every night (1*s.*)
Total - 42*l.* 5*s.*

2nd carter:—11*s.* per week.
2 quarts of cider per week (3*l.* 18*s.*)
A little wood (say 10*s.* a year).
Extra in harvest, 12*s.* 6*d.* per week.
33*l.* 15*s.* per annum.

Other men:—10*s.* 6*d.* per week, no cider unless hard at work.
In harvest 2*d.* per hour extra. Tea and cider.

The same men are often employed at job-work, at which they can make 12*s.* or 13*s.* a week.

Women make 4*s.* a week, Michaelmas to Lady-day.
„ 5*s.* a week, Lady-day to Michaelmas.
„ 6*s.* a week, with tea during harvest.
They work out from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Has three generally employed—one old woman constantly. They bear just as high a character as the other women, and their cottages are as tidy. The

work among the mangold and turnips is let to women. Has no girls at work; they are picked up for the factory. Women like out-door labour.

Has four boys employed—the youngest 9 or 10 years of age. All go to night school. They come as early as 7 years old to scare rooks (drove horses himself at 6); scaring birds is light work, but tiresome, must go on on Sunday.

All cottages have good gardens; Mr. Gidley has great doubts about whether it is good to have large allotments; it is difficult to get enough manure. Population of Nynehead a little under 300, of Langford Budville about 500, and diminishing; the latter was a drunken parish; and there was a good deal of illegitimacy, but it is better now in both respects.

61. Letter from J. E. Knollys, Esq., agent to Lord Ashburton, to E. A. Sanford, Esq.

My dear Sir, Fitzhead Court, Jan. 25, 1869.

I am sorry to say that an attack of this prevailing influenza makes me a prisoner to the house today, and to-morrow, if I am in any way well enough, I must leave home for town; so that with much regret I must give up the pleasure of seeing Mr. Boyle.

I have however made a good many inquiries as to the general rate of wages in this district, and I have made several notes in the accompanying little memorandum book, which even at the risk of their being unintelligible to Mr. Boyle, I think worth sending to him. I found Mr. John Lutley of the Parsonage farm well informed on the subject, (he was for some time a bailiff with Mr. Bouverie), and finding that his accounts were well kept I have obtained from him the actual cash paid for a year to his men. Putting a money value upon the other advantages which his men have, their average weekly earnings come out at 13*s.* 2*d.* He says that Mr. Wilton, and his other neighbours on that side Wiveliscombe, are he thinks on very much the same terms. The extra earnings on each farm vary a good deal, and affect to a greater extent than either employer or employed imagine the total gainings of the year. You will see I have put no money value upon many little things which are a considerable help to a family, but are of more importance in showing a good feeling between master and servant than as increased wages. In the several instances which I have noted, the extras are calculated more closely perhaps by one man than another; but you will readily see what the average will come out at.

I find a growing feeling among our best tenants to pay money instead of cider, and I think that with a general effort this, which would be an immense good, might be obtained. The "modus operandi" is too deep and long a story for this letter, but that point gained, the great scandal that rests upon us would be done away. The grist corn tells both ways. I don't like it. In John Davis's case (Blackgroves), the labourer gets the decided advantage. I believe that Mr. Boyle will get the most reliable information from respectable farmers taking an interest in the question. * * * * If any practical good is to come out of the inquiry it is of the first importance to carry the best men among the farmers with us.

Believe me, yours very truly,
J. E. Knollys.

"Enclosures."

62. Enclosure No. 1. *J. Lutley*, occupier, Parsonage Farm, Wiveliscombe.

An account of the money payments to my five farm labourers for the year 1867.

	£	*s.*	*d.*	
James Baker, day work	17	9	2½	
task work	6	5	0	
	23	14	2½	=about 9*s.* 1*d.* per week.
Isaac Greedy, day work	19	16	3	
task work	5	7	6	
	25	3	9	=about 9*s.* 8*d.* per week.
Wm. Bale, day work	20	2	4	
task work	2	15	8	
	22	18	0	=about 8*s.* 9*d.* per week.
Martin Baker, day work	20	4	2	
task work	3	6	6	
	23	10	8	=about 9*s.* 1*d.* per week.
Henry Baker, day work	20	8	9	
task work	1	16	4	
	22	5	1	=about 8*s.* 6*d.* per week.

Making average per week about	*s.*	*d.*	money payment.
	9	0	
House rent and gardens	1	6	
Cider	1	3	
30 perches potato ground, manured, &c.	0	10	
Run of a pig	0	4	
Firing	0	3	
	13	2	

J. Lutley.

Parsonage Farm, Wiveliscombe.

(2.) Enclosure No. 2. Further statements of Mr. J. Lutley's wages. Estimate excluding task-work, from notes by J. E. Knollys, Esq.

	s.	*d.*
Money wages	8	0
3 pints cider, sometimes money	1	3
Potato ground 30 yards, manured and ploughed in and drawn home, 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* At 1*s.* 3*d.*= 2*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*, or per week	0	10
Run of a pig, 35 weeks at 6*d.* would be 17*s.* 6*d.*	0	4
Firing from hedges, and drawing, say	0	3
House rent-free with good garden	1	6
	12	2

Besides manure for garden and straw for pig.

The above is the rate for ordinary men. Mr. Lutley makes no agreement with the men for cutting corn. More frequently others are employed in cutting; these five regular men work in carrying corn, &c.

Extra wages.

Say harvest, on an average 10 days carrying corn, 1*s.* extra each, 10*s.*

In hay time, a supper.

Turnip hoeing, generally 3 men only.

Christmas gifts.

Shepherd gets 1*s.* a week extra; hours of work 6.30 to 5, with half hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. From 1st Dec. to 1st Feb. from 8 till dark, but come out after breakfast.

Statement of wages of *Mr. Fishleigh*, Dean, Fitzhead.—(294 acres.)

Standard wages per week 9*s.*; no house given. Shepherd 9*s.* 6*d.*

Carters during harvest, say 18 days, 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, 15*s.* a week.

Extra wages for a labourer during harvest 2*l.* 2*s.* ditto during haytime 5*s.*; ditto pulling mangold, say 6 days, 9*s.* Cider, 1*s*, 6*d.* per week each man. Use

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of a horse and cart; firewood for making a hedge; hoeing about 52 acres of turnips at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, 1*l.* 12*s.*

Summary.

			s.	*d.*
Money			9	0 per week.
Harvest earnings 42*s.*				
Hay-time 5*s.*	88*s.*, or spread over 52 weeks=		1	9
Mangold pulling 9*s.*				
Turnip-hoeing 32*s.*				
Cider			1	6
			12	3

Statement of wages of *F. Fishleigh*, jun.—(139 acres).

Carter, 9*s.* and house.
Shepherd, 9*s.* and house, and 1*l.* extra in sheep shearing.
Farm labourer, 8*s.* 6*d.* and no house.
} Wheat 1*s.* a bushel below the market price, and firewood for making the hedge.

Cider, carter and shepherd, 14 quarts per week= 1*s.* 9*d.*; farm labourer, 1*s.* 6*d.*

Extra work, hoeing 30 acres of roots, 1*l.* 10*s.*
Harvesting extra, 2*l.*, and 6*d.* extra cider per day.

Summary.

			s.	*d.*
Money wages		per week	8	6
Extra work	Turnip hoeing 1*l.* 10*s.*			
	Harvest 2*l.*		1	6
	Hay-time 6*s.*			
Cider			1	6
			11	6

(3.) Statement of wages paid by *S. Bennett*, occupier.—(134 acres).

Farm labourer's wages (with house), 9*s.* Wheat at 6*s.* per bushel; 1 bag of potatoes at the planting. Cider, 3 pints a day, 1*s.* 3*d.* Extra wages in harvest for 14 days, 14*s.*; do. cutting corn, 2*l.* Horse and cart—firewood for cutting. Straw for pig.

Summary.

	s.	*d.*
Money wages	9	0
House rent	1	3
Bag potatoes, 8*s.*; land, say, 18 (?) yards, 18*s.*	0	6
Extra earnings	1	0
Cider	1	3
	13	0

(4.) Statement of wages paid by *Mr. John Davis*, Blackgroves.—(217 acres).

Farm labourer.—In cash, 8*s.* a week.
2 quarts of cider a day.
Grist corn at 6*s.* per bushel, but if the price is below that, then at its worth; they have this or not at their option.
House rent, 1*s.* a week.
Firing for cutting, and drawn for them.

Farm labourers, harvest wages—extra 1*s.* a day, and extra cider for (on an average) say 20 days, and 10 to 12 days cutting corn, when the earnings would be 3*s.* extra wages. Say harvest extra earnings not less than 2*l.* 10*s.*

Farm labourers, haytime, about 6*d.* a day extra, when making or carrying hay, say for 10 days=5*s.* Mowing 50 acres at 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre, with one gallon (6*d.*) per acre of cider to be divided among three mowers. Say 50 acres cut by three men at two acres per day=8½ days per man=2*l.* 2*s.*; making the extra labour less 8½ days at 16*d.* per day (usual daily wages), in the whole about 30*s.*, besides cider.

Piece-work. (1) turnip hoeing, mangold hoeing; (2) mangold gathering; (3) hedging; (4) shearing hedges; (5) reed-making after machine.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
(1.) 16 acres turnips, &c., by each man, once hoed, at 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre =	2	0	0
8 acres turnips, &c., second time at 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre	1	0	0
	3	0	0
Less 24 days wages at 16*d.* a day average work an acre a day	1	12	0
Extra earning being	1	8	0

(2.) 8 acres mangolds, from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per acre= 4*l.* 8*s.*

N.B. Extra hands had in for this, about 7*s.* 6*d.* extra per man; wives earn about this.

(3.) Hedging done in short days, and not much extra money earned.
(4.) Shearing hedges, done in autumn
} say for the two, 5*s.* per man.

(5.) Reed-making on wet days; not much extra.

Summary.

	s.	*d.*
Regular days in cash	8	0
2 quarts cider, at 6*d.* per gallon	1	6
Grist corn from	0	9
House rent 1*s.*, as against 1*s.* 6*d.*	0	6
Say harvest wages=1*s.* a week	1	0
Turnip hoeing, 30*s.* per week	0	6
Hay-time, 30*s.* per week	0	6
Mangold, hedging, and other piece-work	0	3
	13	0

Besides extra cider in haymaking and harvest.

Carter, extra per week in cash 1*s.*, and house rent-free; 1*s.* 6*d.* in money instead of cider; but no grist corn. Carter does harvest and hay work, but not often piece-work.

(5.) Statement of wages paid by *Mr. Corner*, Manor Farm.—(356A. 3R. 17P.).

	s.	*d.*
Weekly wages in cash	8	0
Cider, per week	1	3
Grist corn, half a bushel per week (not compelled to have it)	0	6
Straw for pig	—	
Extra wages during harvest=1*s.* per week all the year	1	0
Cutting about 50 acres of grass at 2*s.* per acre, about 8 days, 3 men=6*d.* per week with extra cider	0	6
Hoeing mangolds and turnips, and other task-work, say	0	3
House rent 1*s.* charged, as against 1*s.* 6*d.*	0	6
Total	12	0

(Besides firing for cutting; hauled; use of horse and cart at any time).

	s.	*d.*
Carter, in cash	9	0
House rent free	1	6
Grist corn	—	
Cider	0	6
Carter cutting corn and carrying during harvest and hay-time, with extra cider	1	4
Use of horse and cart, and firing for cutting	0	6
Potato ground, about 14 yards at 1*s.*, say per week	0	3
	13	1

63. *Mr. Corner*, occupier, Wellington.—Boys begin at 10, bird-keeping; the Board of Guardians consider that boys above 10 ought to work, and no relief is allowed after that age. Almost all their work when very young is bird-keeping; there is little plough-

driving now, that being done by reins. If deserving they get regular work, they are chiefly the farmer's own labourers' children. Those who begin early make the best labourers, those who begin a few years later are lazy and do not take to it. Prefers a moderately educated labourer, but would like all to read and write. It is a different intelligence from school intelligence that is needed for machinery, school intelligence is no use for that. You cannot apply the factory restrictions to agriculture; for instance, at the factories in Wellington they leave off work at 2 on Saturday afternoon; you could not do that in haytime with Sunday coming. There are good schools, and all can take advantage of them; only stopped by parents not caring; but there is ample school accommodation for all.

Mr. Corner employs no girls, nor is it usual to employ them in the neighbourhood, they find work in the factories. It is difficult even to get female servants; they prefer dress-making, which gives them a sort of independence, and that leads to what's worse. It is a consequence of over-education. The factory girls make the worst poor men's wives. Women are employed to a limited extent, but it is getting more difficult to get them to go out; they are much taken away by the factories. They work 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., longer than in most places, men and boys 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The women who work in the fields keep their cottages just as clean as others. The cottages are not as good as they should be; should all have three rooms. Has himself added one room to a one-bedded cottage himself. Lodgers should not be allowed. Laid stress on the case of Priscilla Biggadyke, who was hung for murder; she lived in one room with her husband, three children, and two lodgers.

	s.	*d.*
Wages of an ordinary labourer, in cash -	9	0
and liquor = 1*s.* 6*d.*, and most of them take money in preference - -	1	6

But most men are on task-work; at a hard job, such as draining, they can earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day = 15*s.* a week; deduct wear and tear of tools, and would = 12*s.* (Mr. Sanford put it at 11*s.*) The carter and shepherd have regular wages, as they do no job-work.

The shepherd receives 1*s.* 9*d.* a day cash, = 10*s.* 6*d.* a week, and cider 1*s.* 6*d.* per week; three pecks of corn per week, has a large family and likes corn, but most do not; cottage, rent-free; 40 yards of potato ground.

(Mr. Corner holds under Mr. Ayshford Sanford, Nynehead.)

64. *Mr. Bailey*, Nynehead, occupies 350 acres under Mr. Sanford.—Employs boys from 10 years old upwards; finds most work for them in summer. They come out thinning turnips with their parents. Employs no very young girls; one unmarried woman aged 24, she has an enlargement of the neck, and does light work all the year round. A very good girl. The work is given rather as a favour; she is the only girl we have ever employed. She is really better protected than in a town, as she works with her brothers.

Employs three married women, all the year at 9*d.* or 10*d.* a day. The custom is to give 8*d.* and cider, and they like it best; a farmer would rather give money. The women who go to work have the best and tidiest cottages; it is not a bad thing in any way, and there is no immorality due to it. There is none in the parish. The women do piece-work generally. They work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., men and boys 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. No one has to go a quarter of a mile to his work.

Shepherd's wages:—

11*s.* in cash.
House and garden (a quarter of an acre).
2 quarts a day of cider.
Meat through haymaking and harvest, and what he can drink.

Has done away the custom of giving grist corn. It used to be given, now there is an advance in wages instead.

65. *Mr. Davis*, occupier, Preston, Milverton.—Employs two boys, aged 12 or 13, driving horses; does not like younger boys. They have been to school, and can read; they still go on Sunday. Every labourer should read and write; most of those who are educated beyond that go away, and are of no use to the parish. Employs one girl 11 years of age, she works with her mother and is sizing turnips. She does not work with the lads; she is a good girl; has no father, and her mother asked for work for her. When a little older will probably go to service. Has seen a lot of girls working up at Mr. Handcock's farm at Halse (*see* Taunton Union); they go out occasionally with their parents. Mr. Davis employs two women. He has three cottages on his farm, two with three bed-rooms, one with two; not enough cottages. Some of his labourers come from Milverton.

Wages, 9*s.* and cider. Gives a cottage at 1*s.* a week, worth really 4*l.* a year; so wages are really 8*s.* a week, cottage, and cider. In other parts of the same parish 8*s.* is given.

Good farmers prefer giving piece-work, they get the work better and more quickly done. One disadvantage of it is, however, that Milverton people, being very fond of cider, will often after making some little money by piece-work stay out of work for a bit drinking. Formerly all work was by the week. They can easily earn 2*s.* a day at it. Mowing is done at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre; a man working a long day can mow two acres. Putting down day-work and piece-work together you may strike an average and say a man earns 12*s.* to 13*s.* a week. Some will take money instead of cider, but not many; they cannot get the cider so cheap elsewhere.

66. *Mr. Fry*, occupier, Sampford Arundel.—Employs only one boy; they are not required so much as they used to be, now that reins are more used for ploughing. In bird-keeping too a boy is really not much good, if he scares the birds from one field they will only fly to the next. Twining a field is a much better system; or to cut up a rook and scatter a wing there and a leg here will keep the others off some time. Has only one woman employed on the farm; rather finds the want of women, as he often has to give men double as much money for doing what a woman could no. The wages are not high, but their husbands can make enough to keep them. They are better off than in many a higher paid part, because they get so many perquisites; they get fuel and turf for nothing, turf being cut on the hills (Blackdown Hills). Most of them live on the land. Wages 9*s.* to 12*s.* and cider. Gives his shepherd a cottage; most of the others pay 1*s.* a week for theirs. They have mostly good gardens. Has two cottages on the hill with three bed-rooms each, kitchen, back room, and pigsty, and charges 1*s.* a week.

67. *Mr. Farrant*, occupier, Hemiock.—Boys are not much employed here, except to lead the plough, with cows, &c.; as such they are called indoor servants, for though working out they live in the farmhouse; such boys very in age from 11 to 16. Complains much of the young men going away so much. Scarcely an unmarried woman goes out at all; recollects that 30 years ago they did; they go out to service more now, and seem not to like going into the fields. Few women work in the fields; most of them would starve rather than work; there is not one employed on this farm. It has not been the custom in this country of late years, though it used to be very much so formerly. It is partly owing to the husband getting better wages; and besides this a woman can generally get washing or sewing at home, which pays better, and which she prefers.

Wages, 9*s.* and cider; there has been rather a move up this year; food is given in hay and harvest time; for himself he prefers giving job-work; some of his men prefer it, others do not. They have to pay for their cottages, out of the 9*s.*, 1*s.* a week. There is not much the matter with the cottages, though few

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have more than two bed-rooms; their situation is handy, rent low, and there is no want of them, principally owing to the diminution of the population that is going on.

Complains much of the beer-shops.

68. *Mr. Manley*, occupier, Mill Hayes.—Employs boys of the ages of 12 to 14. Has one little scrub boy living in the house, who gets 6*d.* per week. You cannot get girls to work in the parish; not one in 20 is worth anything; they like fancy work, dress-making, and bonnet-making, which they bring home to their cottages to do. Employs one work-woman, very few are employed now, they are not to be got. Remembers many more working; never had any good harvests since it went out.

"It would frighten you to see the wages I sometimes "pay, 40*s* to 50*s*. a week." (Mr. Fox, the proprietor of the great factory at Wellington, which employs 600 hands, had kindly accompanied me.) Wages 9*s*., and cider; reckons each man costs him 12*s*. a week, out of which he has to pay 1*s*. for cottage rent. The cottages are improving, and have good gardens, has himself none with less than two bed-rooms.

(The above three gentlemen, Messrs. Fry, Farrant, and Manley, live on the borders of Devon, on the slopes of the Blackdown Hills, the two latter on the Devonshire side, but in Wellington Union.)

69. *Mr. Langdon*, Chilworthy, Raddington, farms 600 acres, partly pasture, partly arable; has also a farm at Chipstable.—In his parish there are very good schools, and boys are not much required in out-door labour, consequently they do not come out till 12 or 13 years of age, and are all educated till then. Employs four or five married women, chiefly in summer; weeding and harvesting the chief employments, they get 8*d*. a day and cider. Women with young children do not go out to work; all the rest like to go out, it adds to the husbands' wages, and improves their own health. There is no glove-making or other employment for them. They would not be happy unless they went out. An able-bodied woman in one of his cottages, if he did not give her employment, would come and tell him she could get it elsewhere. They work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., boys same hours as men.

Wages, farm labourer :—
9*s*. a week cash.
Cider.
1*s*. of grist corn at a reduced price.
30 square yards of land.
Run of a pig, and keep of poultry on pasture.

They have to pay for their cottages; he would willingly give 12*s*. a week in lieu of perquisites.

Has 13 cottages, and no one goes more than half a mile to a mile to work. They are mostly good cottages, some have three bed-rooms, none less than two. All are stone and slate (and so in the neighbourhood), mostly lately built. There are only two thatched cottages. Six are leased to him with the land, five are his own. He does not allow lodgers.

70. *Mr. Norman*, Wiveliscombe, occupier.—There are a lot of boys in the parish employed in the fields; they get them out as early as possible, say 11 or 12, to do light work, such as looking after sheep. Little boys go out to scare crows, but not much under 11. They begin at 3*d*. or 4*d*. a day, and work up. There are good schools, and as far as is consistent with early labour, people are not careless about sending their children. There are no girls working out except in haymaking; married women are much employed, regularly all the year round; they receive 8*d*. a day. They are in no way inferior in character or other respects to other women. On a farm of 150 or 200 acres there are usually two or three employed; it is a large parish purely dependent on agriculture, so there is nothing else for the women to do. They can get a certain amount of charing and washing, but this is not enough to fall back upon if the husband dies. It gives Mr. Norman (who is P. L. G.) a great deal of trouble in the union. For men there is plenty of work; women work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., boys the same hours as men. In the present state of affairs would not restrict the employment of boys or women.

71. *Robert Featherstone*, overseer, Wiveliscombe.—Boys are employed all the year round from the age of 9 upwards. But some of their employments have much gone out in this neighbourhood; for instance, keeping crows, which used to last seven months formerly; now twine is used a good deal to keep out the rooks, and a man going up to the field with a gun now and then does as much good as a boy there all day. A peck more of wheat sown does more good than a boy who walks about the field. Leading horses has gone out a good deal too, reins being much used, as the soil is light and you can plough with two horses. Boys ought to be kept from work till 12; owing to early labour, and also from the negligence of parents, some do not take advantage of education at all.

From 80 to 100 women in the parish (population 2,760) are employed in agriculture; they are chiefly married; but there are some who have had a misfortune, perhaps half a dozen who have love children, and work out too. Besides this some younger girls of the ages of 12 to 16 pick stones, weed, &c. There is an average perhaps of one woman regularly employed to 100 acres. About half of the number who work, work regularly all the year round, the rest go out on a job now and then. They are generally respectable; but one great disadvantage is that when the mother goes out to work, an elder child is kept at home, usually a girl, to look after the younger ones, and loses her schooling. Most girls go out to service, a good many have gone away of late years to Taunton and Weston.

Wages: The lowest wages in the district are at Brompton Ralph, where some get 8*s*. a week without a house; it is so low nowhere else, and the men work generally by task-work. Wages always have been low; don't know why, and yet the labourers seem to stay there. There is no resident gentleman. Fitzhead is little better. At Wiveliscombe itself the lowest wages are 8*s*., and all who have not a cottage too have perquisites.

Labourers wages at Wiveliscombe :—
In cash, 8*s*.
Cottage (in some cases, not in others).
Cider.
Pick the firing off the farm, generally as much as they want.
Grist corn at 6*s*. the bushel; no gain, as it is the average price, but in hard times of course it is an advantage.
Run of a pig, tailings in the winnowing, and get a a few turnips.

Reckoned at an average of 10*s*. a week. Shepherds get perhaps 1*s*. a week more. It is difficult to see how they get on, but somehow they do. At —— they say they get on by cheating doctor, stealing firing, and begging clothing.

Fitzhead has the best cottages in the district, they are mostly stone and thatch. At Wiveliscombe it is thought enough to have two bed-rooms in a cottage, few cottages have more. In this parish there are plenty of large families all sleeping in one bed-room. It is strange, but the crowding of cottages does not seem to have a bad effect on the character of girls; there is more freedom of manners among them, and they are not so easily shocked; would not say it leads to bad consequences. There may be 10 such cottages; they will generally put a curtain across, and the bed-room is generally large, and divides easily. There was one cottage in which lived a man and his wife, two sons, and two daughters, all in one bed-room. The eldest girl was 15, and Mr. Featherstone had insisted on her going to service. The lodger system

is an evil; a man and his wife if they have only one bed-room will always take in a lodger. Mr. Handcock's cottages are the best; Lord Ashburton is improving his, but in the town cottage accommodation is rather going back.

72. *Mr. Morgan*, relieving officer, Wellington.—Boys are employed in the district from 9 till 11 years of age; each farmer employs a few regular boys. At 13 or 14 they are taken as in-door servants. In this union the rule is that no relief is given for boys older than 10, so they have to go out to work.

Does not know of a girl employed; they generally go out and become nurses at 13 or 14.

Married women's employment too is going out very much, attributes it to the introduction of machinery. There is no regular female labour in the country districts, but they are employed for a few months in the summer. Knows of a case in Burlescombe (Devon) of a woman who tends sheep, and cuts turnips all the winter. There are not a dozen who go out from this parish; in Buckland St. Mary, though it is purely agricultural (a small parish), not above half a dozen. Agricultural women bear as good a charater as any. Mr. Morgan speaks from his own knowledge of his father's farm, where they had three very honest women employed. One of them worked 46 years on the farm, and was as good as any man. We have cases of men taking task-work, and women going out to help them.

73. *Mr. Flood*, relieving officer, Milverton.—Guardians do not relieve children after 10 years of age, they expect them to go out to work; finds a few girls employed, but not regularly, in apple-picking and that sort of thing. Most of them take to gloving, but that is not a very profitable employment, as they only earn 5*d.* a day at it. They like the independence of it, and unfortunately a good many turn out bad, one in five perhaps. They take a room not in the parents' house to work in; sometimes several join to do so.

There are generally two or three women employed on a large farm, where they are kept on regularly; reckons glovers more slatternly than the women who work out in the field. There are always enough servants, but a scarcity of good.

People live in Milverton and go out to work in neighbouring parishes, such as Fitzhead, Halse, and Oak, where cottages are few; some of them go three miles. In all these parishes there are many yeomen who cannot afford to build cottages, so people have to come far.

Reckons Wivesliscombe and Chipstable poor parishes; few paupers come from Raddington (small parish).

The cottages in the district generally have four rooms; very few more, except in small parishes, which are better taken care of. In large parishes like Milverton and Wiveliscombe, where the population is crowded, often find a family huddling in one room with only a screen between the grown-up children and parents. When, however, parents are with children little harm comes, the bad cases arise when lodgers are admitted. Water is good, ventilation bad.

74. Cottages in Milverton (population 1,895).—Extract from Diary, Jan. 26, 1869 :—

Visited Houndsmoor, a hamlet a quarter of a mile distant, where the worst cottages are supposed to be. Mr. Dwyer owns most, and he not being a rich man cannot afford to repair, and can with difficulty get his rent even, 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. The two worst were at the end of a row that branched off at right angles to the road, and were unoccupied. They consisted of only two rooms each. There did not appear, however, to be any very great overcrowding, most of the cottages having two bed-rooms, but dark, ill ventilated, and badly kept. One inhabited by an old man was very wretched.

75. Cottages in Wiveliscombe (population 2,060).

(1.) —— *Poole.*—A man and his wife, have two rooms, very bad; pay 1*s.* 6*d.*

(2.) —— *Shopland.*—A man and his wife and three children, live in two rooms, very bad cottage; rent as above, 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

(3.) *Samuel Greedy.*—A man and wife, and five children, of whom the eldest is a boy of 15, and the youngest a baby; one boy is deformed. The oldest girl is 12½. They have only one bed-room for the seven. The landlord is Stephen Ridge, who keeps a china shop; rent 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

(4.) *Mary Ann Jones.*—A widow with five children, the eldest a girl of 13. Has one sitting-room downstairs, and two bed-rooms above. Her house tidy, but dilapidated, and she complained much of the water coming down the chimney, and out into the room when it rained. It belongs to Mr. Handcock, but has only just come into his hands, and is to be improved. Rent 1*s.*

(5.) *William Brown.*—Husband, wife, and one boy; only one bedroom.

(6.) *John Smith*, marine store dealer.—Two very small rooms below, the biggest not 10 feet square, two bed-rooms above. Father, mother, and five children live in it, the eldest boy 15, the eldest girl 7; a very much larger family has been brought up here, but the elder ones are away.

(7.) *John Stoop.*—Lived in one of the brewery cottages, belonging to Mr. Handcock: stone and slate, and built on the road: had two bed-rooms; six children, of whom the eldest was 12; (specimen of many such.)

(8.) — *Paine.*—Husband, wife, and one child, one room above. Rent 3*l.* 10*s.* Landlord Mr. Hawkins.

(9.) *John Chapman.*—Husband, wife, and two children; two rooms above, one big room below. Rent 4*l.* 10*s.*

(10.) *John Perry.*—Was out to work with his wife, only saw one of his boys, age nearly 14; has been at school, and since then has been out to work three years. Cottage is only one story, two rooms, 1 bed-room, and lies detached at the end of a path. Rent 15*d.* per week. Father, mother, and two boys live in it; all the family that are at home; there are two elder ones (daughters) out at service.

(11.) *George Millett.*—Lives in his own cottage (is a shoemaker); has one good room below, and two bed-rooms above. There are only three children at home with himself and wife now. They have had 17 children, of whom 10 are living; never more than eight at home together.

76. N.B. — Handcock, Esq., to whose kindness I am indebted for being put in the way of getting my information about Wiveliscombe, agreed with Messrs. Featherstone and Flood, in thinking this the worst parish in the neighbourhood. The cottages, except the brewery cottages, are bad, few having two bed-rooms, and none three. I did not find any large families at present resident; it appears that in such cases the girls go out to service, and many boys go away to other parts. Some of the girls may come home with child, either by a farmer or by some labourer; in the latter case, the labourer often marries her, not always; if he does not, she usually comes home to be confined, and tries to get other work after her confinement, such as gloving, or sometimes field-work, for she cannot get into service; she then allows her parents something for the care of the child. Morals seem worse here than in the neighbourhood, and education not sufficiently taken care of. Many of the parents are an idle set, who do not care about sending their children to school. (Diary, Jan. 29, 1869.) There are a good many illegitimate children in the town. In one cottage, Mr. Flood, the relieving officer, (who was good enough to come over from Milverton, to show me some of the Wiveliscombe cottages,) showed me a lot of children, under the care of a young woman,

Somersetshire. — Mr. Boyle. — k.

while their parents were out to work, and said, that to his own knowledge, four of them were bastards. (See also the evidence of Mr. Lucas, the schoolmaster, No. 79, below.)

77. Cottages at Nynehead (population 321), parish belonging to E. A. Sanford, Esq.—There are few large families in the parish, and there is no overcrowding. Most cottages have at least two bed-rooms, many are built of mud, which is always warm, and thatched, but any repaired are repaired with stone and slate, and the mud houses are gradually going out. Mr. Sanford took me into that inhabited by the poorest family in the village, a husband, wife, and 9 children. There are three bed-rooms upstairs, and downstairs one big kitchen, and a back room, which might be made into a scullery, but is used as a wood-store.

78. *Rev. Richard W. Lambert* (Vicar of Fitzhead, population 496, acreage 1,721A. 3R. 27P.)—"Boys in the parish generally are employed at the age of 8 in the spring, keeping birds from the newly-sown corn, and helping parents to plant potatoes, in the summer minding pigs or sheep, in the autumn picking up apples or potatoes, or looking after pigs, sheep, or such like work; when older they drive plough. They should not be allowed to begin 'for actual work' before 9 years of age; but at 8 years of age they might be employed in some seasons in picking up potatoes, apples, keeping birds off corn in summer, or watching sheep; but I believe they gain nothing by such employment, though farmers find advantages from their services.

"I do not know of any girls so employed except in haymaking time; there may be very few, in leasing or gleaning on their own account for three weeks or a month; many go out with their mothers to glean, but a large proportion of girls are constantly employed in making gloves. Not 10 women are employed in the whole parish; in the spring or autumn, setting potatoes or planting beans, in haymaking, and binding corn in harvest time; also weeding beans or wheat, or hoeing teasles; the majority make gloves. It is decidedly desirable to restrict their employment. I have lived in this district nearly 30 years, and I am confident that the employment of females in agriculture is prejudicial to their best interests; where mothers work in agriculture, their children are necessarily neglected, their cottages are not kept as they ought to be kept, discomfort prevailing. Most women who engage in such work, say they know it does not benefit them, but husbands think they ought to earn something in this way, and so they go; but for every 6*d.* earned, they lose 1*s.*

"There is a very good daily national school kept by a certificated master and his wife; many do not take advantage of it. I think many more would send children to school if the charge were reduced; I certainly think that great advantage would arise to the poor, if in small parishes an efficient master or mistress could obtain a certain salary, which would enable them to take children at 1*d.* per week.

"The condition of the cottages is generally good, with some few exceptions of extraordinary character, the property of the residents. The pavement of many old cottages is bad, so bad, that if washed on Saturday, it cannot be dry before Monday or Tuesday, the consequence of this is rheumatism, and other ailments; a wet cottage on Sunday drives the labourer elsewhere; nearly all have good gardens, and three are many cottage allotments. I let off my glebe 22 allotments of one-eighth of an acre each, and another field of four acres is let in subdivisions; but there is great difficulty in getting the rent."

79. *Edwin Lucas*, schoolmaster, Wiveliscombe (consisting of town, population 1,800; hamlets of Ford, Croford, Whitefield, Langley, and Moundown, total population, about 2,700.)

Approximate Number of Children, Young Persons and Women employed in Agriculture in the Parish.

Males.					Females.				Over 18.		
Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.	Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Married.	Unmarried.	Total.
—	5	10	35	50	—	3	10	5	10	2	50

Employed in general farm-work.

Approximate Number of Children in the Wiveliscombe National School.

	Boys.			Girls.			Total.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
On the register of school.	100	30	130	50	20	70	200
In average attendance.	65	15	80	40	10	50	130

N.B. "I would draw attention to young girls "being sent out to nurse children, and do the drudgery "of small tradesmen's houses, under 13 years of age. "The Workshops Act does not touch either them or "errand boys at small shops. The small tradesmen "also think the national school too vulgar for their "children, especially girls, esteeming fancy work pre-"ferable to a sound elementary education." The girls attend less well than the boys, many being taken away at 8 or 9 to nurse children, either for their parents out at work in the fields, or for other people in like employment.

The Miss Featherstones keep a night school, to which both boys and girls go; but unless they do that, they never learn anything after leaving day-school. Writing is principally taught, a little reading and arithmetic. It is open 20 weeks in the winter for an hour two nights a week, and there are 60 to 70 scholars. It is very inadequate to supply the deficiencies of the day-school. "I have often had to go to a house for the annual subscription of 1*s.*" The chief difficulties are "inadequate subscriptions, the bigotry of the farmers, the want of an assistant in the day-school, to be available for the evening." There are from 300 to 400 young people growing up with insufficient education. "In some instances they "may be able to write a little, generally read the "easiest part of the Bible, but no arithmetic, &c. "Make the attendance at a national night-school com-"pulsory, instead of the day; I see no reason why "night schools should be closed in summer other "than day schools." Not a farmer, with but one exception, subscribes to the national school. Mr. Howard, the school inspector, on his first visit after Mr. Lucas came 8 years ago, said, "this school is very "ignorant."

Mr. Lucas is very strong against female employment in agriculture. "They lose their delicacy, "which is followed by loss of chastity; young lads "become old men in immorality; of all employment "it is the worst for the union of the sexes. It "undermines the health of the mother of a family, "tramping the wet fields, digging the frozen roots "for the sheep, weeding the same. The old coat or "jacket of the husband is coming much in vogue. It "hardens the finer feeling of the women, they "neglect home duties, their children roam the roads "and fields, unkempt and uncared for. The older "nurse, mostly generally neglecting the younger, "dwarfing their stature, damping their vivacity by "the care devolving on them, beside the detriment "to the younger from bad nursing and long hours "without food. Till the wages of the labourers "are raised, I cannot see how, with a family,

"her earnings can be dispensed with; 6*d.* to 8*d.* "a day. What is 7*s.* or 8*s.* for a family? It will "barely suffice for bread. One penny for each meal, "and three meals a day, is little enough. I would "prohibit female labour altogether except in harvest. "Education is in my opinion perfectly thrown away, "when there is no parent to carry it on at home. "Tired, jaded, perhaps her washing to do; what "can you expect from a woman? (!)

"Children should not be employed under 13 "years of age, nor have to walk more than one mile. "If sent to work between 10 and 13, certainly not "more than five hours in summer, and none in *winter* "*months.*" There are 100 to 150 children, quite uneducated, owing to the apathy of their parents chiefly.

"The cottage accommodation is most demoral- "ising. What can you expect from a father and "mother in one bed, three or four boys in another, "two or three girls in another, all in the same "room? Beds they cannot be called, their clothing, "which they have just taken off their principal mode "of warmth. . . , . . Till very lately, I knew a "group of three cottages, with only one bed-room "in each, containing 27 souls." They are crowded chiefly "with members of a family, a few lodgers, "from those who came to work in the slate quarry." They are built with cob-walls, thatch, limestone floor beneath. Ground floor contains one living-room, from 10 to 12 feet square, and a little back house, in one of which the oven is situate for baking. The stairs open with a hand-rail on entering the bed-room; if two bed-rooms (rare even in the town for farm labourers), generally the second is a sort of closet or cupboard; ventilation only the diamond-shaped glazed windows. Water from the stream, or by well in the country. Generally owned by the landowner, the rent being invariably kept back out of the weekly wages by the farmer; garden fair in the country, rent 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* The Union Chargeability Act is doing little to increase accommodation. "It should "be incumbent on landowners not to build cottages "with less than two bed-rooms, on large estates "three. A cheap building society under the security "of the state, would be a good plan both in town "and country. But I doubt if the farmer would "give more wages. 'There is 7*s.* a week, and a "house, live in it or not.'"

80. *Richard Berry*, Scripture reader, Thorne St. Margaret's (population 144)—In this small parish there are three able-bodied women who work out; all would who can, but the number happens to be small at present. They bear as good a character as other women, and keep their cottages as tidy.

No girls are employed, one works at Wellington in the factory. They stay at school till old enough to go to service, generally at about 15.

Four or five boys are employed; the youngest aged 11. Small boys used to be much employed for bird-keeping, but does not go on so much now. They have forgotten a great deal, when they come back to school, and if taken away for good very early, they soon forget everything. The Sunday school makes some amends; there is no evening school.

There are 50 children in the day-school.
25 „ „ Sunday-school.

The cottages are moderately good, but not in a very good state; but being improved; gardens good, about 15 yards on an average. Three cottages have three bed-rooms, two bed-rooms and an attic. Largest family seven, but three of the children out at service. The three at home are all under 8. No lodgers in the village, except one old pauper.

Taunton Union.

I.—*Parishes north of Taunton, and in the Vale of Taunton Deane.*

81. *R. King Meade King, Esq.*, chairman of Board of Guardians, Walford, Taunton.—"Women, both married and single, are employed in agriculture generally throughout the Taunton Union, as well, as I believe, in other parts of West Somerset, at wages varying from 8*d.* to 1*s.* per day, with an allowance of two pints of cider, when employed at day-work, and at wages somewhat higher when at task-work. The hours of work are usually from 8 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m., allowing an interval of an hour for dinner. The work consists of for the most part—

Weeding and stone picking in the spring;
Weeding, haymaking, and harvesting in the summer;
Turnip hoeing and thinning (lately much practised by women on the light soils), drawing turnips and other roots and cleaning them, digging potatoes, and apple picking, in the autumn; and a little occasional work of the above description in the winter.

"Young girls, as a rule, are not employed in agriculture; those who are not at school are kept at home by their mothers, who are at work, to do the household work, and superintend the family during their mother's absence. The work performed by women is such as is suited to their strength, age, and sex, and in no way detrimental to them, either physically or morally; I should say in some cases rather the contrary. Girls above 12 are usually placed at service by their parents, generally commencing in farm-houses at very small wages, frequently nothing beyond their maintenance for the first twelvemonth; others are placed with dressmakers, and many of late in this neighbourhood learn gloving, which they do at home with their mothers, and this often increases the earnings of the family more than by farm work. Boys as well as girls are, as a rule, kept at school until 10 years of age, but there are very many exceptions, the parents being tempted to profit by the few pence per week, which the stronger of their boys under that age are capable of earning by scaring birds, driving teams of oxen and horses as plough boys, and other analogous work. It may be here remarked that 10 years is the age prescribed by board of guardians, at which it is expected that both boys and girls should earn something by their labour; and with respect to boys it is found by experience that it is not too early for them to be initiated into some of the multifarious occupations of the farm. The wages of boys in agriculture from 10 to 14 vary from 3*d.* to 6*d.* or 8*d.* per day, with an allowance of cider. There is but little schooling after 10 years of age, a want which perhaps more than any other needs to be supplied, especially when it is borne in mind that even under that age the attendance at school is not as regular as it should be. This is not entirely attributable to the inability of the parents to pay the cost of schooling, for during my experience as chairman of the Taunton Union I cannot recollect a single application on the part of any poor person for relief for the purpose of enabling him to provide education for a child under 16, pursuant to the provisions of the statute 18 & 19 Vict. c. 34. I am not an advocate for a system of compulsory education, but with respect to boys employed in agriculture between the ages of 10 and 14, I think somewhat analogous provisions to those in the Factory Acts for providing attendance at school may with advantage be applied to them. I am aware of the difficulties attendant on any system which seeks to combine partial work and schooling in rural districts, especially when the population is scattered and schools far apart; but I think these difficulties may be overcome by the aid of night schools established under good regulations of inspection.

"R. King Meade King."

"Walford, Taunton,
19 Jan. 1869."

82. *C. Smith, Esq.*, Bishop's Lydeard (to whose kindness I am indebted for most of my information about this neighbourhood).—Farms himself, and employs two women regularly, besides women in the garden, which is large, and requires a good deal of labour, and these same women milk the cows. It is a purely agricultural district, and there is no other employment

Somersetshire.
Mr. Boyle.
k.

for women, so that they would think it a great hardship if they were not permitted to work out in the fields. Though bad for them they like it a great deal better than home work. The state of morality in the parish and neighbourhood generally is bad, and Mr. Smith complains that many affiliation cases come before him, some very bad ones, women in their employment having children by young farmers. If the father is in the same class of life, it appears to be considered very much a point of honour for the young people to marry; but if it be a young farmer and a serving woman the case is different. (While I was at Bishop's Lydeard a very bad case came before the magistrates of a girl of only 15 in a neighbouring parish giving birth to a child under very distressing circumstances. She swore it on a boy of very much her own age.)

83. *Henry John Pearce*, Bishop's Lydeard, relieving officer.—There are 12 parishes in this district of Taunton union. Some boys are employed at 8, but very few under 10. The usual thing is bird-keeping; after 10 they go with horses. Very seldom have more than perhaps an accident a year from their being put so young to mind big horses, and that is generally from riding on the shafts. It is a heavy soil, and three horses are required to plough, so a little boy is required to lead them; but the farmers are trying to get into using reins.

Very few little girls are employed, and they in little beyond apple picking. Do not know what they do; a great many idle. Mr. Pearce is trying to get gloving started, so as to find them occupation and a means of earning a little money. From 10 to 15 they go out to service, to look after children; a good many to service in Taunton.

A good many women work out in this district. It would be better if they did not; they would save a deal of money, as they wear out so many clothes, require more food, and the children get into mischief, and break things while they are out. There is more poverty among them generally than elsewhere; their homes are neglected, and the elder children kept at home to look after the younger. They do not work regularly, but go out to work when required, and in many cases in busy times they are expected to do so; they are generally labourers' wives. Knows one case in Combe Florey where it is made a sine qua non the labourer's wife should work, and they have actually to turn out of their cottage if she does not work. Premiums are given in Bishop's Lydeard for excellence in agricultural labour in its various forms; they are open to four parishes, Bishop's Lydeard, Combe Florey, Ash Priors, and Bayborough. One of these is given for girls who work out in the fields under the age of 20; no one came to claim it this year. There are two premiums given to women; four came to compete. The one who had served longest had served 33 years; the average length of service was 20 years. You never find that young people like working out.

The most ordinary case of bastardy is with in-door servants, *i.e.*, not necessarily girls who work in-doors, but who live in the farm-house, and go out to milk cows, &c. There are scores of illegitimate children in the district; Lydeard St. Lawrence is the worst; this place is bad. At Ash Priors are the most cottages and most crowding. Bad affiliation case from there to-day (*see* above, No. 82), a girl of 15 and a boy of the same age. (1.) Family name Woodbury, and there live in the cottage in only one bed-room, father, mother, and five children, of whom three girls, aged respectively 16, 14, and 6, and two boys aged 10 and 8.

(2.) Newick, Ash Priors.—10 in one house. There may be two bed-rooms, but doubt it; if there are even it is great crowding, father and mother, three boys aged 12, 10, and 8; the rest girls, of whom the eldest is 17.

(3.) Rackley, Bishop's Lydeard.—Two rooms, one bed-room; five in the house, father, mother, a daughter of 15, and two boys aged respectively 16 and 12.

(4.) William Thorne, Chapel Lane, Bishop's Lydeard.—Two rooms; husband, wife, and five children. All boys, so only crowding to be complained of.

(5.) Rogers, Bishop's Lydeard.—A man and his wife, and a boy of 10 years old; also another woman, daughter of the wife, and three illegitimate children.

(6.) Thomas Brown, Halse.—Certainly not more than two bed-rooms, containing a man and his wife and six or seven children, of whom one is a daughter with an illegitimate child; also an old man, the father of Mrs. Brown.

(7.) ——, Common Down, Halse parish.—Upstairs only a room and a cupboard. Cottage contains three old people, a man and two women, besides a man and wife and six children.

At Heathfield and Bagborough too many cottages are bad.

84. — *Pavey*, assistant overseer, Bishop's Lydeard.—Children begin to keep birds in the district at 8 or 9 years of age; they get 3*d.* The next work is driving horses, at which they begin by receiving 4*d.*, and the pay rises from year to year. Bird-keeping goes on in autumn and spring. Women do not like work as well as they used to. Where the farm labourers have cottages on the farm nearly all the women go out, but those who live in the village and go out to farms do not do so, as they get other things to do, such as washing, &c. They get 8*d.* or 9*d.* a day. Some labourers get no more than 8*s.* a week and liquor, some 9*s.* and liquor. Mr. Smith gives 10*s.* and no cider.

The cottages are under various owners; those in Vicarage Lane are held under the alms-house trust. Some of them are let at 1*s.* a week, most at 3*l.* a year. Most of them have two bed-rooms, some only one. One or two of them are crowded. Parkman has six children at home, and his cottage is in bad repair. Most of Sir John Lethbridge's are better; rent 4*l.* to 5*l.* Chapel Place belongs to Mr. Cooksley, who was a carpenter, then relieving officer, who made a little money and bought cottages. His cottages let at 1*s.* a week; they have only one bed-room, but sometimes, where there are families, two cottages are thrown together and let for 1*s.* 6*d.*

85. *Mr. Follett*, occupier, Bishop's Lydeard.—(Mr. Follett was thrashing his corn when I had an interview with him.) Hires the machine from Mr. Hollins over the hill (Quantock), and gives 9*l.* 10*s.* for the job of thrashing out all his corn. For this Mr. Hollins supplies labour, and pays everything. Mr. Hollins gives 1*s.* 4*d.* a day to his men and cider for working at this job, which comes to 8*s.* a week and cider. Some of Mr. Follett's men work too, but they are paid by Mr. Hollins. Mr. Hollins's own sons work, and that is a daughter of his up on the machine feeding it. Mr. Follett holds of the Lethbridge trustees; he is a butcher as well as a farmer. He gives his men 9*s.* 6*d.* a week, and three pints of drink. Does not care about employing women, thinks them of no use except for a little weeding and turnip-cutting. It is a great pity that it is the custom of the country to give all labourers the same wages; one man is often worth twice as much as another, and yet you have to pay him exactly the same. That man there is worth 12*s.* a week to me, and I give him the same as another who is not worth 5*s.* As a rule the men are very lazy; they want watching, or they do not do their work. They have changed very much of late years, being so much more independent than they used to be. It is the effect of the rise in wages.

86. *Adolphus Allen*, schoolmaster, Bishop's Lydeard.—Has been here 13 months. The school is not under Government. Number of children on books 97; 20 infants. Average attendance 60 to 70.

Has known six boys go away at 7 or 8 to work on the farms. Has not heard that they will come back again to school at all. Sometimes they go for a few weeks to pick apples, potatoes, &c., and then come back again. Boys generally go away for good at about 12, but it must be remembered that in a large

village a large proportion are the children of small tradesmen, &c. The oldest boy in the school is aged 13; he is the son of the inspector. The oldest labourer's boy is 11 (George Lock).

The oldest girl is a coachman's child, aged 13; the oldest labourer's daughter is 11. Girls are kept at home a great deal because their mothers go out to work.

87. *George Lock*, aged 11.—Father is a labourer. Have been out in the fields, keeping birds. First went out a year and a half ago. Drive them off the corn by hallooing at them. Go out on Sundays all the same as other days. Hours 6.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Have also kept sheep.

88. *Henry Wescott*, aged 7.—Kept birds for 12 months; hallooed at them. Got 2*s.* for it, and went out all the week, Sundays included. Like it very well. Got into a linhay when it rained. Took dinner with me, bread and meat; had supper when I came home, bread and meat, cider to drink. Like keeping birds better than coming to school. Brothers who work out are older than me.

89. *Mary Jane Harkell*, aged 12.—Father is a mason. Mother works out for Mr. Waller; goes now and then. Goes washing up sometimes. Am kept at home sometimes to take care of little brothers and sisters; got two, one aged 8 and the other 5. The oldest comes to school with me sometimes.

90. *Maria Hayes*, aged 10.—Father is a labourer. Mother goes out washing, and I stay to take care of the children. One of them is 7 years old, the other 4. Find I can take very good care of them. Come to school sometimes, and like it best.

91. *Mary Jane Chitty.*—Father carries letters, mother washes. I have three younger brothers, and stay at home sometimes to take care of them. Like coming to school best.

92. *Thomas Hole*, 17 next May.—First went out to work at 8. Went to regular work at 9, when began to lead horses. Horses used to knock me down sometimes, but never hurt me; trod on my feet now and then. First work was keeping birds, Sundays as well as week days. Hours 5.30 a.m. to 7 p.m. in barley sowing; wheat sowing 6.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., because the days are shorter. None in August. Was paid 4*d.* a day bird-keeping, and the same for ever so long after began regular work. Only had a dinner given me on Christmas Day. When I came home after being out in the rain had to dry myself as I best could at the fire; but often when it rained rigged up a hurdle with thatch to shelter me in the corner of a field. Never went to school at all. Have seven brothers and sisters, of whom two besides self have never been to school.

(N.B.—The above six children all belong to Bishop's Lydeard).

93. Cottages at Bishop's Lydeard belonging to Cecil Smith, Esq.

One row of cottages that looked very neat and nice, rather old, but in good repair, being strongly built of good red sandstone, were bought by Mr. Smith's father. Had two rooms below, two above. In the one into which Mr. Smith took me lived only a man and his wife and one child, who slept in one room, the staircase opening into it; the other bed-room is used as a store-room. He had another row of cottages at the back, built of the same stone, but smaller, only one room above and one below; still what rooms there were were spacious. In one we went into we found a woman and four children, but only two were her own, the other two she was taking care of for a woman who was working out in the fields. The cottage gardens are small, but improving, partly owing to the annual premiums now given. We went up to see a field of capital allotments, let out in quarters of an acre. It belongs to the alms-house charity. Close by is another allotment field belonging to the Sandhill estate (Sir J. Lethbridge's).

94. Return of wages earned by a woman working on Mr. Blackmore's farm at Bishop's Lydeard, from her own account and from Mr. Blackmore's.

Mr. Blackmore's.			*Her own account.*
Week ending:—	*s.*	*d.*	
Friday, Jan. 1, 1869	2	4	2*s.* 4*d.*
„ „ 8, „	2	0	No reckoning on that Friday through illness.
„ „ 15, „	3	8	Never earned so much in any week.
„ „ 22, „	No entry.		
„ „ 29, „	3	8	Never earned so much in any week.
„ Feb. 5, „	1	8	1*s.* 8*d*
„ „ 12, „	2	2	1*s.* 2*d.*
„ „ 19, „ and milk making up	3	1 6	3*s.* 1*d.*

95. *Mr. Hancock*, Halse, farms 480 acres under Dr. Phillips, of this three-fourths are arable.—Employs eight or nine boys all the year round; of these the youngest is 11, the rest very much the same age; they are employed at all times of the year. In July and August Mr. Hancock sends out a man into the village to get all the children, both boys and girls, he can find to come and single turnips; some come at 9 years old; they work in a row, and there is a man to look after them, who tells the younger ones what to do, if they fall behind the others; it is light work, and there is no unkindness used. Boys go younger to bird-keeping, but that is as often, if not more often, done by little girls, the boys generally getting regular work, such as keeping sheep or leading horses very soon. The girls will do such work till they go out to service at about 13 or 14. Bird-keeping is quite necessary, birds soon get accustomed to twine; but it is a good plan to shoot a rook and break him up, and scatter a wing here and a leg there. It is also a good plan, as Mr. Hancock does sometimes, to send a man with a gun if only with powder. But this is too great an expense, enough men cannot be spared. Mr. H. has three little girls in regular work on the farm, the youngest 10, the next 11, and the eldest 13 years of age; the last is just going away to service. Besides these in regular employ, other girls single turnips mixed with the boys. Employs no elder girls; one of the women who works is unmarried, but she is an old stager, about 50 years of age. If it is wet while they are bird-keeping, they have a hurdle and make a sort of hut, and sometimes light a fire; they sing a sort of rhyme to frighten the birds;—

"Get away, Jack carrion crow,
"Why do you use your master so?"

Has 7 women in regular employment, labourers' wives. They receive 8*d.* and a pint of cider a day. On an average in winter they will work four days a week, but in summer nearly every day. However, some are very irregular, and often do not come for some time, and then they begin at their discretion to come again. The more regular will often want a day for washing. Wet weather need not stop them; if it is raining there is always work to be done in-doors among the roots, &c. It is a very healthy employment. One woman who came from a neighbouring parish to work, suffered from fits, and has been very much better since working in the fields, which is very wholesome work for men, women, and children too. Mr. Hancock would not like to see any restriction placed on such labour.

Men's wages 1*s.* 8*d.* a day = 10*s.* a week. Does not give cider as wages, but deducts it from the wages, calculating it as 1*s.* a week, that is 2*d.* for three pints, which is the daily allowance for a man; this makes the wages 9*s.* and cider. Many of his men are teetotallers. Cottage is given to labourers at a low rate, 1*s.* a week. Shepherd and carter have rather more, and have not to find a cottage. The people are well-off, but many able-bodied youths go away to a

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blacksmith or carpenter or to the towns, and if it had not been for machinery coming in, the farmers would have been in difficulties from want of sufficient labour. Cider is a wholesome beverage—there is little gravel or stone as in beer counties.

The hours of labour are eight to nine hours daily; from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and in winter 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; the meals generally occupy two hours, but one hour and a half is the time allowed.

96. *Rev. E. Spurway*, rector of Heathfield (population 126; acreage, 692 A. 3 R. 11 P; agriculture mixed, 400 acres arable, the rest pasture, meadow, orchard, cottages, and gardens).—"Boys are employed "at the age of 10 years and upwards all the "year; it is not desirable to limit the age at which "they should commence work; they seldom do any-"thing previous to 10, and then I consider that "unless they become acclimatized and hardened to "cold and wet at that age, they cannot rough it when "older. Girls under 13 are employed only at certain "seasons of the year, viz., bird-keeping (local term), "picking apples (cider district), singling turnips, and "mangolds and stones; girls above this age go out "generally to service. There is only one above "this age who works all the year round in the parish. "A few women are employed all the year round, hav-"ing the option of staying at home to mend clothes, "wash, &c.; they bind and stack corn, pick turnips "for sheep in winter, assist when corn is thrashed, "and other general work. But they are less inclined "to work in the fields now than formerly. I do not "consider it desirable for girls above 13 to work in "the fields; there are times and circumstances when "the wives of labourers can work in the fields with-"out detriment to the well-being of their families, "and when they can add to family weekly earnings "materially. They very often work half-days, being "obliged to stay at home to attend to their own "domestic matters."

"There is a daily school in this parish, to which the parents are only too glad to send their children, as much as a matter of economy to keep them out of the dirt, as for the benefit of education.

"Some of the cottages are bad and in a decayed state, rather too well ventilated; others, again, are good, some are very commodious; most have gardens attached to them, which vary in size; the farmers allow them a piece of potato ground at a moderate rent."

97. *Rev. J. King Eagles*, vicar of Hillfarrance (population 582; acreage 917; cultivation mixed).—Boys begin to work at 8 or 10 years of age; there are scarcely any girls employed in agriculture because of the gloving trade, and such women as are employed are not employed wholly. Their occupations are, in spring, occasionally in weeding wheat; in summer, in weeding wheat and spring roots; in autumn, in harvesting; in winter, in pulling roots.

No boys should be employed under 10 years, nor go to work more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles; no restriction necessary on the employment of women in this district (from an experience of 30 years). "The "children at present go to school until they are put out "to work, which is frequently earlier than they ought "to be put to labour; but I do not think either of "the modes above specified (Factory or Printworks "Act) applicable to this district.

"The parish is so peculiarly situate by reason of hamlets in the middle of parishes miles off, that if it were not for schools in other parishes school attendance would be much affected (by distance). It is not at all affected by the money payment, which is only 1*d*. In the parish school there are about 12 boys between the ages of 5 and 13, and about 18 girls from 5 to 15. The circumstances of this parish are also peculiar. There are no land-holders of any extent. The parish is in many hands in small portions, farmed by men living in other parishes to some extent, and burthened with poor. The parish school has been maintained for many years by a lady at her sole expense, and as she has recently died, the school will be closed at Midsummer, and I fear it will be impossible to set one up, as the farmers as a body are not at all favourable to education. There is no night school; there is a Sunday school open every Sunday from 2 to 4, at which some of the labourers' boys attend who do not go to the weekly school.

"The cottages as a general rule are very bad, and in this respect prejudicial alike to morality and health; they generally contain one sitting-room, and two sometimes three bed-rooms. The parish lies low, and the drainage and ventilation is not good. There is no lack of good water, and most of them have small gardens. Many belong to private persons of the labouring class, and those just above them; a few belong to the landowners; the rents are about 4*l*. per annum."

98. *Rev. Eccles J. Carter*, vicar of Kingston (population 892; acreage 3,378; cultivation chiefly pastoral, intermixed with arable).—A large parish, and somewhat peculiar; it supports a large yeoman class, with holdings of 60 to 100 acres, mostly first-rate land. Most of them used to keep race horses and hunters, and drank and mortgaged their property. It is strange they lasted so long. There are two considerable properties. The land is very good, and what is not in pasture and used for grazing, generally yields three crops in two years. If put up to auction it would let very high, but that is not done, and anyone is scouted who gives 50*s*. an acre for it. The land on Quantock slope is also good, but not to be taken liberties with. The labourers employed are too few. "Boys are employed from 10 "years old (at all times of the year); the age seems "governed by a regulation of the Board of Guardians "which only allows a man in sickness for each child "under 10 years at the rate of 1*s*. 3*d*. each." Would not let a boy work under 12 years of age.

Nearly all the women work in the fields, there is nothing else for them to do; and a man's wages are often as low as 8*s*. Many farmers in letting a cottage to a labourer stipulate that his wife is to work too. Mentioned a case of a farmer coming to him, and complaining that a woman was so lazy she would not work; another of a farmer threatening to turn out a family because the wife, who was in the family way, would not work. Had himself read before the agricultural society a paper in which was a paragraph on women working. "The women themselves think it necessary "to work to make up a living. Would like to pro-"hibit it at all seasons except harvest, hay or corn, "and where females are working by themselves, such "as picking apples or potatoes. Dislikes it for two "reasons; it induces a bad tone of morality from the "women working so much with the men; they be-"come loud and use bad language; and also it keeps "the children from school, the elder being left at "home to take care of the younger. There are some "girls work, none under 16, and the number is "diminishing; apple-picking, potato-digging, and "assisting the women on the farms; they go out more "to service. Hardly a boy at school after 10. Wages "8*s*. or 9*s*. from which they have to provide a cot-"tage; rent generally 1*s*. 6*d*. or 2*s*., sometimes as "low as 1*s*., but these are mere two-roomed hovels. "If more than one bed-room, they generally only "use the second as a store-room or let it to a lodger. "Generally a good garden, and also they can hire one-"third of an acre potato-ground, rent about 10*s*. per "annum. Sorry to say will often grow a little "mangold or turnips, which enables them to pilfer "and say it was their own. Farmers know they "pilfer, and wink at it, but better than raising wages. "Used to do so much more when wages 6*s*. and 7*s*. "Once asked a man how he got on without it now. "'Ah sir, there were not the police about then there "'are now.' Cider truck goes on, men five pints "a day, women two pints, even boy on a horse, "ploughing, one pint. Belives it is very bad for "them, and only the very worst cider is given to

"them; 1*s.* a week. Men lose their strength very "early; does not believe six sound elderly men in "the parish; has seen a woman lift a weight a man "could not. Have corn, but very inferior, at 6*s.* a "bushel all the year round; very bad quality, and "often not worth the money; the shepherd had to "pay 7*s.* at one farm because he had higher wages! "Low tone of morality in the place; many drunkards; "not above two or three notorious bad characters in "the village, and they work in the fields. Women "seem to have a strange idea that as soon as they are "engaged to be married they may begin; marriage "only a seal. Many come to be married with "child, but has rather stopped it by refusing to "church such; knows it is illegal, but on one "occasion was threatened: it was a notorious bad "case; child born a few days after marriage, and "girl living in her father's home. Found the senti-"ment of the parish with him. Used to use this "rhyme; Monkton for rich, Cheddon for poor, King-"ston for thieves, Lediard for ———."

"If you ask a farmer, he will always say, 'Labourers "make as much as 12*s.* a week.' This they do by "piecework; but after all, except harvesting, haying, "draining, hedging and ditching, there is little piece-"work to be done. Much of the immoral tone is to "be attributed to overcrowding in the cottages.

"Ample means" of education "are provided, but "not sufficiently taken advantage of; the women work-"ing in the fields is the most fruitful cause of the evil."

99. *Rev. F. C. Kinglake*, curate of Monkton (population just over 1,200; cultivation mixed).—"Boys are employed from the age of 10 years. There are exceptions, but this age may be taken as the rule. They are employed during the whole year; but it is not an unusual thing for a boy of from 10 to 12 or 13 to go to work at a busy time, and to attend school at a slack time of the year. I think it well worthy of consideration whether the maximum age at which boys should work on the land should be fixed. Personally I should regard the age of 11 as a suitable limit.

"In this parish there are usually a few girls engaged in agricultural labour. When so employed they are very seldom under 15 years, and their work would consist of such things as weeding, hoeing turnips, picking up stones, apples, &c., and they would take their share of work at haymaking and harvest. Girls usually go into service; those who work out are generally those who have been in service and are out of employ. As a rule they are the worst characters, but not through going out to work. It is working out that is the resource for those who have nothing else to do. Would not say that above 20 work in this large parish; would be glad to see a restriction placed on girls working in the fields before the age of 15, and would not have any work except those above that age, who have had their chance of going out to service. The wives of agricultural labourers are the principal married women who work.

"We have a national school conducted by a master, mistress, and pupil-teacher; the school is well attended by children up to the age of 13. The parents generally are alive to the advantage of giving their children the opportunity of gaining the rudiments of education. We have also besides Sunday schools two dames' schools; had a night school, but gave it up. Found children did not attend well, and the class of boys wanted did not come, *i.e.* not the elder ones. Schoolmaster keeps it on now.

"Many of the cottages are old, but they are frequently more roomy than the newer ones. Overcrowding does occasionally occur, but cannot be regarded as a habit. Most cottages have gardens, not all. There is no allotment system, but the labourers rent potato ground from their employers."

100. *Rev. R. Watson Moor*, Stoke St. Gregory (population 1,600).—Boys are employed at all times of the year from 8 years upwards. There is a good deal of withy-peeling, at which a child of 5 years can earn 1*s.* a week. All the women and children do this, and it keeps the latter much from school. They should be kept at school till 12 years of age. Girls are employed a good deal in gloving; also in out-door work, but not as much as boys.

Women are "generally employed in out-door labour, "when required." As their labour is optional, no restriction is needed. Those who do not work out are not a better class than those who do.

Wages about 9*s.*, and cider.

There are national and Sunday schools under Government; there are 130 children in the day school, but attendance is irregular. The people will not take advantage of them as they ought to do, partly on account of poverty, and the apathy of parents; also distance from schools, and bad roads (which are under water part of the year). Farmers have a good deal to do with children not going to school, they complain of their being better educated than their own, they will not subscribe at all, and there is no squire. There is a night school.

Most of the property belongs to the Dean and Chapter of Wells, whose cottages are very bad. Ventilation is good, because the wind blows through the chinks in the walls of many of them. State of morality low; formerly a great part of the children were illegitimate, it is a little better now. A good deal of overcrowding. They have not gardens, as a general rule; no allotments; the farmers and proprietors will not give land for the purpose.

II.—*The Blackdown Hills.*

101. *Hon. and Rev. Fitzhardinge B. Portman*, rector of Staple Fitzpaine cum Bickenhall (population 491; acreage about 3,000).—Has five parishes, Staple Fitzpaine, Bickenhall, Thurlbeer, Orchard Portman, Stoke St. Mary; but all together have not a population of 1,000, or a revenue of 1,000*l.* a year to the rector. All belong to Lord Portman, and are close parishes. Cultivation mixed; a good deal of wild common. Most of the boys leave school at about 10 to guide the plough; some few stay till 13 or 14. Girls stay longer than boys, but are generally taken away at 12 to sew gloves; they go out about 15 or 16 to domestic service, after a few years sewing gloves. The boys' employments, before they go to regular work, are mazing, *i.e.* keeping pigs, in the autumn, and keeping birds for two or three weeks in the spring (a few, perhaps one on each farm). They are often kept longer at work than women or men. Women begin at 8 a.m., and finish with the men, who work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. They are never ill-treated; if a farmer thrashes a boy, the parents have him up before a magistrate directly, or take the boy out of his employment. No out-door labour affects the health of the young; gloving does, if it goes on long; it is not a healthy employment, owing to the stooping posture they are obliged to assume.

Would think it a great advantage if boys could be kept at school till 12, but thinks it is impossible. Would certainly not interfere with women's work; they are employed with advantage to the farmers and themselves. In Bickenhall are one or two widows, who would starve if they had no field-work.

It is impossible to apply the Factory Acts to agricultural labour; the Printworks Act would do no good; six months' schooling is not long enough. Practically the boys of 12 and under come most of the winter, Michaelmas to Christmas or Lady-day, and work the rest of the year. Distance and expense do not affect the school attendance. A mile and a half is the greatest distance the children have to come. 1*d.* the weekly payment. There is a great and increasing desire to send the children on the part of the parents; nine out of 10 of whom fully appreciate it. There are scarcely any children neither at school nor work.

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APPROXIMATE NUMBER of children of the labouring class at school in the parish of Staple Fitzpaine near Bickenhall.

	Boys.			Girls.			Total Boys and Girls.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
Summer -	19	7	26	12	8	20	46
Winter -	16	11	27	11	8	19	46

"The average attendance we have no means of giving in detail, but it is generally good."

Mr. Portman is perplexed at wages not rising with the disappearance of the labourers, but thinks they must soon, the introduction of machinery having prevented a rise so far. The departure of labourers exercises a bad effect on the schools; the bigger boys do work that used to be done by men, and small boys do the old work of big boys. There is a great migration going on; the people go like a flock of sheep; one member of a family finds himself thriving elsewhere and writes home to say so, and the rest follow. There are two vacant cottages in the village now, and in Bickenhall six. Lord Portman lets his cottages cheaper to a labourer than to any outsider. The cottages are good, there is no crowding. But the people do not appreciate the value of much room. If you give three rooms, they will live in one or two, and let the rest to lodgers. There is always an odd lodger to be found.

102. *Rev. R. A. St. Leger*, incumbent of Otterford (population 476; acreage 2,343).—Boys go to work as soon as they can go with the plough, about 10 years of age; no girls work; women only plant potatoes and make hay, seldom any other work. There are Church day and Sunday schools, also dissenting ditto, "both are taken advantage of; if any "neglect to take advantage of them, the fault lies "with the parents."

Cottages sufficient, but in a very bad state, dirty, and dilapidated, several are a long distance from water, and that not over pure, many without any at all. Not overcrowded, "but the moral condition of "the inhabitants of these cottages might be improved. "Most have gardens, and there are allotments, but "not convenient in situation."

103. *Rev. A. C. Ainslie*, vicar of Corfe.—The people are very badly off in the Blackdown hills, where there are many squatters settled on a piece of ground, which they till with the help of their wives and families. A good many too are employed in burning lime, which only affords a very precarious support. One man has built five or six cottages, entirely by collecting the stones, which he has collected in ploughing, and putting them aside till enough are accumulated. The chief enemies to schools are the potato setting, hay and corn harvest, and potato picking; but below Taunton, at the parish of Stoke St. Gregory (*see* above, No. 100), which is the most distant parish he inspects as diocesan school inspector, there is another enemy in the spring, the withy-peeling, when the people of the neighbouring village, men, women, and children, all turn out and make a sort of junket of it, taking their dinners with them. Does not lead to immorality, as they go in families.

104. Walk over the Blackdown Hills with Rev. A. C. Ainslie.—Extract from diary, Feb. 1, 1869.

Drove over to Corfe, and spent the afternoon with Rev. Mr. Anislie, vicar of Corfe, walking over Pickeridge and Stapely hills. Corfe a small parish, 300 people, lying under the hill; there is little working of women in fields, the cottages are of a rather superior description; he showed me two very bad, one room above and another below, let for 3*l.* In the one we went into only two women lived, but it was very close, ill-ventilated, and the roof looked falling in. In this cottage had been the only cases of small-pox and diphtheria he recollected in the village. House rent in Corfe, generally rather high; wages 9*s.*

Walked up on to the hills, the sides of which are much covered with lime-kilns, and the lime-burners are a very poor class. The people were formerly squatters, but most of the hill is enclosed now. We visited *John Venn*, a hawker, with a wife and large family, and a fair cottage, two rooms above and two below, cob and slate, built right into the road, inside the hedge. Two of his children were gloving; the Yeovil people bring the gloves round, and this is the furthest parish where it is done, they were quite young, the youngest about 10. Mr. Ainslie approves of it, but is sorry it takes them from school. *Venn* told us that "when the com "missioners came to inclose the Black Down, bits "were allotted first to the lords of the manor, thus all "Pickeridge Hill, which he remembers common, is now "inclosed by a lawyer, Mr. Beadon; distant people, "even as far as Taunton Deane, who had rights, were "allowed a bit of land, but the rights of the squatters "were not respected, and they had to buy the land "on which they had been settled for years, at about "10*l.* an acre, mere uninclosed common. It was "advertised that in Taunton sessions would be held "and claims admitted, but either the poor people never "saw the announcement, or did not understand the "importance of it; further up on the hills, where there "were no manorial rights, bits were allotted to the "squatters." The squatters, who seem a different race from the people about, dark hair and eyes, probably the old Damnonians, and might be considered as a fit study for ethnographers, inclosed generally a small piece of garden from the moor, and hired the neighbouring woods, where they cut down the underwood as soon as it was 14 years' growth. Their cottages were generally miserable like the Irish, but most of those are gone with the appropriation of the land, it being a duty of the landlord to keep them in repair. Mr. Ainslie explained to me that the landlords had always asserted their claims, so that when the common was inclosed, these squatters had really no rights. They are careless generally about religion and morality. Mr. Ainslie has an idea, which he hopes soon to carry out, of getting a small room on the hill and having service there once on a Sunday, and so getting on gradually with the people. There is a Baptist chapel on the hill, and if he complains about their not coming down to Corfe on Sunday, they say they go to service at this chapel, and of course he can say no more, but he fears many go nowhere. There is an outlying hamlet of Pitminster parish called Feltham, outlying far in the hills, which he fears sets a bad example. Pitminster is a long and straggling parish. There is one of the squatters, who married a woman within the degrees of consanguinity, he could only do so by swearing to a lot of statements of doubtful truth. She bore him a lot of children before marriage, and came to church the first Sunday after he had married her in white ribbons, like an ordinary village bride. A labourer in a cottage belonging to this same man lives with another woman, having a wife in Taunton all the time. We visited the cottage of Mrs. Broad, two rooms above and two below, comfortable enough. Most of these cottages belong to Wm. Hake, who has built six altogether, and lets them at 4*l.* a year, most of them to lime-burners. We saw one house of his just finished, much superior to the rest, and built of stone and slate, with a window on each side of the door, and three above; it was built on to the end of a row of much inferior cottages.

105. *Mrs. Broad.*—Husband is a lime-burner, generally two lime-burners become partners and take a quarry, and have a horse between them, obliged to have a horse to carry the lime. They are paid by

the quantity of lime delivered in the sack, a certain amount for the master they work for, and some left for the workmen. The work is very irregular, sometimes there is a great call, and sometimes it is not wanted at all. Sometimes four weeks without getting any money at all, and consequently get in debt to shop-keepers, and pay when the money comes in. The busiest time is just after harvest, when a quantity of lime is wanted for the fields. You may put the profit at 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week on an average, and no cider; out of this have to pay 4*l.* for a cottage, and have to join someone else in keeping a horse. Would far rather her husband had farmer's work; better wages and more regular. They suffer much from the heat of the kilns in the summer.

106. *James Hoare*, Staple Fitzpaine, aged 13.—Began to work at 7, driving plough for father; father is a farmer, farming 20 acres. Found could not manage the horses well, sometimes knock me down, never hurt me, ran over me sometimes. Has other brothers, and all work out. I went to school before I worked out, and after began working out took five months school, and the rest of the year work, after which left school at 11 years of age. Like school better.

107. *George Wembrige*, Staple Fitzpaine, aged 10.—Began work at 9, driving plough; can manage horses and keep pigs; father is a labourer. Horses never knocked me down. Was taken way from school to mind birds; the farmer wanted a boy, he gave me 2*s.*

108. *Afred James Dinham*, aged 13.—Began to work at 8, driving plough. Horses knocked me down once, but found I could manage them. Pays 3*d.* a day. Came to school again the year after, and was only employed after Lady-day. Up till 11 years of age came to school a few months, and worked a few. Liked coming to school best. Made a boy terrible tired walking about with the horses. Had supper when I came in, taties sometimes, sometimes bread and cheese, no meat except sometimes on Sunday. Had 3*d.* a day, and a pint of cider; have 1½ pints cider now, and 6*d.* a day. Still drive plough.

109. *Rachel Dinham.*—Began gloving at 11, now aged 14; don't much like it; too much sitting over the machine; have had a pain in the back, but never very serious. Would rather go to service. Work from 8.30 to 6.30; never get a holiday; can do a dozen pairs in a week, get 2½*d.* a dozen for them. Sisters gone to service. "Mother do glovey." Mother taught me. Some do it in Bickenhall. The work is sent from Mrs. Stevens at Ilminster, she always pays in money. I walk into Ilminster to her once a week, start at 8, get there at 10; do not stop more than an hour generally. Sometimes wait two or three hours in a room. Mother goes sometimes; the gloves are kid.

110. *Jane Wembridge*, aged 12.—Began gloving at 10, would rather go to service; too much sitting down; felt a pain in the back sometimes, but never very bad. Can do 1½ dozen pairs in a week; mother taught me. Get gloves from Mr. Yarde at Broadway, six miles, walk there to him; sometimes wait two hours. Walk tires me sometimes; always go myself. Me and mother work together. First began at 10 years of age, and did it in the evenings after school, going to bed sometimes at 11 or 12 p.m. Usual hours of work now 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sometimes in busy times work much longer, have worked from 6 a.m. to 12 at night with only an interval for meals. Never get up and run about, and never have a holiday. Got 11 brothers and sisters, seven brothers at home. Dinner generally bread and butter, sometimes potatoes, sometimes tea-kettle broth. Mother and I drink tea, and father tea too; he cannot drink cider. He is a thatcher by trade. Breakfast, bread and butter and tea, supper, bread and butter, or sometimes cheese, and tea. Don't very often get cider, don't like it much.

111. Cottages at Staple Fitzpaine.

Extract from diary, February 2, 1869.—Mr. Portman took me to see one of Lord Portman's model cottages; very neat, built of stone and slate, two rooms below with a vestibule and three bed-rooms above. It was inhabited by the policeman, who pays for it 4*l.* 16*s.*, which even is rather under its value; a labourer only pays 3*l.* for one as good. Saw also one of the old cottages, cob and thatch, neat and warm, with a large room below, and two above; the kitchen had one of the old high chimney-corner fireplaces, which the people in this country are so fond of. Is half of an old farm-house divided into two. It is let with the farm, and the tenant holds of the farmer; he is by trade a carter, with wages 11*s.* a week and a cottage. The usual wages about here are 9*s.* and a cottage, some old people get 8*s.*

Chard Union.

112. Meeting of the Board of Guardians at Chard, March 29, 1869. W. F. Cuff, Esq., Merriott, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, in the chair.

Minutes of the Meeting.

(1.) In this union boys generally begin to work at bird-keeping at 10 years of age; they are little used for plough, except when three horses are driven; about Chard itself they are used for the purpose; but reins are becoming very general now. Some boys go to work as early as 8.

(2.) No girls are employed in field work as a rule, with the exception of a very few bird-keeping; there is a great deal of other employment for them; besides gloving, which is pretty general throughout the union, there is lace made in Chard, and a good deal of mending done in the neighbourhood, which is all done by hand. It is something independent, and they like that better.

(3.) The women who are employed are chiefly labourers' wives; some few of their daughters too, but such employment is almost confined to married women. Merriott, which is a peculiar parish, being chiefly market gardens, is the place where they are most employed; there they go out with their husbands and children to work. They are not so much employed anywhere else; their usual work is in hay and corn harvest, and weeding, spring and summer work. There is little winter work. Singling turnips is mostly done by men.

(4.) The cottages are conveniently placed, so that few labourers have to go a mile; put the average at half a mile. A good many labourers live in the villages, and go out to the farms to work.

(5.) Women work, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; boys, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., the same hours as the men.

(6.) Mr. Bond of Ilminster thought that no boy ought to go to work under 10 years of age; one or two gentlemen present thought that it was desirable to place a limit, but were in a great minority; one said that as a matter of fact, 10 was the practical limit. Mr. Paull thinks that it would not do any harm to any one, if such a limit was fixed; if children go to work early, they are liable to to get ill, and so thrown on the parish; besides which they ought to go to school.

(7.) No necessity to restrict women's labour; at Merriott it is only gardening, and elsewhere all over the union they are engaged in gloving, collar-making, &c.

(8.) There is no parish without a school. Mr. Cuff says many parents complain of poverty, and inability to pay the pence, and so do not send their children. Mr. Paull thinks there is a want of inclination among the parents.

(9.) There was a very general complaint of the badness of the cottages in the district; overcrowding is unfortunately very general; a great wish expressed that Government would do something for them, but no one knew how it could be done. One gentleman who takes his cottages with his farm, says that he pays

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6 per cent. for them to the landlord, which quite pays the landlord, and he is very glad to do so, as though he has to let them at a cheaper rate to the labourer it is quite worth his while. Chillington was singled out as being a very bad parish in this respect, but they are being improved there now; many of the cottages were out on lives, but they are now falling in to the squire. Cottages mostly well enough ventilated from want of repairs. At Ilminster there is a great deal of overcrowding. Mr. Paull stated that the relieving officer had made a careful inspection of the town, and came to the conclusion that 50 new cottages were wanted. Fortunately there is an increasing sense generally of the want of more and better cottages. Lord Bridport is doing wonders in this way at Cricket and Winsham; formerly cottages used to be pulled down, but there have been some new built lately; some people who work in Cricket, come from Winsham, but that is no great distance. The general rule in the district is only one or two bed-rooms to each cottage; those who have three bed-rooms very often abuse their advantage by taking in lodgers, or making the third into a store-room Mr. Paull mentioned that he has some two-roomed cottages at Ilminster, but puts into them a couple or single person; he has one of two bed-rooms, in which live a father, mother, and nine children, of whom the eldest are two boys of 18 and 19. Young men do not go away much from the district, but the population is not increasing.

(10.) With respect to gardens, the general rule seems to be bad cottages and good gardens. A cottage without a garden is an exception, and there is always potato ground to be hired.

General wages seem to be 9*s.* and cider. Mr. Paull gives 10*s.* a week and no cider. He calculates cider at 1*s.* and his men accepted the extra 1*s.* in lieu of cider. He sells cider to them himself, at the rate of nine gallons for 4*s.*=72 pints for a month=18 pints a week=3 pints a day, which is quite enough. But opinion seemed to be divided as to whether the cider consumed weekly by a labourer should be valued at 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* Mr. Bond of Ilminster, said that if you offer 1*s.* 6*d.* a week instead of cider, a labourer will always take it. Mr. Fowler of Lopen parish gives his best men 9*s.* a week and cider, the others 8*s.* and cider.

113. *Mr. Bond*, Ilminster, occupier.—Holds land under Mr. Lee Lee. He hardly employs women at all, the fact being they are not to be got, as they are principally busy, button-holing, &c. He takes cottages with his farm; the fact is the labourers prefer holding of farmers, as they get cottages cheaper, in such cases 1*s.* being the usual charge. If they have to live in the village they probably have to pay something more. A farmer, of course, likes having cottages on his farm, and will generally make inquiries when taking it, considering that it adds very materially to the value. Feels very strongly about cottages, and thinks that Government ought to do something to better them.

114. *Mr. Hull*, occupier, Chillington.—The women in the village mostly glove; has one or two who come out to work on his farm, but they come irregularly, and not in cold or wet weather; they come out in the haymaking and harvest, also to weed corn, and to do jobs about the farm. His farm is principally pasture, and he lets his dairy to a dairyman, a very common custom in this district, he providing and feeding the cows, the dairyman milking and making cheese. His wages are 9*s.* a week and cider; he has two cottages on his farm, which he lets at 1*s.* a week. The rest of his labourers have to hire cottages in the village, and generally pay for them 1*s.* 3*d.* a week; cottages are very bad, but improving.

115. Cottages at Chillington.

Mr. Hull kindly accompanied me to some of the cottages in this village. They mostly belong to Squire Notley, and have been out on lives, but are falling in now. Many of them are in very bad repair, but such as the lease of falls in are being put in order. The first we went to belonged to a cobbler, who had brought up in it a family of 13 children. There was only one room above and one below; the cottage was built of cob and thatch, a high chimney-corner, the window very small, and the house consequently stuffy, and ill-ventilated; the floor was rough stone, and the staircase went up in one corner of the room. Hard by was a cottage of a similar description, which had lately tumbled down from want of repair. Further on was a cottage that had been lately repaired; the cob walls had been raised with stone, and roofed with slate instead of thatch, and the upstair rooms, which must have been very low, raised to a moderate height. One of the worst cottages was one placed on the slope of the hill, a little off the road. It is held of Mrs. Wetherall, of Chard, at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. The downstair room is sufficiently large, but the flooring is very bad, all the windows broken, and stuffed up with paper. A husband, wife, and four children live there. There are two rooms above. The woman complained it was no use to get the windows mended, the boys break them again. Mr. Hull thought her own boys had as much to do with it as any one else. On the top of the hill was a pair of cottages, held under Mr. Notley, and lately put in repair; the old people, who inhabited the one we went into, had held it till lately under an acknowledgment of 1*s.* a year, and the Squire had put it in repair for them on condition of their paying a rent of 2*l.* a year, and it falling in to him at their demise.

116. *George Newis*, Shepton Beauchamp, aged 19.—First went to keep sheep at 6 years of age, bird-keeping soon after; hours 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drove plough at 8 years. Began at 1*s.* a week; the horse trod on my foot once, once he knocked me down and the wheel went over me, but it did not break my leg. In bird-keeping used to halloo at the rooks; got under the hedge when it rained; master did not look very sharp after me. Never went to school, except on Sunday. Come to night-school pretty regular.

117. *Thomas Best*, age 15, Shepton Beauchamp.—First began at 7 driving plough; had regular work all the year; kept sheep and birds, like keeping sheep best, not so much trouble. First went to school at 4, when left could read to a certain exrent, and do a little writing, had not begun arithmetic. Kept birds on Sunday as well as week-days. After left school to drive plough never came back, but come to Sunday and night school.

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118. *Rev. J. Higgin Evans*, vicar of Merriott (population 1,412; acreage 1,694; cultivation chiefly arable, but mixed, much of the ground being cultivated as market gardens).—Merriott is a very peculiar parish; there are three employments in it, factory, gloving, and farm-work; there are only two large farms in place. Mr. Cuff's one, he employs a good many women and girls on his farm. As a rule would say that these women bear a higher character than glovers or factory hands. Factory hands worst. Get together in the dark, coming and going to and fro to work. Would like to see girls not allowed to work out till 11 or 12 years of age; no necessity for restrictions on women. The great feature is the market gardens, all small holdings; many people borrow money to buy an acre or two of this very rich land, and pay it off gradually. At a certain time of the year women and children give up other employments and come pea-picking. Husbands go hawking the vegetables about the country, and the women and children work in the gardens nine days to the week, the whole of the long summer day from morn till eve. The cottages are very bad; hardly sufficient for the population considering that beside the above employment many hands live here who are employed in sail-cloth factories. A great deal of crowding; can mention families of seven or eight living in one bed-room. Morals very bad; generally they go on till the child is coming, and then

the man will generally marry the woman. Much of this arises from the gloving girls leaving their homes at 16 or 17, when able to support themselves, and setting up for themselves. They marry very early, because it becomes necessary. Still there are a great many illegitimates, and three-fourths of the women marry with child. Has suspicions of bastards being at least not taken such good care of as other children. Certainly there are more bastards die than other children. Considers gloving a great evil. But as a rule the girls prefer gloving to going to service on account of the independence. They pay their parents 2*s.* 6*d.* a week as long as they stay at home, and what is over generally goes in finery. Some of them can make more than 6*s.* a week.

A good many boys work in the gardens from 7 years old all the year round. Would like them not to work under 10. Many children are kept from school through the ignorance and poverty of their parents. There are Sunday and week-day schools under Government teachers.

119. *Rev. J. E. Lance*, Buckland St. Mary (pop. 715).—Rather a peculiar parish, consisting chiefly of small freeholds. As many as 50 votes in a population of 700, scattered over a large hilly parish. Many of the holdings so small that the proprietor and his wife and family are sufficient to work it without any labourers. The boys and girls are both taken from school early, the girls for gloving, for which they get 2*s.* 2*d.* a dozen pairs sewn. At first it is good work to do a dozen pair in a week, but a practised hand can make two dozen. It makes them bad wives, for it is a kind of sewing useless for needle-work or repairing clothes. Few women work, and those not continuously, principally hoeing corn in the spring. The state of morals pretty good and improving. Formerly many women used to come to be married in the family-way, but some 12 years ago he wrote a pastoral letter and sent it round everywhere, and had only had a few cases since. As a rule, returns the marriage fee if no child is born within the year. There is little drunkenness. There were a good many squatters, but all have been got rid of by the Inclosure Commissioners, which is a very good thing. They had no right on the moor, which belonged to the manor, and when the manor was inclosed it was divided among the three proprietors. The squatters had acquired no rights, because the lords of the manor had always claimed the land annually. It is a wide parish with many outlying cottages, and the distant people seldom come to church, generally saying they go to some other church which is nearer; but this Mr. Lance doubts. Most cottages fair and improving, few with less than two bed-rooms. Some, however, are wretched hovels, at least two consisting of only one room. These bad ones are freeholds of small size. The gardens are very good. There is a labourers' friendly society, and each cottage has at least a quarter of an acre garden. Rent too is low, generally 50*s.* to 3*l.* per annum. Before the Union Chargeability Act the parish was under a great disadvantage, for it lay between Lord Portman and Major Elton, both proprietors who reduced their cottages to the number positively necessary for the labourers. The wages are generally 9*s.*, but some farmers only give 8*s.* House rent is low. Mr. Lance remembers perfectly well when wages were only 7*s.* Could never make out how people got on. The fact was they could not live on it, they were always in debt. It is a parish from which there is a good deal of emigration; can recollect 200 people going to the American States.

120. *Rev. George Phillipps*, incumbent of Chillington (pop. 313; acreage 881; cultivation mixed).—Boys begin to work at 9 years; do not think they ought to work younger, and very few do so. They work all through the year. "Girls are not generally "employed, nor women, except in the haymaking "seasons." "The young women with us go out to "service, or get employment in glove making. I do "not know that it is desirable to have any restriction "on their employment."

They go out to work "about a mile; occasionally "they have further to go, two of the farmers having "land in adjoining parishes." We nave more cottages than are sufficient for the supply of the labour required, consequently many come to reside in the parish who do not work in the parish. Some of our cottages are very indifferent indeed; two or three of them I consider scarcely fit for people to live in. Some have only one bed-room, in which too many sleep to render the room wholesome. Several of the cottages have gardens, but very small. Many cottages have allotments.

"We have a mixed school kept by a woman, in fact a dame's school. Many of the parents send their children, but they are obliged to take them away as soon as they are able to earn anything."

121. *Rev. J. S. Coles*, Shepton Beauchamp (pop. 658).—Women and children are not much employed in agriculture in this parish. A good deal of gloving done, at which some girls are employed 12 to 14 hours a day. "I think sitting at the gloving for so "long a time is injurious to health." Is in favour of an alternate whole day system.

On the register of the school at Shepton Beauchamp.

—	Under 10.	From 10 to 13.	Total.
Boys - -	50	6	56
Girls - -	40	4	44
Total -	90	10	100

Average attendance about 90, none of whom over 10. There are about 50 males and same number of females growing up with insufficient education. There is an evening school for females kept by Miss Coles, open from Michaelmas to Lady-day for two hours two nights a week. All are above 12 years of age. On the register 40, 26 average attendance. The course includes reading, writing, the Bible, and Catechism, but it is inadequate to supply the deficiencies of the day school, owing (1) to the young people being tired with a long day's work, (2) the difficulty of obtaining teachers.

"I have no doubt that want of proper chamber accommodation in cottages is a fruitful source of immorality, by destroying, or at least lessening, a right sense of decency. Very few cottages in this parish have three bed-rooms, and many only one. Any means which would improve chamber accommodation would be a great blessing. They are as a rule deficient in size. Some gardens, but most of the families have allotment grounds. Very many are owned by labourers, and very many are mortgaged, or in the hands of persons only a little raised above the labourers, and therefore are not kept in repair. A few new cottages are being built. Rent varies from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* 10*s.*"

122. Extract from Diary, March 4, 1869:—

"Drove to Shepton Beauchamp, and saw Rev. Mr. Coles. Curious place, much over-populated, nearly a person to every acre, yet cannot induce them to go even a few miles to work; would rather starve at home. Those who go away have the reputation of being rather stupid, but it is hardly fair on them, for of course it is the worst men who are out of work, who go away to try elsewhere. The others have lots of work and are willing to stay. Sent two boys to Yorkshire, but one could not manage the horses, *i.e.*, the horses did not understand his language, and so both came back. A very good school under a mistress. At Barrington, which is also Mr. Coles' parish, an endowment of 40*l.* and a master. I went to the school at Shepton, and examined Miss Hearne, the mistress, and two farm boys brought up to me. There are two night schools, one for boys, the other

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for girls, which Miss Coles manages, and it is a very good one; also a Sunday school. 130 children, and population not much over 600.

123. Extract from letter from V. S. Coles, Esq., Shepton Beauchamp, and Cuddesdon College, Oxford.

"Our parish affords a striking example of the evils of early work, as you will find a good school receiving government aid, and doing much for the children of the small farmers and shopkeepers, who can afford to keep them longer at it, but not helping the labourers much more than a school of a far lower type might very well do. The wages are low, and the parish very greatly over-populated, but it is hard to see what remedy can be at present applied. Through Canon Girdlestone's kindness I heard last autumn of several excellent places for farm labourers in the North of England, which the better class of men would have been suited to, but of course they are just the few who are in constant employment at home, and therefore not inclined to move; the only men who are ready to go are poor fellows, who from want of regular employment have never had fair chances, either as regards food or opportunities for learning their work. They are taken on by the farmers at odd times or in harvest, but they cannot plough, and are in no way "skilled." They would soon improve under better circumstances, as one sees from the difference in the strength and even intelligence of one of them after he has had a few months of good food, when employed in a gentleman's garden or stable."

124. *Miss Hearne*, schoolmistress, Shepton Beauchamp.—Has not a child in the school now over 10 years of age. Till last Christmas had one of 17, and another of 14, and a few others a little younger; some parents having been induced to keep children on, as there is a charity for the benefit of boys who stay on to apprentice them to some trade. Most boys go away at 10 to work in fields; the girls at pretty much the same age to glove, but some go earlier, and many of those who are in school glove in the evening from 5 till 9. (She asked the first class to hold up their hands, whoever did it, and every one, even a little thing of 8, held up her hand.) A boy at 10 can read tolerably, and write a fair hand (she showed me one or two very good specimens); he can listen to a Bible story, and write it down afterwards, do the first four rules compound, and go up sometimes to fractions. He can write from dictation. The spelling used to be very bad, but she has improved it by taking up a class, and making them shut their books after reading, and spell the words, going up or down when a mistake is made.

It is provoking to have all little ones again after having had a class of big boys. At this time there happen in the village to be a great many boys of 9 or 10.

125. *Annie Garrett*, pupil teacher, Shepton Beauchamp.—At 7, a boy can read words of one syllable, and a few of two syllables; can write capital and small letters, and add and subtract up to 10. They go away at 9 or 10 mostly; can read tolerably perfectly then and write.

Yeovil Union.

126. Meeting of the Board of Guardians at Yeovil, March 3, 1869. From the Yeovil paper.

The weekly meeting held on Wednesday was attended by Mr. John Trask (chairman), Messrs. Wm. Pool (vice-chairman), H. Parsons, W. Woolcott, J. Wills, Brown, G. D. Templeman, W. Hawkins, C. Raymond, Wake, Ewins, A. Hodges, Simeon Hebditch, Wm. Raymond, Darby, J. Hodder, and J. R. Pearse.

Mr. Boyle, one of the commissioners appointed by the Government "to inquire into and report upon "the employment of children, young persons, and "women in agriculture, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with what modifications "the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted "for the regulation of such employment, and especially "with a view to the better education of such "children," waited upon the board for the purpose of obtaining answers to the following questions, which were handed to the guardians in a printed form:—

"1. At what ages, and at what times of the year, are boys employed on your property or farm, and in your parish generally?

2. Are girls so employed? and if so, how many, at what ages, and in what occupation?

3. To what extent are women so employed?

4. To what distances do the children, young persons, and women employed on your farm and in your parish generally go to work?

5. What are their hours of work?

6. Is it desirable to place any restrictions on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and if so, at what age would you place the limit?

7. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, and especially of the young, in agriculture?

8. What means of education are provided in your parish for the children of the agricultural labouring class? Do they take advantage of them? If not, are there any other causes besides early labour to which you attribute their non-attendance?

9. What is the condition of the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood? Are they sufficient for the supply of the labour required? Are they conveniently situated with respect to the farms? Are they overcrowded, and have any evil results to morality come under your notice in consequence? Are they well supplied with water and well ventilated?

10. Have all the cottages in your parish and neighbourhood good gardens, or, in default of gardens, have all the cottages allotments of land conveniently situated for the use of the labourers and their families?"

The questions were answered by the guardians to the effect that very few women are employed in agriculture, and that the ages at which boys are engaged ranged from 9 to 11. Mr. H. Parsons stated that no boys were employed in the union under the age of 9. Boys of that age usually accompanied the carters or were employed in scaring rooks. The chairman informed the Commissioner that great difficulty had been experienced during the past five or six years in obtaining boys. They were obliged to employ men to drive the plough. Mr. C. Raymond explained to the Commissioner that the majority of the girls and women in the union were employed in glove making. Their earnings averaged 4*s.* per week, although one family, in which there were four daughters, regularly received 26*s.* per week. If women were employed in agriculture they worked from 8 in the morning until 6 in the evening. Boys were expected in the stable by 6 o'clock. They did not work on Sundays in frightening the rooks, which were considered by the guardians generally to be "pests" to the farmer. Mr. Brown, Mr. Pool, and the chairman expressed themselves as opposed to any legislation in the matter, and any restriction of the age at which boys should be employed. Upon the subject of education the guardians stated that almost every parish was provided with night and Sunday schools. Montacute, South Petherton, and Martock national schools were highly spoken of, and a great many children were said to be taught therein. Mr. H. Parsons spoke of the night school at Merriott under the personal supervision of Mr. Cuff. The boys paid 2*d.* per week. He (Mr. Parsons) had examined the writing and was astonished at the progress made. The boys had, in many instances, never previously had the advantage of education. In reply to the Commissioner, Mr. Woolcott said that there were some children in Montacute who did not attend school. This neglect he attributed to the parents. Mr. S. Hebditch confirmed the opinion expressed by Mr. Woolcott, and added

that poverty had a great deal to do with the parents' neglect. Some of the people in this parish were particularly poor, and could not afford even the 2*d.* a week for education. The Commissioner inquired if South Petherton was a poor parish. Mr. Pool replied that South Petherton was supposed to be the most fertile parish in the county of Somerset, which was considered to be the most fertile in England. Mr. C. Raymond asked if such were the case how was it that there were such a number of paupers in the parish. The chairman said that many years ago a good trade was carried on in South Petherton. That had been discontinued, and consequently there was a scarcity of work. It would take some years for the parish to work down to its proper level. The cottages in South Petherton as a rule were said to be very bad, some having only one bed-room. Mr. H. Parsons said that the cottages in every parish in the union had been greatly improved during the last seven or eight years. Mr. S. Hebditch referred to the cottages erected by Mr. Blake at South Petherton. Those held by small freeholders were in a disgraceful condition. The average rate of wages was said to be 9*s.* per week, in addition to cider. Men on piece-work earned from 12*s.* to 15*s.* per week, with cider. Mr. H. Parsons said that 7*s.* was the average in West Somerset 20 years ago, but wages had increased since then. The guardians concurred in the opinion that no legislation was necessary in this district, and the Commissioner, having thanked the guardians for their courtesy, withdrew.

127. Additional notes of the above meeting, March 3, 1869.

(1.) Boys are not trusted alone with horses, they always go with the carter; it is the improvement in trade that finds other occupations for them; they are employed in factories, not in sewing, but work is found for boys. Difficult to get them as young as 9 now; only two or three in a parish employed at that age. Mr. Pool of Martock employs an old man with a gun; cannot depend upon boys, they get away to play together.

(2, 3.) All the girls are employed in weaving, collar-making, and glove-making. All work at home, and do not begin much before 9. They begin being initiated when very young, perhaps to make a pair or two now and then, and begin regularly at 12 or 13; it is said that the earlier they begin the better. Gloving covers a very large range; some are found as far as Exeter in one direction and Shaftesbury in the other; the centres are Yeovil, Stoke, and Milborne Port. The old system of making them come to Yeovil with their work has gone out; it used to be a great hardship. Mr. Cuthbert Raymond, the owner of a large factory at Yeovil, says that he goes to Langport, and takes a room in the hotel himself, where he receives and pays the glovers, and gives out fresh gloves every Monday himself; linendrapers drive a brisk trade among the glovers, and it is a very bad system; but it has nothing to do with the gloving; they sell their wares to girls, who get in debt to them, and once in debt are always kept so. Mr. Raymond knows a case of four gloving girls taking 26*s.* home to their parents in one week to add to the family wages; of course an exceptional case in a family where there happened to be four grown-up girls. A woman doing nothing but gloving would make 6*s.* a week, but of course much of their time is taken up in domestic duties. This led to a discussion, the farmers maintaining that it is a most unusual thing for a woman to make as much, and at last an average was struck, saying that the average earnings might be 4*s.* a week, but several of the farmers said that to earn even that was very unusual. All women who can do it, are employed in the gloving; it has taken them away from the bean-planting, which used to be a great employment for them, as many as 10 having been at work at a time for one farmer. It is done by the drill now; dibbling is done sometimes by children; in Martock old men are employed to plant beans with a stick. Almost the only work done by women now is in the allotments and potato ground.

(4.) There is a growing disposition to make it more convenient for labourers as to their dwellings. Most live in the parish they work in; this is an improvement, as in close parishes formerly cottages were much pulled down, to send the people to live in the towns.

(5.) Such women as work, work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The boy who drives plough comes at 6. The boy who keeps birds in summer ought to come earlier, but does not.

(6.) No restriction need be placed on boys' labour. Some are better at 9 than others at 11; some parents will come and ask a farmer to take one of their boys on a job. In the union generally all boys go to school, to Sunday or evening school, if at work during the day; in some parishes, however, there are a lot of boys who do not come to school or work either; but get loitering about and into mischief. In many cases it is the parents' fault.

(9.) Many bad cottages in nearly every parish, but they are improving as a rule. Mr. Digby has done a good deal lately towards improving cottages. Landowners must make up their minds to a pretty considerable sacrifice in building cottages. In Hardington some cottages are very bad, and crowded with large families. South Petherton, East Coker, and Hardington seemed reckoned the poorest parishes.

(10.) The allotment system is pretty general, if a man has not a garden he can always have a bit of potato ground from a farmer. Lord Portman tries to give a quarter of an acre. General wages 9*s.* and cider; have risen 2*s.* within the last seven years.

128. *Henry Parsons, Esq.*, agent to Lord Portman, Haselbury, Crewkerne.—Farms altogether 1,700 acres of land, of which 600 in Haselbury, and 400 in adjacent parish. Thinks bird-keeping a necessity, but does not think that boys need be taken before 10, and that farmers might give them up till then. Often has to employ a boy because parents come and ask to give him a job, but such a boy is no real good to him; has two at present employed under 10. Twine is of no real use, all very well for a small farm, no good for a large holding. A boy necessary here in ploughing to lead the horse for a heavy soil, and three horses required; ploughs himself by machinery.

Lord Portman has put up about 100 cottages in different parishes, while he (Mr. Parsons) has been steward. Generally very plain, to avoid breaking the roof, and so weakening the cottage; rent 1*s.* 3*d.*; that of the others 1*s.*, to make a slight distinction between the new improved cottages and the old. In neighbouring parishes, like East Chinnock, always find a great demand when one falls in, as let cheaper than those near belonging to other proprietors. Planted in rows of four or five generally, which is a saving in expense.

Very much prefers giving piece-work, and it draws distinction between good and bad labourers. It is very bad to have to give the same to a man who is worth double what another is worth, and can escape that by piece-work. The men like it better too.

129. *Wm. Peren*, occupier, South Petherton.—Gives 10*s.* a week wages and cider, but puts that at 1*s.* more than usual wages in the neighbourhood. Gives his carters and shepherd cottages, not the labourers. They mostly live on the farm, but some in Petherton, a mile distant. Women all do gloving, and can often make as much as the men make by their out-door work.

Only employs one woman, and she not regularly. Boys go to school very young, and come to work at 8 or 9, but have got a good deal of instruction before they come. Employs four boys himself, of whom the youngest is 10. Bird-keeping no real use; much better to send a man with a gun round all the fields than send a boy into each. Not cost more, and rooks do not like powder, and a boy gets a lot of friends to

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come with him and play, and often does as much harm as the rooks.

Early marriages are a great source of poverty, they marry without a home, and quite forget when they have got a house that they have to furnish it. Borrow money, and seldom get out of debt.

Gloving often makes men less anxious to get work, on account of the money made by their wives and daughters.

130. *W. Woolcott*, occupier, Montacute.—Gives his labourers 9*s.* and cider, carter 1*s.* more; when the labourer prefers it he gives him 1*s.* 6*d.* instead of cider, but he prefers the cider as a rule. Gives a good deal of piece-work, and much prefers giving it; taking piece-work and all together he would put the average wages throughout the year at 11*s.* besides cider. 9*s.* they make in the short days. Education is generally very well taken care of in the parish; there is a good school, to which many children come from other parishes. There are a few children who have never been to school at all, but that is their parents' fault.

131. *Wm. Pool*, vice-chairman, and occupier, South Petherton.—Poverty forbids many parents to send their children to school. It is a very poor parish, and strange it should be so, as it is the most fertile parish in the county. The fact is, there was a good deal of trade, which has gone down now, and the population is large, 2,500 people, and there is not much employment. Wages not low, 9*s.* and cider. The school has 130 children on the books. The number of cottages is sufficient, but the quality bad, many having only one bed-room. They belong mostly to small holders.

132. *C. Harris, Esq.*, Ilchester (pop. 800; acreage about 800; cultivation mixed; three-fourths grazing; no dairy; the rest arable.)—Boys begin to work at 10, bird-keeping, some even earlier. They drive plough, and go with horses. Think bird-keeping a cruel thing, keeping a boy out all a long wintry day. The parents want to get the extra shilling. Twine does just as well. The wages are from 9*s.* to 10*s.* and cider. Some do not give cider in winter. They have to find their own cottages, but it is a place with a diminishing population, and cottages are cheap; you can get a good one for 3*l.* or 4*l.* No girls work out; gloving is their employment, and it is injurious to some of the little ones leaning over the machine.

Women work out very seldom, sometimes in spring to pick stones. Bean planting has gone out, it is done now with a drill; nor is there so much weeding and that kind of work, and men do much work that women used to do. It is only labourers' wives who work out, but there is no stipulation that they are to do so. They do a good deal of apple-picking, and occasionally potato-digging.

A good many people go from this parish to work in the adjoining parish of Sock, which belongs to Mr. Wyndham. They have had no cottages till lately, but matters are getting better, owing to the Union Chargeability Bill. There is no church at Sock.

You cannot make the Factory Act apply to boys, but they ought not to work under 10. No restriction necessary on female labour. There is a national school, with an endowment of 50*l.* a year from an almshouses charity. There is only a mistress to it. A good many tradesmen's boys go to Archdeacon Fitzgerald's school at Charlton, which is a particularly good one. There is a Church Sunday school and a Dissenting ditto. The Wesleyans too have a day school. The principal farmer is a Wesleyan, and does much to support it. There is no night school. There has been one, but it was dropped, as the people did not take proper advantage of it. Most girls leave school at 10 to make gloves.

133. *Mary Eyres*, Ilchester.—Children are taken away from school to go gloving earlier now than they used to be. The youngest go at 7 or 8. When I was at school, children used to stay up to 14. Only stayed gloving 8 months, and did not like it; it did not suit my eyes. Tried it when 14 years of age, and then gave it up, and went to service. Could see very well at the beginning of the week, but at the end of it all the holes in the machine seemed run into one, and could not see one stitch from another. Beginners usually go to an experienced woman to learn it, and she does not always treat the children well, or give them all the money to which they are entitled. The rule is we get nothing for a month, and rise gradually after. The woman I went to was very strict, and when my eyes felt bad would not let me look up; thought it was laziness. She used often to bang me on the head. 2*d.* a pair is the price we got. The employer gave 2*s.* 2¼*d.* a dozen, and the women we worked for got the profit. Could make 21 pairs a week, and never worked by candle-light because of my eyes. Leaning over does not do much harm. We were always paid in money.

134. — *Wills, Esq., M.D.*, Crewkerne.—Thinks that in gloving it is keeping the eyes concentrated so long on a machine pierced with little holes close together, and not the mere looking at the brass, which the glovers say dazzles them, that is injurious to the eyes. There was a doctor down here some time ago trying to collect statistics about consumption, chest diseases, &c., among the poor glovers, supposed to come from sitting in a cramped attitude over the machine; but Dr. Wills attributes what consumption there is to the habit so common of coming once a week walks of six, eight, ten miles to the gloving place to bring the gloves they have sewn, and have them looked over. They are often kept out hours waiting for their turn, and then have to walk back, and if it rains it is naturally very bad for them. Any glove that there is a fault in is rejected, and the value of the pair (retail price) deducted from their wages, so that sometimes beginners will get no wages at all. They learn gloving from women called learners, who, in return for teaching them, take the gloves they make for the first few months. Most of the younger girls like working together, and has known as many as 14 work together in one room. At 14 or 15 years of age they generally begin to work at home.

They marry very early, men often only 18 to 22,, the girls as a rule pretty well gone in the family-way. There are not many illegitimate children, as the man generally marries her. Sometimes, however, have known the intention good, but put off so long that the child has come in the meantime. After that very often he will not marry her, for a girl who has had an illegitimate child is a good deal jeered by the other girls, and such jeering will often make him try to get off it. Still they have not the same ideas about the shame of it as we have. There is no infanticide, and women will work very hard to support a bastard. Mentioned the case of a women in Haselbury, which was a bad moral certainly, of a woman who was the most hard-working in the parish, and her cottage the best kept, who supported five illegitimate children.

There is a good deal of overcrowding in some parishes. Dr. Wills mentioned the case of a husband, wife, and seven children, of whom the four elder, two girls and two boys, all above 15, sleep in a two bed-roomed cottage with only two beds. The parents and younger children slept in the same bed, and the two girls in the other; there was a mattress for the boys. The way they manage sleeping so many in a bed, is having large beds and sleeping feet to feet; thus the children sleep feet to feet with their parents. The fact is that in gloving parishes there is more overcrowding than in others; for in other parishes most of the girls go away to service; where, however, there is gloving to be got, they prefer that as more independent than service, and consequently they stay at home as well as the boys, who generally work from home till they marry.

Chillington is about the worst off of the neighbouring parishes; with wages 7*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* a week, and no

resident squire or clergyman. It is a purely agricultural parish, and the women work out a good deal.

Gloving girls are of no use for service; constant work gives them no time to learn domestic duties; one who had a great wish to go out to service, was found on getting a place not to know how to make a bed. She had always lain in bed while her mother rose and lit the fire and did the household work, and then risen and gone to work. The general custom is to pay their mother 2*s.* 6*d.* out of their earnings and keep the rest. Most of them have very neat hands, just like a lady's, and few of them will work out of doors for fear of spoiling their hands, which then become hard and dirty, and useless for neat sewing.

135. Visit to glovers at East Chinnock, Friday, March 5, 1869.

Dr. Wills kindly took me to visit the cottages of several glovers in this village:—

(1.) We visited Mrs. Sartin's cottage first, one of Lord Portman's new cottages, sufficiently roomy for ordinary purposes, but rather crowded as we saw it, for there were working in the kitchen 11 persons, besides herself, and it being the day on which the work was collected to take to Stoke, other glovers were continually coming in with their contribution. Of these two were "learners," one 8 years of age, who has just worked a twelvemonth. At first she used to miss stitches, and Mrs. S. thought it was laziness, and proved her, but, she found when candles were brought in that her eyes were bad; so she has to leave off work sometimes, and cannot work by candle-light. Some eyes do fail; her own not near so strong as they were; she began gloving at 6; some have to leave off early at times, and some cannot work at all by candle-light; attributes it to looking at a brass machine, which dazzles.

Girls are "learners" for 12 months, for the first three of which they receive no pay; after that they are paid regularly, but overlooked, and Mrs. Sartin, as agent, deducts a certain per-centage for each pair of gloves. All her gloves nearly are cotton, and come from Southcombe of Stoke; he always pays in money; if a glove is damaged, he makes them pay a fine for damaging it, which varies according to the amount of damage done. For instance, once had to pay a fine of 3*l.*; for the girls had taken gloves out to Stoke in the rain, and they got wet and damaged; then they tried to dry themselves and did it badly; but Mr. Southcombe gave back 1*l.*; he gives 5½*d.* to 8½*d.* a dozen, and the work here is chiefly sewing the backs of cotton gloves. Agency is a new plan; used all formerly to have to go to Stoke once a week, and often wait outside till turn came, sometimes a very long time. Started a 6 o'clock in the morning, and at times were kept out all the next night.

Besides the eyes the chief complaint of illness is pains in the stomach, which come from sitting so long; some when they get it, get up and run about for a bit.

(There were 11 girls in the room, besides which some women came in in a friendly way to finish off just before Mrs. S. started for Stoke; all were sitting in rows at their machines like people at a concert. Very stuffy atmosphere; respectable woman and a good room, but too many people sitting in it to be wholesome.)

(2.) Mrs. Adams' cottage; roomy but an old cottage, and room low; still not so stuffy as the last; there were six girls working, of whom four were her daughters; the eldest an intelligent girl and very fast worker. All her own children began to work at 6 or 7, but for the first few years took half days at school. I pointed out the smallest and asked her age; she was a "learner," 7 years of age, and but lately begun, and works only half days, going to school the other half. There were a little one of 10, who her mother said would sit and work all day sometimes for 18 hours; she began when 6 years of age, before that she went to the infant school, and now goes to the Sunday school. The children sometimes feel bad from sitting at the machine so many hours; they cannot afford to take a long time for meals; sometimes they get up and run about for a few minutes. Sometimes when there is a great deal to do, they all sit and work from 6 a.m. till 12 at night.

In the winter it is all done in the house; in summer they take out their machines and work in the garden. Always find work going on, though more pressure at one time than another. Pay varies according to the goodness of work, up to 2*s.* 9*d.* or 3*s.*; they only sew the fingers; all their work is kid gloves, for Mr. Phillipps at Yeovil. If a glove is damaged they have to pay about half its value; but cannot say whether this is the rule, as have worked for Mr. Phillipps a long time, and perhaps get off easier than some others; sometimes get forgiven, but do not often damage them. Mrs. Adams herself takes the gloves into Yeovil at 2 in the afternoon twice a week. Had waited formerly many hours at Yeovil, till 9 o'clock at night, with a "hungry belly and cold feet," but that is done away with now.

(3.) Miss Adams has made 24 pairs a week at 2¼*d.* a pair, = 5*s.* 4*d.* a week. For men's gloves gets 2*s.* 9*d.*, women's 2*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, and a few pence more when in a hurry. Cannot earn much more than 3*s.* 6*d.*; has done as many as 34 pairs in a week, but that was working a day and a half each day. Some hurt their eyes very much; one girl could not go on after it began to get dusk. That girl began at 5 years of age; did not hurt her eyes then, but they have suffered for it since. White gloves do not dazzle the eyes so much as dark. (They were all at work on the best white kind.)

(4.) Mrs. Slieve lived in a wretched cottage, where she keeps a small grocer's shop; is agent for a good many Yeovil employers, and gets all kinds of stitching, and all kinds of gloves done. Never expects any of the girls to take wares from her shop in part payment for their work; but if they suggest such a thing, is quite ready enough to let them have tea, &c. (Dr. Wills denied this after, and said that it was a very common thing for people with small shops to be appointed agents, and abuse their agency by a truck). Two daughters were in the house, one of whom has had three or four bastard children; one of whom, a dirty, unhealthy-looking girl, aged 13, was sitting working at the machine. Another only 7 years old, just out of measles, had not begun gloving as yet, but was very fond of it, and could sew a pair as well as any one. Often said "Do 'ee let me glovey." Mrs. Slieve's other daughter, a girl of 14, had begun gloving at 5; was now evidently very far gone in a consumption; chest seemed in great pain, and had not strength to lift the kettle off the fire. Her eyes were nearly gone, which her mother attributed to the gloving; it had come on gradually, but she was the only one of her children whose eyes had failed so. They all put it on the use of brass in the machine, which dazzles their eyes. Dr. Wills thinks it comes from the closeness of the stitches, and if the holes were of different colours, it would not matter so much. Such loss of eyes, he says, is an unusual case; a weakly child, and the continual work naturally affected the part so much used.

Mrs. Slieve is separated from her husband; her cottage is very bad and untidy, and yet with the work of her family and the agency, she must get a good deal of money.

136. Extract from letter from *Rev. C. C. Goodden*, Montacute (population 992), March 5, 1869.

"My population is about equally divided as regards males between agricultural and manufacturing pursuits. Every girl is a glover, and continues so as long as circumstances permit. The employment of women in agriculture is almost unknown here. Decent labourers take their sons away from school at about 10 years old. Very poor and improvident labourers take them away earlier still, and seldom send them regularly at any time.

"Girls are taken away from school earlier than boys, generally speaking, to work at the glove. So great is the evil in this district as regards the glove trade,

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that Mr. Tregarthen, H.M. Inspector, is getting up statistics in the hope that some notice may be taken of the present state of things. I have an excellent school in the parish, so good as to attract artizan's children from other parishes. I adopt a graduated scale of payments, and though labourers' children may get the full benefit for 1*d.* weekly for what some pay 7*d.*, yet they get far less than any. Such are the facts; it is difficult to say what is the best remedy.

Yours faithfully,
C. C. GOODDEN."

137. *Rev. Arthur Salmon*, vicar of Martock (population 3,154; acreage 6,974; cultivation mixed).—There are few women employed in the fields, this parish being in the middle of the gloving district. One married and four unmarried being the total, and all above 18. But many women, married and unmarried, begin haymaking in June, and continue at field work, corn harvesting, gleaning, apple-picking, &c., till the middle of December.

—	Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.
Boys employed in agriculture -	3	36	51	48	138

In spring—bean-dropping, potato-planting, weeding, hoeing, withy-peeling, and bird-keeping.

In summer—harvesting, bird-keeping.

In autumn—apple-picking, potato-picking, couch-picking, &c.

In winter—bean-dropping, couch-picking, turnip-hoeing, &c.

Many of these boys attend to and drive horses, clean out stables, &c. Has known a boy of 5 bird-keeping.

Considers the Printworks Act the best of the three plans. "I should recommend compulsory education up to 10 years of age, the guardians paying the school-pence in all cases where there are three children in one family under 10 years of age."

"The school is too far for the very young children in the outlying hamlets." School attendance is also affected by poverty considerably; but I think that withdrawing some little boys from work would soon raise the wages of the elder ones, and machinery will supply the place of any scarcity of labour. I believe that want of means is often an excuse for want of will, some of the largest hardest families being the most regular at school. Plenty of schools for all classes; as many as 14 in the parish.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER of children of the agricultural labouring class in attendance at elementary schools.

Summer.

	Boys.			Girls.			Grand Total.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
On the register -	156	16	172	122	15	137	309
Average attendance	114	10	124	78	5	83	207

Winter.

On the register -	172	16	188	126	8	134	322
Average attendance	116	12	128	84	5	89	227

Would not say more than 12 boys and as many girls in the parish neither at school nor at work.

There are 40 boys and 110 girls at least, growing up with insufficient education; cannot read a chapter in the Bible or write intelligibly, and know no arithmetic. Could not pass standard 3, many of them not standards 1 or 2.

There is an evening school at which reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, open 16 weeks in mid-winter, four nights a week, two hours a night. On the register 126, average attendance 80; all scholars above 12 years of age. The difficulties that attend it with the females are that they cannot spare time from gloving; with the males that they are tired and sleepy after a hard day's work, and by the time they have walked home and had their supper they are ready for bed, as they have to be up early in the morning. When the evenings are light they work in their gardens. No scholars under 12—"as the P. C. office does not allow any capitation for them, we cannot afford to take them.

"The cottage accommodation, though improved is still insufficient, and has a bad effect on morality, health, and comfort; the greater number belong to the small landlords, tradesmen, &c. Some of the principal landlords have a few, which are generally in very good order. Many built on wayside waste, belong nominally to the occupiers. The rent is generally rather high for an agricultural neighbourhood. I do not think the truck system is carried on to any extent in this parish or neighbourhood. The number of illegitimate children is no greater than in Mr. Salmon's old Wiltshire parish; but there are a good many were married not with child, here it is the exception; but under the circumstances the man will generally put up the banns."

Special Report.

1.—The employment of boys in agriculture.

The farmers who are better educated themselves and rent large farms are becoming more anxious for the education of the labourers, the smaller and more ignorant farmers still oppose it. Many of the former would be glad to see boys at school until they are 12, or at least 10 years of age. If boys are not allowed to do any agricultural work until they are 12 years old, many say that they would become "soft" and not fit for much in the fields, and would probably seek, if possible, higher employment. At present, considering the amount of wages, and the little machinery generally used in farming, I should think that a boy ought to go to work at 10, but certainly not before. I have never seen any half-time scheme which I think would be satisfactory. A low standard of examination, within the capacity of an average country boy, sent regularly to school until he was 10, might perhaps be enforced, and a certificate given before employment, or a certificate of attendance at a national school for six years, with 400 attendances at least in each year.

E. ARTHUR SALMON,
March 1869. Vicar of Martock, Somerset.

2.—The employment of children in gloving at their own homes.

There are many instances of children who are set to work at gloving by their parents when they are only 7, or even 6 years of age. As a general rule they begin work at 8 or soon after. They grow up in a state of deplorable ignorance, very few of them being able to write their own names. At an early age they become independent of their parents, and submit to no control, even when it is exercised judiciously. The evil-disposed at once go out to lodge, if their parents do not allow them to keep late hours. Their morality is very low, their ignorance excessive, and their language and behaviour often very rough and coarse. Sunday schools do a little for the best of them, but the roughest will not attend them, as they are ashamed of their utter ignorance, and impatient of any rule. I do not think the gloving seriously injures health, but the early employment at it, and the many hours of work, contract the chest, and interfere with both bodily and mental developement, especially the latter. The number of hours of work at home is often far beyond the number in factories. I do not think a girl should be allowed to work until she is 10 years old, and has attended a national school for six

years, of 400 attendances in each year, or could pass a certain easy examination.

E. Arthur Salmon,
March 1869. Vicar of Martock, Somerset.

3.—A few cases of overcrowding in cottages.

1. In a cottage containing one living and one bedroom, about 11 feet square each, there lived together I. M. and E. M., man and wife, V. M., and L. M., man and wife, (nephew of above), M. A. M., unmarried woman, (daughter of I. M.), and her three illegitimate children, aged about 18, 10, and 5, respectively, and sometimes another man (son of I. M.), sleeps there also. The cottage is the freehold of the nephew.

2. Man and wife and 4 children, 2 girls, 17 and 12, and 2 boys 13 and 10, in a bad cottage with one small bed-room; boys and girls sleeping in one bed together.

3. Man and wife and 7 children; girl 18, boy 17, and downwards, in one room.

4. Man and wife and 6 children; girl 16, boy 14, and downwards, in one room.

5. Man and wife and 7 children, eldest 14, in one room.

6. Man and wife, daughter 28, 2 children, 17 and 9.

7. Man and wife and 12 children (once 14), eldest 22, and downwards, in two small rooms.

8. Man and wife, daughter and 5 illegitimate children, (once 7), 18, 17, and downwards, in one room.

9. Man and wife and 6 children, 16 and downwards, in one small room.

Numerous similar cases.

Several cottages unfit for human habitation.

E. Arthur Salmon,
March 1869. Vicar of Martock, Somerset.

138. *Rev. Henry Bond*, vicar of South Petherton (population 2,400; acreage 3,300; cultivation mixed).—Boys begin work at 8 in the fields; women are chiefly employed in gloving, only occasionally in apple picking and potato picking; all the girls make gloves. There was a great deal of corruption in the parish, but that is diminishing now not so much the consequence of gloving itself, as the waiting about some day in the week to have the gloves examined. That is not done so much now, as people are employed to take them about. The packmen form a great abuse; they travel about and sell a girl a shawl or dress, trusting her, and only taking 1*s.*, saying they will come again in a fortnight, which they do, coming and taking another shilling, and when it is nearly paid off selling them something else, so as never to let them out of debt. Gloving girls are constantly pulled up in the County Court.

There is a boys' school with 109 on the books, and a girls' school with 149. During the last three years every child presented for examination has passed. There are also dame's schools, but in these the number of scholars is small. The cottages are much too crowded, but their condition has of late years been improved. There has been a great exodus, to Queensland principally, since Mr. Bond has been here; the population has therefore slightly fallen. The people eat chiefly potatoes and dry bread; they do not get so much meat as they used; formerly scraps of meat were sold to them in the market, now such scraps all go up to London by railway.

139. *Rev. Thomas Brancker*, rector of Limington (population 343; acreage 1,583, of which under 400 acres arable).—A small parish; half a dozen women, perhaps, and six or eight boys employed, the former not continuously. "I believe it to be a bad school," but there is not enough of it to be worthy of special report here. A great deal of apple-picking in the autumn, and they sometimes suffer from the wet grass at that season. It is a gloving parish, and Mr. Brancker dislikes gloving much, especially the carrying system. Mentioned the case of a girl, a carrier, now dying of a consumption brought on by carrying gloves in all weathers to Yeovil.

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There are between 45 and 50 children on the register; average attendance 35 or 36; has been slack lately owing to illness. Has no night school, as he has no one to depend on but himself, the mistress having enough to do by day. Most of the cottages have two bed-rooms, but they are often very small. They chiefly belong to the landowners, and are let with the respective farms; there are only four or five in other hands. Rent 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. On Mr. Digby's property the farmers are not allowed to charge more than 1*s.*

140. *Rev. John Hancock*, Haselbury (population 835; acreage 2,034A. 1R. 24P.; cultivation rather more arable than pasture, 3-year course).—Boys work out from 10 years old all the year round. As a rule they leave school earlier than girls; has fewer big boys than he used to have, few over 10 years, but there are few in the parish who do not come to school more or less. Would like to keep them till 12 years of age. "Those who leave earlier must be insuffi-
"ciently instructed, and will probably forget the
"little they have learnt." The difficulty is that the earnings of the children between 10 and 12 can be ill spared by the family. There are good Government and infant schools, fairly taken advantage of.

Number on books 113 { 42 boys. 31 girls. 40 infants.

Under 6 - -	46	Under 9 - -	83
„ 7 - -	13	„ 10 - -	8
„ 8 - -	13	„ 11 - -	6
„ 9 - -	11	„ 12 - -	10
	—	Over 12 - -	6
	83		—
	—		113

Had a night school, but had to give it up; could not get the boys he wanted; could get nothing but small boys. In fact when he came there were very few big boys grounded at all, and all he can work on is the very young.

The girls do not work out, they are employed from about 11 years in weaving, partly at home, partly in a small factory. The same may be said of the women, but a few go into the fields occasionally in the summer months. "I should say it ought to be restricted, but
"I do not think the employment of females and
"young persons in agriculture is quite so injurious
"to health and morals as the employment of them in
"factories."

"There are many good cottages, but the generality
"of them are very inferior indeed. Many have
"only one bed-room, and in some cases three gene-
"rations occupy it. The moral result of course is
"bad. The water is sufficient; the ventilation of
"the old dwellings, thanks to holes and crevices, is
"good. In new cottages with tight-fitting windows
"and doors, and several sleepers in very small rooms,
"I look upon the absence of holes and crevices as a
"very serious matter." Badly off for gardens and allotments.

141. *Rev. W. Vassall*, rector of Hardington Mandeville (population 668).—Has but one boy in his school over 8 years of age, and that is a son of Mr. Parson's bailiff. A very poor parish. People take away their children to keep birds, and when a little older to drive horses. Is very sorry to find that boys are taken away earlier then they used to be, and attributes it to the fact of so many men going away now, that much work has to be done by big boys that used to be done by men, and little boys have to do men's work. There are lots of infants in the school, women are glad enough to send them when themselves go out to work. It is wonderful how the children stand the out-door work. They seem to thrive under it, and yet Mr. Vassall has seen a boy of 6 or 7 asleep under a hedge in soaking wet ground. It is the parents with long families who wish them to work for the sake of the 1*s.* 6*d.* Do not see how you can

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fix any age to keep boys at school, but would be very glad to keep them till 10; if they only stay till 8 they have not time to learn anything.

Langport Union.

142. Meeting of the Board of Guardians, Langport Union, Feb. 22, 1869; Robert Pittard, vice-chairman, in the chair. Present, F. Pinney, Esq., Somerton Grange; Messrs. Alford, Fry, Reynolds, Bond, &c.

(1.) The union generally comprises the Somerton hills, a lias formation, and a considerable bit of moor about Langport, Kingsbury, and Compton Dunden; the former is mostly arable, and employs a good deal of boys labour; the latter mostly dairy and pasture, and requires little. Boys are employed in agriculture generally from the ages of 8 or 9 to keep sheep or pigs, or birds from the corn; at 10 years of age they would begin picking stones, "driving plough," a phrase which includes driving horses at all times. A smaller boy too will often go out to assist a bigger, who has regular employment. When they begin driving plough they are engaged all the year round.

(2.) As a rule girls are not employed in out-door labour at all; gloving is their chief occupation; but in the parishes such as High Ham, that are more distant from the gloving centres, some little girls will be found doing much the same work as small boys, such as bird-keeping, &c.

(3.) The same remarks apply to the labour of women. They prefer gloving. In the winter they pick a few apples; in the summer they make hay.

(4.) The chairman said that his cottages were about a mile distant from the work. Cottages are generally on the land; but some in the village; not dotted about on the land, but in clusters of houses.

(5.) Men work 12 hours, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Women come on to work at 7 a.m., and leave off with the men.

(6.) Not necessary to restrict boys labour seemed to be the general sense.

(7.) There is not sufficient employment for women in the fields to make restriction necessary either.

143. *Wm. Gray, Esq.*, agent to F. Dickenson, Esq. (C. Langport B. G.), Kingweston (population 107; acreage 1,100, two-thirds of which is arable).—There is very little employment here for boys under 12; at that age they begin principally as carter's boys. Bird-keeping generally done by an old man with a gun at 1*s.* a day; worth half a dozen boys, who you cannot depend on. A boy is no use till 12; farmers give them 2*s.* 6*d.* at that age, Mr. Gray, 3*s.* 6*d.* All the girls do gloving, which they begin very early, even younger than 11; can earn a lot of money at it. Women hardly ever work in the fields now; only knows one instance in the parish, down at "Lavers." Never see women weeding. Two sisters of a shepherd use to work, but have left off now, and taken to gloving. Tried to break through the cider-truck, but farmers would not follow. Offered 1*s.* 6*d.* a week to his men if they would give up cider, but it gave dissatisfaction. They gave a good reason, it helps down the dry bread; they soak the bread in cider. Gives 9*s.* a week and cider, and expects the men to find a cottage. Always prefers to give an extra shilling, and let the men find their cottage; makes them more independent. Carters get another shilling. It is a hardship on the farmer always to have to pay according to a certain rate; a strong fellow receives just as much as a man not up to half the work.

Most of the boys come from Charlton to work, a mile and a half; there are not enough cottages on the property. Generally what there are are very good; have built a good many, and they are generally let cheap; usually 4*l.* a year; let according to garden ground, of which Mr. Gray is an advocate rather than of the allotment system. Changes people from cottage to cottage, as the family grows, to prevent overcrowding; but the people hate being moved, and if they were to die soon after, would attribute the fault to the agent. In East Charlton the cottages, which belong chiefly to the occupier, are very bad.

Let allotments at both Charltons; give new cottages nearly a quarter of an acre apiece. The clergyman at Charlton Adam lets allotments too. We let about a quarter of an acre at 7*s.* 6*d.*; 20 lug would be 3*s.* 9*d.*; if it is neglected take it away as soon as possible. They pay well, and are never in arrear. It is well worth its price to them. Potatoes are the chief crop, and a few beans for the pig; it is just large enough to get a change of crop. It is strange that they go on now with potatoes in spite of the disease.

144. — *Snook*, steward to Lord Ilchester, under whom he occupies a farm (Somerton).—Employs three boys under 12 years of age; they are engaged in looking after sheep, pulling turnips, and driving horses; such work as a little boy can do just as well as a man; you could not possibly do without them. They are more useful than women. You can get a boy for 2*s.* to do work for which you would have to give a woman 4*s.* 6*d.* The women chiefly do gloving and shoe-binding, and there is a factory which employs 100 girls. Employs few women, and they labourers' wives; is not an advocate for women's labour; it is cheaper to employ men, they do more work, and you cannot get women out in the wet weather. Lets apple-picking to men, and they bring out their wives and children to help.

Wages 9*s.* and liquor; liquor sometimes 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, sometimes 1*s.* Would rather give 1*s.* 6*d.* instead of cider, but they prefer cider. They have to find their cottages. Carters get 1*s.* extra. Gives as much task-work as he can, more profitable both to farmer and labourer. Some farmers on Lord Ilchester's property have no cottages, and most of the labourers who work in the neighbourhood of Somerton live in the town, the women prefer it. Men who live out here even go into Somerton to the public-houses; it would be better to have houses on the farm. Has three on his farm, for which he charges only 1*s.* a week, whereas in town they have to pay 4*l.* or 5*l.*; lets them cheaper, as an inducement to stay. As a rule, the labourers hold of the landlord; the system works better, when they hold of the farmer; but the farmer sometimes takes an unfair advantage of his power.

145. — *Nutt*, Compton Dunden, occupier.—Farms 800 acres. A purely agricultural parish; there is little gloving, but some of the girls go over the hill to work in the factory at Street. Most of them go to service, and they work out a little. Half the year half the women in the parish go out to work; employ about four on the farm, and they do not come out in the wet; in the summer every one goes out. They get 8*d.* and about three pints of cider. Their work is thrashing, bean-planting, hoeing turnips, weeding corn, apple-picking, &c. Men get 9*s.* a week and half a gallon of cider daily, and find their cottage. The shepherd and carter have their cottages given. Not so well provided with cottages as some places. Most belong to Lord Ilchester, to whom three-fourths of the parish belongs, but some are out on lives.

Boys begin work at 8 or 9, bird-keeping and sheep-keeping. We do not allow them to lead plough so young as that, but it is done in some of the smaller holdings.

There is no school at all, a few children go to Lady Hood's, 1½ mile distant. There is a Sunday school, but few come. Four boys work for me, and not one can read or write, they have never been at school; a school is wanted very bad. There is a good attendance in church on Sunday afternoon, not in the morning.

Some of the cottages are much overcrowded, there is one up above here with at least 10 people living in it, mostly grown up; cannot say how many of them

are relations, do not think many. Many women come to be married in the family-way, our carter married the other day, and his wife was confined a fortnight after marriage. The cottages have good gardens generally, and the labourers have potato ground on the moor, very good land. They pay at the rate of 6*l.* an acre; sometimes they have as much as a quarter of an acre. There is a good deal of moor in the parish, but no withy-peeling.

146. — *Bond*, occupier, Kingsdon.—Women do gloving, which is the general thing throughout the union. The pay is very bad, about a day and a half's work for a day's pay. They prefer it to working out; very few work in the turnips now, they only come out in the harvest.

No girls work; employs four or five boys; does not know whether they have been to school; rather prefers those who have not; does not mind reading and writing, but dislikes too much education. Never inquires a boy's age, when he comes bird-keeping; supposes they generally come at about 10, "to sing a "song to rooks." The young men go away a good deal, mostly to Wales, but they generally come back, and settle down, seeming to like home.

General wages 9*s.*, and shepherd 10*s.*, with cider. Gives an extra sovereign in harvest. Gives the same wages to shepherds and ordinary labourers, but gives a cottage and garden to the former, not to the latter. They never get less than 9*s.* in a week; never sends a man home for bad weather. The real thing wanted is more cottages, in the present condition of the people it is out of the question to ask more than 1*s.* rent. Many are allowed to fall down, and the people crowd into Somerton. The usual rent for a cottage is 1*s.*

147. — *Reynolds*, occupier, High Ham.—Boys generally come to work at 9 or 10; they used to come earlier, but there is a capital school now, and the parents like to keep them there longer than they used, and the farmers have to give way. Parents are very willing to send their children to school, if it is a good school. They are not really apathetic about it; they like to send them, but of course if they are old enough to earn money it is an object in a long family.

No girls are employed; women very little since the drilling came in; they work in summer a little; boys and shepherds do the turnip-cutting.

Wages 9*s.* the lowest, some give 10*s.* and cider, some an extra shilling, and no cider; men as a rule prefer the cider, as they cannot get so much elsewhere for the money as they can from the farmers. There are some very bad cottages.

Women take to gloving more than working out; they cannot take so much care of the family if they go out. They do not earn much money at gloving, but are improved by staying at home.

148. — *Alford*, occupier, Curry Rivell.—Does not care about employing boys much, only wants them when wheat is appearing, not when just sown, and again when it is ripening, to keep off the sparrows. But a pistol and a little powder will frighten them much better, or sending a man to kill and hang up one. Boys only drive them from one place to another, they frighten them with clappers, that is, knocking bits of sticks together, but they generally only go and settle on the next field. When a little older, say 8 or 9, they are taken to drive horses, and once taken to do that, work is found for them most of the year. They are really wanted here to drive the horse in ploughing, as the soil is heavy, and three horses are required, so that a man cannot drive with reins, and plough too. They begin at 14*d.* for the week, Sunday included, and the pay rises gradually.

Few women work out, they take to gloving mostly; they are above working out now, it makes their hands dirty, which they do not like. Those only whose husband works on the farm, will work out, and they only come out now and then in busy times, such a thrashing, &c.; they are the only ones a farmer has any control over.

149. — *Fry*, occupier, Curry Rivell.—Women do not like working out now, have got above it; it is very difficult to get them out now except in hay-making. Gives as wages 10*s.* a week and no cider; carters and shepherds a little more. Men at first do not think they like to have no allowance of cider, but they get to like the extra shilling; the wives like it. Two-thirds of his men have cottages at 1*s.* a week; they are the best off, as others have to give 1*s.* 8*d.* or more for a cottage. A farmer has not such a hold over the latter, however; they get more independent. But for the labourer to hold of the farmer is the best system, if they get on well; has some on his farm now, who held of his father for years. Gives a boy when he first begins work 3*d.* a day.

150. *Wm. Lock*, Somerton, age 11.—First went to work in the fields at 10; began driving plough; in the winter and summer; get 2*s.* a week; come to school now for two months. Like school better than work. Began at ploughing; began at 2*s.* a week; only lead the horses with the plough, not hard work.

151. *Wm. Trott*, Somerton, age 9 next birthday. —First went to work at 8, driving plough. Like coming to school better than ploughing. Drove the plough two months, and left off just before Christmas; expect to go again at Lady-day, when the other boys go. Get 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; am the eldest of five; got three sisters, and "one buried."

152. *Darius Lewis*, age 10, Somerton.—Used to be kept at home to look after younger brothers and sisters, whilst the elder ones went out to work. Brother Thomas, aged 18, works out. Been at school four years; did not come often at first, or in harvest, as had to stay at home, while mother went out leasing. Like coming to school best. Do no other work; father wants to keep me at school two or three years longer.

153. *Wm. Dolman*, Somerton, age 12.—Began to work when 8 years old. Began driving plough, and got 2*s.* a week, get 2*s.* 6*d.* now. Keep sheep sometimes besides driving plough, never kept birds. Come to school two months, work the rest of the year. Work for Mr. Barnard, who keeps a farm. Like coming to school best; go to night-school in the winter pretty regularly; hard work driving plough.

154. *John Lock*, Somerton, age 6.—Goes bird-keeping, likes it better than coming to school. Halloos at them. Comes to school 5 months, keeps birds 7. Goes out bird-keeping from 7 till 6; not on Sundays; gets paid 6*d.* a week.

155. *Henry Ford*, Somerton, age nearly 9.—Goes bird-keeping; begun at 7; gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; likes coming to school best; keeps birds part of year, comes to school part; comes to school most; knocks sticks together, and halloos out. Goes wet and fine days, not on Sundays. Stays out from 6 to 8; takes dinner with him. Goes out whether wet or fine; does not get wet, for if it rains, he sits under a tree. Drives plough too; began that at 8, and found he could manage the horses all right. Get 2*s.* a week for it. Likes driving plough better than coming to school or keeping birds.

156. *Mary Jane Colifax*, Somerton, age 10.—Has two younger brothers; stays at home to look after them; likes coming to school better than staying at home. Father is a carter; mother has bad eyes, and wants her at home to look after the younger ones.

157. *Sarah Cox*, Somerton, 10 years.—Used to go out leasing; do it in summer; go out with mother; mother goes to weed the corn. Father is a labourer. Mother works out in the fields a good deal. I stay at home to take care of younger sister, when mother goes out to work. Never frightened birds.

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158. *Caroline Peppard*, Somerton, age 12.—Went last year to pick up potatoes with father, because he could get no one else.

159. *Ellen Summering*, Somerton, age 8.—Goes out to work in the fields, and likes it. Goes leasing, picking apples, and potatoes; likes it all; father is dead, mother in service; picks up potatoes for her uncle.

160. *Elizabeth Davey*, Somerton, aged 9.—Father is a farmer (N. B., one of the small farmers, with perhaps 12 or 14 acres). She sometimes goes setting peas and potatoes, and goes leasing and picking up potatoes. Went last autumn apple-picking. Likes coming to school when it is cold, working when it is warm; never goes out scaring birds. Always works with father. "Father said I did more work "last summer than I had any summer before." Has five brothers, one a mason and another at work. Little brother not as tall as me leads horses; father is not afraid to trust him with a horse and waggon. Father has two horses.

161. *Eliza Perren*, High Ham, aged 14.—Was 10 or 11 before she went out to work. Went apple-picking, leasing, pulling beans, &c. Only went out now and then. Used always to go out with grandmother. Is going to leave school, and take to gloving. Would rather go out to service, and do out-door work in the summer.

162. *Jane Sweet*, High Ham, aged 9.—Goes picking apples and leasing with her mother. Comes to school regular, and likes school best. Is going to glove; does not like the idea of gloving. Would rather go out to service.

163. *Ellen Ralph*, High Ham, aged 12.—Goes apple-picking, and beating out the ground, planting potatoes, and leasing. Comes to school in winter and works in summer. More work than school. Does not know which she likes best. Gets 6*d.* a day. Used to keep birds. Was not 9 when she began. Stayed out 8 till 6, hallooing at them. "It is bird *starving*, not bird keeping." Did not go out on Sundays. Does not know what pay she got, mother had the money. Like keeping birds; not hard work. Leads horses sometimes. Father is a labourer.

(N.B.—A younger sister did much the same.)

164. *James Small*, High Ham, aged 11.—Goes out driving plough. First year of doing so. Likes coming to school best. Used to go with his brother keeping birds for amusement. Frightened them with the sticks, and "Tom had a dog he put at them."

165. *James Burnett*, Somerton, aged 12.—Began bird-keeping at 8 for a few months. Hallooed at them. Liked it, but would rather come to school. After began work did not come to school again. Work all the year round. Began keeping sheep at 10. Drive plough sometimes. Get 2*s.* a week pay. Father dead, mother "do glovey." One sister at service.

166. *William Matthews*, Somerton, aged 11.—Minds sheep all the year. Used to keep birds. Began at 6 years. Began keeping sheep at 7. Keeps sheep all the year. Gets 2*s.* Used to halloo at the birds. Kept birds all the week and Sunday too. Used to come to day-school before went frightening birds. Like coming to school best. Father is the sexton.

167. *Frederich Which*, Somerton, aged 13.—Cannot spell his name. Began work at 7, driving plough. Kept birds at 8. Left school at 7. Thinks he recollected all he learnt. Keeps sheep now for Mr. Coxe. Works for Mr. Coxe all the year. Gets 3*s.* 3*d.* a week and cider. Began at 2*s.* Has no father. Mother "do glovey." Has three brothers, but none work; two come to school.

168. *Henry Brown*, aged 14 (Somerton).—First worked at 7, bird-keeping; hallooed at them. Went on Sundays too. In summer worked from 6 to 6. Began driving plough at 8. Went to school before began bird-keeping, but have forgotten a great deal. Could not read and write now. Would like better to come to school. Father is not right; "mother do glovey." Has two sisters, who also make gloves, and a younger brother who does not work. Looking to the beasts is his duty now, he has done it about two years. Gets 4*s.* a week; began at 1*s.* 6*d.*

169. *Sarah Taylor*, Somerton, aged 8.—Father dead, mother works in the factory. Has two brothers older than herself; one sister older and one younger. Sister comes to school, but is ill at grandmother's now. Goes out leasing with mother sometimes. Used to go apple-picking and potato-picking when 7 years of age. Got 6*d.* a day for it. Does not do any now. Generally "gloveying," but not all the year. Likes it better than working out. Did not begin till she was 8. Works 12 hours, 6 to 6. Has a holiday once a week. Gets tired sometimes, but always quite fresh in the morning. Comes to school twice a week, not to the day-school. Mother gloveys, and never gets tired. Has a little sister at home younger than me, who gloveys.

170. *Sarah Ann Pivott*, Somerton, aged 8.—Father cleans leather, mother "do glovey." Has three brothers and one sister, all younger. Stays at home sometimes to take care of them. "Mother takes care of them when I don't." Likes coming to school best. Goes out leasing with grandmother for about a month. Does not like leasing, it is hard work. Have to stay out all day, 8 to 7; dine in middle of day. Brothers and sisters do not come out. Began to go at 7 or 8. Goes potato-picking too, but dislikes it; it is hard work. Goes apple-picking; likes that. Eats the apples. Gets her food for doing it. Makes gloves besides, and makes gloves more than she goes out to work. Has begun gloveying between two and three years. Likes it better than going out to work in the fields. "Mother makes four pair, and "I make two pair in a day." Never any the worse for stooping over the machine.

GLOVING.

171. *Mrs. Sweet*, High Ham.—Has made gloves for 30 years. Hopes that we will not do anything to interfere with her making gloves. Her boy told her that the other day a gentleman had come down to see the schoolmaster, and all the gloving was to be stopped. (N.B. I assured her she would not be interfered with.) Her eyes are not so good as they were when she was young; thinks that the brass has affected them. Thinks it bad for the health, sitting so long without taking exercise. Does not like her girls doing it. One fell sickly, and she thinks died of it. That one has suffered from it too (pointing to a sickly looking girl crouching over the fire.) Gets 2*s.* 2*d.* a dozen pair. Used to be able to do six pair a day, but cannot do so much now, on account of her eyes. Has earned more sometimes in a week than her husband. Recollects when she got 5*s.* a dozen for sewing gloves, but the price has come down very much.

Used sometimes to work in the fields. Does a little now, but finds it does not pay as well as gloving. Does a little for herself, such as leasing. Her girls have never done a day's work in the fields; very few here do. Has two children at school. Had a boy working at bird-keeping and plough-driving at 7 years of age. Had 1*s.* a week and his keep.

172. *Mary Ann Fido*, High Ham.—Is a glove carrier. Gets gloves from all parishes near—Pitney, Huish, Langport, Othery, and Ham, and goes in with them every Saturday to Mr. Taylor's, the glove manufacturer at Taunton. In the evening she brings out gloves again to distribute. Gets 1*s.* 4*d.* a dozen for the gloves, and pays the glovers 1*s.* 1½*d.* a dozen, getting 1½*d.* profit. All paid in money, no truck. Some women will make two dozen pair in a week. They make cloth gloves in summer, and thread in

winter. Have to be hand-sewn, because the ends fray. The machine is only of use for kid gloves. The machine is bad for the eyes, it dazzles so.

173. *Sarah Lark*, Somerton, age 14.—Have not come to school the last two years, been learning gloving. Began last winter, and kept on ever since. Sits from 8 in the morning till 9 at night, and don't like it at all, sitting so long. Does it at her aunt's house, and goes home to dinner. No one else works there, only she and her aunt. Does a dozen pair in a week. Gets 2*s.* a dozen, always in money. Never has a holiday. Sitting so long gives sometimes a pain in the stomach; have had that. Hurt eyes, but never hurt hers yet. Expects to go to service, and would prefer it.

174. *Susan Brown*, Somerton, age 11.—Began gloving when going on 10; likes doing it. Works from 9 in the morning till 11 at night. Gets tired of sitting so long, gets sleepy. Has a little sister going on 8, who began gloving at 7. Can do three pair a day (cotton); they give 2½*d.* a pair. Always pay in money. Hopes to go to service, when a little older. Mother "do glovey. I can do as much "as another." Does not mind stooping over it. Never has a holiday, and never goes out while working. Little sister gets tired, and then nurses baby. "I am too busy all the week, and only nurse baby "on Sunday."

175. *Emmeline Cox*, Somerton, age 8.—Began to make gloves at 5. When began could make one pair a day, now can make two. Gets a halfpenny a pair, small gloves. Got no mother, and "father, brothers, "and sisters no good to me." Lives with grandmother. Likes making gloves. When older would like to go to service. Get tired gloving. Work from 7 in the morning till 8 at night. Not with a machine.

176. *Emily Ray*, age 10, Somerton.—Makes gloves. Has worked in the fields; has been out leasing, apple-picking, and potato-picking. Likes gloving best, not such hard work. Does more gloving than working out. Was only 7 years old when first went to work in the fields. First began gloving at 8. Does not work with the machine. Gets 14*d.* a dozen, cloth gloves and thread gloves. Gets tired sometimes, and then rests, and has a holiday sometimes. Works 12 hours, 6 to 6. Sometimes works by candle light. Likes apple-picking too. Likes apple-picking better than coming to school. Has never been to school in the week, except to night school. For tatey and apple picking gets 6*d.* a day. "Mother do glovey." Father is a labourer.

COTTAGES.

177. Col. Pinney's cottages at Somerton. Extract from Diary, Feb. 23:—

"Visited one of Col. Pinney's model cottages with three bed-rooms. Porch, with one room over, very small, but other two bed-rooms good; one had a fire-place. Below were two rooms and a lean-to, in all three rooms, a kitchen, back kitchen, and store-house. Nice cottage, not too good, and room enough for people in it, labourer, wife, and nine children, mostly young. Cost probably about 200*l.*, let at 4*l.* Built of red tile and blue lias.

"Saw also a converted cottage (with back kitchen and bed-room over it added). Rooms rather small, and great complaints of smoke. Floor, stone. Three bed-rooms, but one used as a store-room for potatoes. Five children beside husband and wife, but eldest only 8 years old. Three were already put to bed together, the three smallest. Mother just come in from working out."

178. Mr. Dickenson's cottages at Kingweston. Extract from Diary, Feb. 26, 1869:—

"Coming back visited some three cottages Mr. D. had built in a row. Large and roomy, with three rooms above and three below. Boiler inside, which a pity. Door opens into a little square vestibule, and staircase opposite. Kitchen door on right-hand side. Neat on the whole. Only waste of space a little landing out of the big bed-room over the staircase, which might have been a cupboard. One fire-place upstairs."

179. Prince of Wales' model cottages at Isle Brewers.

Have three good-sized bed-rooms, two of which have a fire-place. The staircase seemed the drawback. It is spiral and very narrow, and the old woman whose cottage we visited did not know "how, if it "pleased God any one was to die, he could be got "out." The porch is inside, and the stairs spring from it. There is a closet under the stairs, and a large closet upstairs, besides the three rooms. There are two rooms downstairs, and outside, touching the main building at right angles, an outhouse, containing boiler and privy. Did not seem a good plan; the privy door at right angles to the back kitchen window, but they said there was no smell in the back kitchen. They were built at a cost of 300*l.* the pair, and at first the Duchy expected a return of 6*l.* per cent. on the outlay. However, they let them to Mr. Miller, the rector, at 4*l.* a piece, and he underlets them at 1*s.* 6*d.* weekly. It is strange then, though infinitely superior to the other cottages, he could only got two widows to take them. The people do not seem to like supervision, as the cottages are close outside Mr. Miller's gate.

180. *Rev. Archdeacon A. O. Fitzgerald*, rector of Charlton Mackerel (pop. 387; acreage 2,200; cultivation mixed).—Boys work all the year round from 10 years. There is little bird-keeping. No restriction necessary on their labour, or that of females. Women work out very little except in haymaking and apple picking, and girls not at all.

There is an excellent National school, built and endowed by the will of the late rector. A number of children come in from other parishes, even tradesmen's sons from Ilchester. The rector gets 15*l.* a year from the endowment; the schoolmaster 90*l.* There are many more boys than girls, but that happens to be a chance at the present time. There are more boys than girls in the parish. There is also an evening school in the winter, which is much appreciated.

181. *Rev. Charles Carey*, rector of Kingweston (pop. 172; acreage 1,155; chiefly arable).—In this parish boys begin work at 11 or 12, but in neighbouring parishes, which are poorer, boys go to work at 8 years of age. No girls work out in this parish, and very few in the neighbourhood. Women only occasionally for bean setting, haymaking, apple picking, and other odd jobs. No necessity to restrict their labour. Boys should not work before 10–11 years, "but I do not think any legislative restriction is "called for, or could be rightly enforced. It is only "in the poorest families that the boys go to work so "very young, when their earnings, 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, are "almost a necessity to the parents."

There is a well-attended parochial school. "Cot-"tages good and convenient; not numerous enough "for the labour of the parish, which is supplemented "from the adjoining parishes, but the distance is "very little. This parish is all the property of a "resident landlord, and consequently better off than "many others."

a. It is not desirable to restrain the earnings of a family by law, unless for sufficient reasons, sanitary or moral.

b. Agricultural labour is healthy, and not *demoralizing* to boys.

c. Half-time system is impossible in farm service.

d. In good schools a boy of 11 years of age ought to be able to read thoroughly well, write a good legible hand, spell correctly, and do compound rules of arithmetic, money, weights, and measures, with an intelligent knowledge of Scripture, and his Catechism;

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in short, quite a sufficient elementary education for his class of life. This he may keep up by night-schools.

As inspector of a rural district (36 parishes) I find many schools in small parishes thoroughly inefficient through want of funds to procure proper teachers, the burden of maintenance being thrown almost entirely upon the clergyman.

182. Inspection District rural; 36 parishes; area, about 100 square miles.

Only $\frac{1}{14}$ of children in school are turned of 12 years, and these are almost all girls.

Archdeaconry of Wells, viz.:—

Nearly half the county of Somerset. School prize examination open to all parochial schools.

Average age of competing children—

Large schools, 1st class, 11·4 years,
„ 2nd „ 10·12 „
Small schools, 1st „ 11·1 „

These are chiefly girls; the average age of these boys is only 10·6.

Average age of prize winners (boys) 11·3.

This shows what a fair amount of education can be given at an early age.

The number of boys at school very nearly equals that of the girls, and quite a fair proportion are of 10 or 11 years of age. Boys 863; girls 891.

183. *Rev. Gilbert Smith*, Barton St. David (population 404).—Is very strong on subject of bird-keeping; thinks it is bad for little boys being taken off early to go out and stay out in continual wet, and come in late after it.

184. *Rev. George W. Grogan*, vicar of Somerton (population 2,206; the cultivation is "chiefly grazing "cows and feeding sheep; there is a great deal of "dairy-farming, for cheese especially, but not so "much stall-feeding for beasts. This culture does "not employ so many nor pay such good wages as "tillage and fattening beasts with higher farming").—Children are employed from 8 to 9 upwards, cattle tending, driving horses, bird-keeping, and other light jobs. "Very young children are sent out with wag-"gons, boys of 9 or 10 years old, younger than is "allowed elsewhere. Girls are employed in light "field work very young, but not so many as boys, "being employed in gloving at home or in the "factory."

Ten years of age should be the limit for boys "with provision for school-teaching. It would be "impracticable where wages are so low as here, and "the cash payment is only 8*s.* or 9*s.* per week, with "cider and extra allowances in harvest, to exclude "children's aid wholly."

Women are employed "to a very large extent hoe-"ing, besides the usual harvest and meadow work;" many glove, however. "Young females should be "restricted as much as possible, but whether by legal "enactment, or improving the general condition of "the labourer, and enforcing a certain school attend-"ance by landlords and employers, through bringing "public opinion to bear on the question, it is hard to "decide. It must be observed that public opinion "has proved ineffectual, and that high wages, even "the highest, have been found in factory, pottery, "and mine districts only to increase the demand for "early labour, while the parents, though able to "afford the loss, only enforce it more to supply their "wasteful expenses, high wages not being accom-"panied with economy in proportion."

"The children attending the boys' school are only 95 of all ages (a small average for the population). The attendance at the girls' national school (excluding infants), is still smaller in comparison with the population. There are one or two dame's schools, another infant school, and a night school for adults, but the proportion of children from 9 to 12 in school is very small. Indifference and the low condition of the labourer is, I believe, the cause as much as early labour."

"The cottages are not much overcrowded, but poor, very wretchedly supplied with comforts, and forming a real contrast to the Norfolk cottages * * the stone (damp-sweating) floors and bad staircases are cheerless. Some are repairing as they fall out of lease. There are a few allotments, and some have gardens; those in the street have not for the most part, but there is a fair proportion with small plots of ground. It is very hard to obtain correct returns of these particulars, as the employers of such immature labour are the very class less likely to aid in any legislative enactment which might tend to disturb the system."

185. *Mr. Hewitt*, schoolmaster, Somerton.—Some boys leave school at 8, but the instances of their leaving for good at that age are rare; most go for a time, and that generally in the summer; the best attendance is in the winter. The boys generally go at about 10, a few stay later. There are none in the school older than 11. Would like to keep them till 12. Cannot fix anything in their minds if they leave earlier. The boys forget so much. Mentioned a case of two brothers, of whom the elder left and went out to work for 9 or 10 months, then came back, and was found not to know as much as the younger. In the first class there are generally not above one or two labourers' children; they are taken away so early.

There is a small endowment. It is a mixed school, about three-fourths being labourers' children. There are 96 on the books (all boys); 61 is the average attendance, but at the best time of the year 85.

There is a night school; none under 12 in it by rule, as there is no money allowed; but there are some few, for whom Lady Smith pays, the children of labourers, who have been taken from the day school to go out to work. There is one pupil over 50, and about four over 20; the average age is 16 or 17. Average attendance 45; has had as many as 60. It is open two nights a week. Best attendance when it first opens, and dwindles towards Lady-day.

186. *Miss Glover*, schoolmistress, Monteclefe school, Somerton.—Some of the infants are sent by mothers who want somewhere to send them to while they go out to work in the fields; some of the bigger girls are kept at home by such parents to look after the younger ones, while they themselves are out. There are one or two in the school who go out bird-keeping in the summer.

Number of girls on the books - 142
Average attendance - - 86

Have several over 14; most leave to work in the factory at about 12.

187. *Rev. W. Knight*, rector of High Ham (population 1,283).—Many of the cottages at High Ham very bad; there are so many small freeholders in the parish. Land societies do much harm by lending money to people who put up a small house on a small bit of land, and pay a heavy per-centage on the loan, which comes to the same as paying a very high rent for a bad cottage.

188. *Schoolmaster* at High Ham.—Will lose about 40 boys at Lady-day, when potato-setting begins, and they will not come back till Christmas. It is heart-rending work, the boys forget so much. Most boys go out at 9 or 10. A boy of 7 has been driving plough all the week; another of 8 minds sheep. But has more occasion to complain of the gloving; girls of 10, as soon as they can sew, are kept at home to do it.

Number on the books 145.

Average attendance 87 - { 64 over 6 / 23 under 6.

To be examined to-morrow.

When mothers go out to work in the summer a great number of infants come to school. A great many women work out, but as a rule they prefer gloving. Prefers those who work out. Generally a glover is known by being very dressy.

Wages in the parish 8*s.*, and cider and potato garden. Very often in summer a farmer will let one of his men go away to mow in another parish. Money is short, but the people are not really very badly off. Is himself paid a good deal in kind. Many of the people own their own cottages, more so than in any village near.

From October to near Christmas the girls go apple-picking, a very bad time for the school.

189. *Rev. C. S. Grueber*, vicar of Hambridge (population 556).—In this parish a good many women working, perhaps as many as glove; those glove part of the year, and work out the rest; as a rule bear a better character, are tidier, and cottages better kept than those of gloving women. Occupations, threshing, which they do not like, as the dust gets into their eyes, hoeing wheat, potato planting and picking, apple-picking, &c. Get 9*d.* a day. All the girls up to 12 from 8 work in a button-hole establishment, Miss Williams', into which asked me to look; from 30 to 40 work there, and never go to school. Boys go out bird-keeping from 6 upwards; spoil voices for choir, but on the whole stay at school a little longer than the girls. His daughter keeps a night school. Called in at Miss W.'s, not at home. They work for Mr. Cooper, at Ilminster.

Extract from letter from Rev. C. S. Grueber, vicar of Hanbridge.

Hambridge Parsonage,
Curry Rivell, Taunton.

Dear Sir, March 22, 1869.

In answer to your inquiry about the workshop for children, I beg to say that the young person you called upon employs between 40 and 50 children. I believe they work from 8 in the morning till about 8 or 9 in the evening. In the summer I believe they go earlier to work. Some of the children, I believe, are as young as 7 years. I consider it very detrimental that children should go so young; they will be left without any education. I am willing to give every accommodation I can as to hours of attendance at school as may best suit the young person who employs the children. If the system of employing children at 6 or 7 years of age were carried on it would be of little use keeping a school. It was bad enough to take away the elder ones, which itself cleared off almost our first and second classes.

With best thanks,
Yours truly,

R. Boyle, Esq. C. S. Grueber.

191. *Rev. J. Augustus Miller*, vicar of Isle Brewers (population 254; acreage 1,246; cultivation mixed).—Some boys go away before they are 8 years of age, generally at that age both boys and girls; no girls work out habitually; it is a gloving parish. Almost wishes he had an establishment like the Miss Williams', at Hambridge, who are very respectable people, and keep the girls out of mischief. "If young "females are employed in the fields, they should "either be kept at work by themselves, or should "work under the eye of some one whose pre-"sence would be a protection to them." Boys should be allowed to remain at school till at least 10 years of age. Has only 30 in the school, and almost all he can teach the boys is at a night school in his own kitchen, but has no girls at that. The boys who stay longest at school are the sons of dairymen, a system that has arisen from the change of feeling of farmer's wives, who are now above the old dairy work.

Only a few women work out constantly; most take to gloving. Upon the hill, towards Fivehead, will find more female employment; they come out in hay-making and harvest.

"There is also a Sunday school. The school attendance is improving, but there are several who either do not attend or attend very irregularly. For this various reasons might be assigned; the utter indifference of some parents to the welfare of their children, the unwillingness of the parents to send their children clean and tidy, and to take the trouble ever to mend their clothes; the drunken habits of some parents, in consequence of which their children are left very much to themselves; the jealousy of interference on the part of the more ignorant parents, who have no idea of the need of school discipline, and therefore resent the punishment of their children, although they will often themselves half kill them when offended with them."

"Some cottages are very bad. Those attached to the farms are more comfortable, and conveniently situate. In some instances cottages are overcrowded, in consequence of which the tone of morality is low, and no disgrace attaches to the birth of illegitimate children. The supply of water is good; the ventilation a matter of accident. Four years ago the Duchy of Cornwall built two model cottages for labourers, but not a single labourer would become a tenant on account of the necessity of keeping the cottages clean and tidy, the labourers preferring to do as they like in that respect. The cottages are let to respectable widows. Gloving is a great blow to morality, as it keeps the girls at home; they never go out to service."

"The cottage allotments are sufficient, and if they could be let without reference to the character of the occupant they would all be taken."

192. *Rev. Charles Southey*, vicar of Kingsbury Episcopi (population 1,838; cultivation mixed; a good deal of dairy-farming).—Boys work at all times of the year from 5 and 6 years upwards; no girls or women, who are all glovers. "The rate of wages is so low "that to restrict the labour of any able to earn would "be a great hardship, if practicable." Farmers do not want the boys so much, as parents come to ask for work for them, owing to the low state of wages in the parish, 8*s.* or 9*s.* There is a school here with a female teacher, but the children are little better than infants; it is difficult to keep them after 8; the people are indifferent to education. There is a Church Sunday school, and the dissenters have one too; dissent is strong here.

Many of the cottages very bad, many of them being let out on leases for lives, and the poor people being unable to repair them. There is overcrowding and immorality, but not of a very gross kind (no prostitution), chiefly owing to all the girls remaining at home and earning their own living. There is a great want of allotments and gardens. Lord Portman's are the best cottages.

193. *Rev. Charles Leigh Pemberton*, rector of Curry Mallet (population 549).—No girls work out, women only in harvest, and occasionally a little other work. "Boys go to work from 6 years old in some cases, but "they are not all taken so young; they ought not to "go till 10 years old, so as to give them time for "learning to read and write. The school is well "attended on the whole, though often boys are taken "away very young for the farms. The girls are "sometimes taken away to work at gloves; I do not "think there is any other cause of non-attendance." It is a parish school, kept by a mistress.

The cottages are very bad, but well situate, and sufficient in number. Some are overcrowded, "and "evil effects have followed; this is owing to the desire "for increasing small wages by taking in lodgers. "They are well ventilated because they are so de-"lapidated. Most have small gardens attached, and "in addition there is an allotment field, divided "among 46 tenants."

Bridgwater Union.—(I.) Slope of Quantock.

194. *Thomas Oldfrey Broadmead, Esq.*, Enmore Park, Bridgwater, Chairman of the Bridgwater Board of Guardians (population of parish of Enmore 314; acreage 1,112A. 2R. 2P. half arable and half pasture).—No girls are employed in agriculture; women are employed in hay and corn harvest, digging potatoes, pulling turnips, &c. Boys go to work at 12 years of age, and work throughout the year; occasionally they

Somersetshire. — Mr. Boyle. — k.

are employed at 10 for a few weeks bird-keeping. There is a good parish school, and they take advantage of it. Cottages in a fair condition, some new and some old, and not over-crowded; they have large gardens, and good supply of water.

195. *Henry Robertson, Esq.*, agent to Lord Taunton, Over Stowey, Bridgwater.—Lord Taunton owns five parishes.

			A.	R.	P.
Over Stowey, population	613,	acreage	3,647	3	35
Nether Stowey	866	„	—		
Spaxton	1,058	„	3,387	2	9
Charlinch	242	„	1,432	2	9
Asholt	181	„	1,252	1	7

Boys are employed in the five parishes pretty generally at all ages and all times, girls also at all ages in light field-work. There is little regular employment for women, and what there is mostly among the turnips. It would be desirable to prevent boys working in the fields under 12 and girls under 15. In the parishes of Over Stowey, Nether Stowey, and Spaxton are very good schools under Government inspection, and very well attended, nearly every family taking advantage of them; there are small schools also in Charlinch and Asholt.

"The cottages on Lord Taunton's estate are rebuilt, or repaired, as they fall into his hands; they are quite sufficient for the supply of labour, and conveniently situate with respect to the farms. The cottages belonging to the life-holders and squatters in the neighbourhood are rather overcrowded, but cases of immorality are not common. These latter are also badly ventilated, but water is abundant. All the cottages have gardens attached, and in addition those on Lord Taunton's estate have allotments very conveniently situate."

Could show me some dreadful cottages; people who are squatters own their own cottages, and live very large families in one room. Used to live by brooming very much, steal heather on Moor and poles in covers, and sell them in Bridgwater; but gone out very much now as wire is much used; live at place called Castle Hill, about 12 cottages. Most of the children come to school now, and many of the men come to work; but work does not seem to come natural to them. One who came threw down his spade after digging an hour, and said he could not do it. So went back to his old life.

Calculates that building a cottage is so much dead loss; for even if you get 2½ per cent. on the outlay, that is swallowed up in repairs.

Wages about 10*s.* and cider; some give 9*s.* It has been tried to make them give another shilling instead of cider; but the labourers like it. They could not get so much cider elsewhere for a shilling; after all if they had not cider given to them, they would go to the public house, and much better not do that.

196. Lord Taunton's Cottages at Over Stowey. Extract from Diary, Feb. 13, 1869:—

Mr. Robertson took me up to see some of Lord Taunton's cottages lately built. The first pair were from a design of his own (Mr. Robertson's); he makes them a double square, 48 feet by 24. On the ground floor was one very good room, the fire-place adjoining the other house, one window to the front, besides this there was a strip, a little wider than the hall-door, taken off all along the outside and the back of the house. The outside consisted of a small vestibule, nearly square—he thinks it makes it warmer to have it in the house—and a smaller room with copper. Had a door out into the garden at the back. Along the back of the house was a small pantry nearly square and the staircase. Upstairs were three bedrooms, two good-sized, the other too small rather, but would do, one of the women said, to put two boys in. In the kitchen was an oven, and a good cupboard. The floor downstairs was of red tiles, which the people complained is hard to keep clean. Common labourers rather like it, but a higher class complain. The walls are of red stone, which is very plentiful, and a little freestone has been worked in, left over from the house. There is a good deal of sloping roof in the bed-rooms. Calculates the cost at 220*l.* (let at 3*l.*), not including pig-sty and privy, which is out behind at the back of the garden. Mr. R. has come to the conclusion that they are rather too small, and is building some new, 54 by 27, of which the cost will be about 10*l.* more; but they are lucky in having the stone on the spot. The tiles are brown Bridgwater, which he likes better than red. He showed me a second pair, which he had taken from some his father, agent to Lord Bath, had built at Horningsham. More pretence to adornment; a good deal bigger, with another room downstairs, built out at the back for a boiler; the porch outside; three good rooms upstairs, the staircase leading up in the floor of one, which makes it more airy, and they like shutting windows; cost about 250*l.*, besides pig-sty. A better class of cottage, and rather above labourers. He had also pointed and roofed with tile several old cottages, which looked like new.

197. *Rev. J. W. Robinson*, vicar of North Petherton (population 3,950; acreage 10,174).—It is a big overgrown parish, its increase chiefly owing to the railway; but it still depends mainly on agriculture. "Women are employed to a certain extent, but "generally on the farm on which their husbands are "employed; the majority of women do not work in "the fields. Girls are not employed as a rule in "agriculture; it is most desirable to prevent the "employment of females together.

"Boys work out from 9 years old and upwards; bird-keeping in the spring and summer, apple-picking in the autumn; as they get older they get into permanent employ on the farm, either about horses or cattle. I would not let a boy go to work till he has passed his twelfth birthday. There is an infant school, a mixed school, under Government in connection with the Church of England; there is also a British school; in both cases there are Sunday schools. They take advantage of these opportunities until the child can earn anything; home duties interfere with the girls' education.

"The cottages in this parish have improved much during the last 10 years. In most cases they are sufficiently near to the farm; but many live in the village who work at outlying farms. Overcrowding is the exception, water scarce. The majority have gardens; they do not let easily unless they have gardens. There is no allotment system; some farmers underlet land in small plots (⅛ acre) at a large rent for potatoes."

The parish being large many labourers live far from their work, but do not work out of the parish.

198. Letter from *Rev. H. B. Hare*, rector of Fiddington, Bridgwater.

The Rev. H. B. Hare begs to inform Mr. Boyle that the average wages of the agricultural labourer in the parish of Fiddington are from 8*s.*, 9*s.*, to 10*s.* per week; that they pay from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* for their cottage; that very few women work in the fields except at turnip-hoeing and the harvest, &c.; and that the boys are set to work as soon as they can earn anything; up to the time they go to work they are at the parish school, and afterwards attend the Sunday school up to the age of 16.

Fiddington Rectory, Bridgwater.

199. Bridgwater Union. (II.) Polden Hill and the Moors.

(N.B.—Polden Hill divides the turbary moor to the North from Sedgmoor to the South, and the hill parishes almost all include some portion of one or other of the moors.)

200. — *Smith, Esq.*, Pawlett, agent to Lord de Mauley.—Nearly all the property he has to manage is grass, and lies on the moor, but has a few hundred acres of arable on the hill. The land is very heavy, and you cannot plough with two horses, so small boys are necessary to lead them. Up the country where the soil is light you can plough with one horse, which the ploughman can drive, so that no boy is necessary. Boys usually begin to drive horses at about 10. No girls work, and in a pasture country there is little work for women; they cut young thistles, which are very abundant and make good food for cattle.

Has only three farms on the estate, which includes most of the Pawlett Hams. Some time ago, when Mr. Smith first came to manage the property on the Scotch system, they got rid of all the small tenants, and divided the farm houses into cottages, which are very large and roomy. In these cottages live the shepherds, who take care of stock, often sent by farmers from 40 miles away to be fattened. Farmers from all over the country come down to the auction, which takes place annually, to take a bit of grazing land, and bid one another up. The best land is about 1,000 acres beside the Parrett, rich alluvial land, just sufficiently raised over the river to escape being flooded.

Wages given to the shepherds and herdsmen 12*s.* a week; the usual thing given by the farmers is 10*s.* and cider; some give as low as 9*s.* and cider. No cottage given.

201. — *Jeffery*, yeoman, Huntspill. — Farms his own land, which is mostly pasture and dairy, so there is not much employment for women and boys. Women cut thistles for the cattle, clean the pasture, get rid of dung, &c.

Gives 10*s.* a week wages and cider; perquisites, such as garden, and lets potato ground.

202. *Mr. Biddicombe*, Shapwick, occupier. — Women are not employed in the fields as much as they used to be; only employs two himself; they are both labourers' wives, who come on a job now and then. They dress ground, plant beans, pick apples, &c. Do not work much except in summer, and a little in autumn among the mangolds. Many of the boys begin work at 7 or 8 years of age, keeping birds; at 10 they drive plough, and take regular work; while younger they come to school most of the year, or have ample opportunities of doing so.

The great employment here for all ages and sexes is digging turf; at this a man can get in the summer 2*s.* 6*d.* a day and liquor; one man takes an acre or two, and hires others to assist him in cutting the turf, which is carted round and sold in the neighbourhood. The pay is so good that it takes away many men, and it would be difficult sometimes to get labour, were it not that the introduction of machinery had made fewer labourers necessary.

Cottages are not much on the farms; has none on his; but it is near the village, and it is no hardship for people to live in the village, and go out to work. Wages 9*s.*, and half a gallon of cider daily. Prefers giving piecework, and the men like it too, but there is none to be given in winter. Employs two boys, one of whom is under 10; he drives plough, which is necessary here as the soil is heavy.

203. *John Sherran*, occupier, Shapwick.—Only employs one woman himself, threshing, apple-picking, &c. There is no other employment for women, so if they want to work must work out in the fields. There are only four girls employed in the fields, aged about 18 or 20; they work just like the married women; and are no worse characters than any of the others. It is an exceptional case for girls to work; most go out to service.

204. *Simon Hayes*, turf-farmer, Shapwick (a tenant of Mr. Strangways, living in a small house built on the turbary moor).—Children begin working in the turf as soon as they can keep birds or do anything; there is a variety of work to be done, some of which is very hard, and employs men, some easily done, which employs women and children. Men cut out the blocks about a foot square, wheel it away, and put it down; boys slit the squares into three or four flat pieces, and then they are left a fortnight to dry. When they are dried, women and children put them up in heaps locally called "hiles," 14 turfs going to a hile. It is a loose kind of heap; seven below and seven above, built up like a card house, so that wind and sun can get in and out and dry the turfs. When they are dry they are put up in a "ruckle," which is shaped much like a sugar loaf, 40 hiles going to a ruckle; if the weather is wet the women come and turn the turfs between the "hiling" and "ruckling," if it is dry that is not necessary. They are left in the ruckles till required to be carried off, and sold in cart-loads; more than three and not four ruckles go to a one-horse cart, 10 to a waggon.

14 turfs make a hile.
560 turfs or 40 hiles make a ruckle.
5,600 turfs, 400 hiles, or 10 ruckles, make a waggon load.

Loading is done by men and boys.

The first job, the cutting, is let to a man, and then the hiling and ruckling to a woman and her children. Some men earn 3*s.* a day at this work; they are usually paid by the day, but sometimes by "covering "an acre," as it is called. Their average pay is 2*s.* 9*d.*, and a gallon of cider. They will not come under half-a-crown a day, and a gallon of cider. Women make 1*s.* a day, and boys 8*d.* Some boys, if good hands, if working by job-work, can make as much as a man.

Nearly all the women work, unless they have a lot of children. It agrees very well with them, they eat a deal more victuals than ever they bring out with them.

The best turf is the blackest; some is quite a light colour. The best black turf sells for 18*s.* a three-horse waggon load in winter, and 12*s.* in summer. The difference is owing to the badness of the roads, which are very soft in winter, so that you have to "bulk the turf up," *i.e.* carry it out in small quantities, and load the waggon outside the moor.

(N.B.—T. Strangways, Esq., to whom I am indebted for being taken to visit Simon Hayes, informed me that he grows some fair wheat on the moor, and that potatoes do very well. This he has managed by employing a man with a horse and cart for the last 30 years to bring down loads of earth from the hill, and mix them with the peat. It is a very paying business both for himself and Simon Hayes; but this success is chiefly due to the railway having been brought right through the centre of the moor, the difficulty of carrying peat being what usually prevents turf-digging from paying.)

205. Cottages at Edington Burtle.

Miserable place, all in the middle of the turf swamp. (1.) Best cottage, a Mrs. Cox, old lady in a wig, where schoolmaster resided, but had been built for the sexton. (2.) Close by a mere hovel with open thatch, and two very small windows, now a stable, where till two years ago, when he died, lived an old farm labourer; chimney corner at one end, at the other was a curtain across to screen his bed. (3.) Visited another good cottage close by; sitting-room and store-room down stairs, and one bed-room; two bed-rooms up. In it live an old man and wife, married son and wife with three children, and one son unmarried.

(4.) *Mrs. Simmons.*—Two rooms upstairs, and 10 persons in the cottage; holds under Mrs. Cox. Has eight children, two big boys 20 and 22, the next 15. Oldest girl 9, the rest smaller.

(5.) *John Holly.*—Lives in half an old dilapidated cottage on the moor, which looked as if it had once been good. Water comes up to the door in floods, and we had to jump two peat ditches to get there; they have a plank, but that had been removed. It has only two rooms, one above and one below; in it live a father, mother, two big sons, older than the eldest daughter, who is 19. She went to service, and

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came back with a child; she has just gone out again to a farmer's family. There are 10 in the house altogether. The mother was out at work; a girl of 9 was kept at home to look after the baby; she comes to Sunday school. They are turf-people.

(6.) *George Cox and wife.*—Lived in a smaller half of the same cottage; four girls at home.

(7.) *Richard Combes.*—Has three boys at home, of whom the eldest is aged 15; two girls, eldest 13; only one room, divided by a partition and a blanket; very ruinous, rough paved stone floor, thatched, with light visible through one place, built of a hard sand, in a ridge of which in the peat the village is built. Leaning forward and nearly tumbling down, kept together by laths. Belongs to Mr. Henniker, but falls in at Lady-day, rent 1*l.* 1*s.* per annum; will probably then be pulled down. Combes himself can read but none of the others, who never come to school; he reads gossiping paper to them over fire on Sunday evening. A wild rough looking little girl, hardly clothed, showed us the cottage.

N.B.—Most of these people on the Moor come into the village in the winter, when the houses are flooded. They live mainly by going "turfing;" will take perhaps half an acre, and husband cut, wife and boys hiling and loading. Then in the winter when money wanted will take a load and go round to sell it at Highbridge, Glastonbury, or elsewhere. A bit of peat bog lets at perhaps 50*l.* for eight years, in which time it is cleared of turf, and becomes only useful for pasture for inferior stock. Men employed as delvers get as much as 18*s.* a week; it is very hard work, as they have to cut it and lift it up to a higher level.

206. Cottages at Bawdrip.

(1.) *Mrs. Clist.*—Bad cottage, thatched, rough stone floor; under Mr. Allen, rent 2*s.* a week; has two rooms below, two above. Husband a carter, and gets 10*s.* a week, the other men get 9*s.* Has seven children; the eldest boy is out at work, not quite 10 years of age; gets 2*s.* a week.

(2.) *Mrs. Sellick.*—Reckoned the best cottage in the village, two rooms above, two below (there are none in the village with three bedrooms); tidy, but rooms very small. Rent 4*l.* per week, and pays rates and taxes. Has seven children, all girls but one, a little boy. Eldest girl at home aged 13. Husband is a labourer; gets 10*s.* a week, which is all the money that comes in.

(3.) *H. Moore.*—Had one of a row of five cottages; small sitting-room downstairs, and very small back-room with not much window, and badly ventilated; two rooms upstairs, but one very small, into which the staircase opened. Paid for it 4*l.* to Mr. Greenhill. Very wretched cottage; but the occupier is making 16*s.* a week, as a sort of under-strapper to Mr. Greenhill. Has eight children at home, and two away in service. The eldest girl at home is about 8 or 9 years old. The two biggest boys sleep downstairs in the back room, the rest upstairs, three or four little ones sleep in one big bed.

207. *Mr. Johnson*, station master, Athelney.—Takes some withy beds of the company, but generally buys his withies, and sends up the country 400*l.* worth in the course of a year. They are cut in December and January, and put in ditches to soak till they grow out; peeling begins about April, when the sap has got up into the bark, of which the growing out is a sign, then they peel easier. They are given in bundles to the poor people, women and children, to peel; they receive 4*d.* a bundle for peeling, and a women with a child to help her can sometimes earn 2*s.* a day; the woman draws each withy through an instrument called a "break," which splits the bark, and then it is easy for a child to pull the bark off. When peeled it is put out in the sun to dry, and when dried is ready for sale. A bundle is two feet in circumference.

Most of the beds belong to the poor people themselves, who have holdings of a few acres. Very few farmers have any; the company has some along-side the railway. The cottages on the road from Borough Bridge to Athelney that look so wretched are held on lives from the Dean and Chapter of Wells; they are very low, mostly one story, but have good gardens.

(N.B.—Much of this country is below the level of the river Parrett, which is banked up to prevent floods.)

208. *Rev. W. C. Lake*, rector of Huntspill (population 1,017).—This is a large parish, and contains a good many small holdings, in the cultivation of which the whole family of the occupier assist. The people as a rule are very well off; wages 10*s.* a week and cider; there is a good deal of piecework too, and many labourers work entirely by the piece, such men getting 2*s.* a day. The railway and the brick-kilns keep up the wages in this neighbourhood. Many of the people have got on so well that they have been able to put by a little money till they have gradually become rich enough to rent a bit of land, and keep a cow; such men have generally very saving habits, and have left as much as 2,000*l.*; they are not likely to subscribe to the school. Cottage rent high, about 2*s.*

Reckons Huntspill a tolerably moral place, most of the women are married in the family-way, but there is very little of worse forms. A great drawback is the cider houses, unlicensed; the police cannot stop the sale of cider, unless they catch the seller in the very act. Cider is very cheap, and there is consequently much drunkenness.

209. *Rev. J. D. Macaulay*, vicar of Highbridge (population 762).—A village that has increased much with the railway, depending very much on the railway works; but there is a considerable agricultural population too, about 400, which existed before the railway came. The cottages are generally on the farms. Wages 10*s.* 6*d.* and cider, cottage rent as high as 2*s.* 6*d.*

210. *Rev. J. Oland Crosse*, vicar of Pawlett (population 580; acreage 3,000, pastoral; includes the Pawlett Hams).—Women only work in assisting their husbands occasionally, "at cracking stones," but not commonly. They sometimes take "thistle cutting," and "right "lawn," *i.e.* clean the grass. Girls work "merely "as gleaners, in apple picking, and potato digging," from 9 years old upwards. Does not see that any restriction is necessary, but it is much wanted in the brick yards, where children of 6 and 7 work bare-footed in the clay. "Does this come under the "Workshops Act?"

Boys begin bird-keeping at about 7, driving plough at about 12. Would like them not to work under 12, but it is "a very difficult question." It is a question between what is good for the mind and what for the body; would wish to combine as far as possible making them gentle and sturdy too. There is a day school with an average attendance of about 50, also a night school in the winter, and a dissenting school, at which, however, Mr. Crosse gives books, and the catechism is taught; only about 12 or 13 children.

Cottages good and sufficient, with two or three exceptions not overcrowded; gardens attached.

211. *Rev. Alfred Bull*, vicar of Woollavington (Woollavington, population about 400, cultivation pastoral; Puriton, population about 600, cultivation more mixed.—Almost entirely pastoral on the *level*, as the reclaimed moor is called, on the hill more arable).

"Women pull turnips, mangolds, &c., plant beans, "hoe wheat and other crops;" girls do little out-door work, "with the exception of general farm "work." I think girls should not be allowed to work in the fields under 13, better not at all, as it has a tendency to corrupt their morals, and to unfit them for domestic duties and service.

"Boys work at all times, and sometimes as young as 7, keeping sheep (as the land in the level is divided by ditches, which are sometimes destitute of water),

and they are employed generally about the farms, and sometimes in driving the horses at plough, planting potatoes, beans, &c. I should say that 10 years old is quite soon enough for them to begin regular work."

At Puriton, a good schoolhouse and buildings, recently erected, with an endowment of about 20*l.*, also recently recovered. But the new code has inflicted a serious loss on the efficiency of the school, and made it impossible to employ a master. I have, as yet, been unable to establish a school at Woollavington, but supported one for seven years entirely at my own charge. There is a building well adapted for the purpose, which both the Poor Law Commissioners and Charity Commissioners have sanctioned being so applied.

It is impossible to prevent the children deserting the school frequently during the year for the purpose of field work, so as to hinder the advantages they would otherwise receive, and retard those that are more regular. A large majority of the parishioners at Woollavington were prepared to vote in vestry for the appropriation of the old house standing in the churchyard for the purpose of a school; but one or two of the inhabitants hindered by threats of deprivation, of work, and other assistance. This opposition has, I believe, passed away through circumstances, such as the death of several of the farmers who objected, because they wanted to sell the house, which I prevented on the score of its being on the glebe, and in other ways.

At Puriton the cottages are insufficient and in a bad condition, overcrowded too, from which much evil has resulted. "Very badly ventilated indeed. In some "cases the windows will not open at all in any of the "rooms, and there is frequently only one bed-room, in "which large families are brought up.

211. *Rev. E. C. Coney*, vicar of Burtle (population 250; cultivation almost entirely pastoral).—There is a large tract of peat land, on which the people are chiefly employed, the men in digging, the women and children in drying the turf. The work lasts from April to August, and almost all the little boys and girls from 8 and 9 years upwards go out to such work, as well as the women. Few boys are employed in farm work, and they from 13 years upwards, no girls. "I consider the employment of girls in the turf "fields is most demoralizing."

"The cottages are with few exceptions very bad; they are sufficient under ordinary circumstances. In the winter the lowlands are flooded, and then cottages above high-water mark are indecently overcrowded; the state of morality is low. Plenty of water; no ventilation. All have not gardens, but most of the cottagers can and do rent (at a high rate) potato ground.

"There is a day school under a fairly competent master, and a Sunday school. In the four turfing months the school is deserted except by some 20 or 30 infants, brought by mothers who go out to work. The rest of the year it is well attended, and Mr. Coney has a very successful night school, to which men will actually come by boat in the winter. Looks upon turfing as most demoralizing; boys and girls get out together, and a deal of harm done; fortunately now gets a good many girls out to service at Weston, where is a regular colony, but there are four or five about the village. A good deal of overcrowding, especially in winter, when relatives, who have intermarried, come off the moor to stop at houses in the village, while their own are flooded. Quite the exception for a woman to marry pure, even in the class immediately above the labourers. A very out of the way place; no resident squire, and no resident parson, till Mr. Coney came down about six months ago to the uninviting spot, having previously lived at Chilton.

"The establishment of a dairy in this county (not six ploughed fields in parish) will consist of three men, a farm girl, and two or three boys; perhaps five pails will go out milking. Men are generally engaged extra on Lady-day, though little work so soon, to secure their presence at mowing. The system of dairymen is followed by some farmers who have farms on the hill, and a bit of land here, which they let with cows to dairymen. A good many small farmers with three to five cows.

212. *Rev. Giles Pugh*, vicar of Shapwick (Shapwick, population 404; acreage 2,292. Ashcott, population 817; arable and pasture; cheese the chief article of sale.)—Boys work from 8 years old; they ought not to work before 10, even at bird-keeping, which is always their first employment.

"Girls are occasionally employed in stone-picking, and other light work, but to no great extent for the farmers, except in picking up apples and potatoes at the time of in-gathering. Of women I may say the same. Both women and girls are more extensively, indeed very generally, employed with their own families in the turf moors of Shapwick and Ashcott alike, many of the men of the labouring class being engaged in cutting turf on their own account, or with or for partners or helpers. Out-door work, especially in the turf moors, has, I am convinced, had a very demoralizing and hardening effect on females in these parishes, especially in Ashcott, where those resident on the moor two miles from the parishes are very uneducated and uncivilized as well as irreligious.

"There is a school for boys and girls at Shapwick, conducted by a mistress, the parish being small; a larger and better school at Ashcott, with a master and mistress. There is also an infant school at Ashcott. The provision is sufficient for the wants of each parish. Early labour takes away the boys, and some parents are too careless and too ignorant to avail themselves of the schools, but they are on the whole well attended, especially in the winter, when children's labour is not required."

In Shapwick there are scarcely enough cottages, but the gardens are good; in Ashcott the supply of cottages is ample, the gardens deficient. "The men are "occupied in the turf moor during spring and summer, "and go from home *guttering* in the winter, which is "bad for themselves, and for their families, serious "evils arising from the separation."

Like the cottages of most other villages they are small and overcrowded, according to my views, and those now beginning to prevail; but still the occupants take in lodgers, whenever they can get them, and crowd them more. I cannot say whether immorality has arisen particularly from this cause, but there is a *low tone* prevalent, especially in Ashcott.

From 43 years' experience in towns and villages, I gather that the overcrowding and deficiency of ventilation, and cleanliness, from want of space and water, is greater in towns than villages.

213. *Rev. J. Warren*, rector of Bawdrip (population 450; acreage 1,826; cultivation mixed).—Boys work in the parish generally from 9 years of age. Girls rarely. Some 20 women in ordinary field-work, during spring, summer, and autumn; they work out a good deal in summer. Men are employed to turn the cheeses; it is too hard work for women. There are two schools in the parish, one in connection with the National Society, with a master and mistress, and a dame's school; attendance at both fair; average joint attendance 45. Three-fourths of the cottages very inferior, and in many cases overcrowded, but evil results rare. Every cottage has a garden or allotment, many both.

214. *Rev. George Oakman Mullens*, rector of Chedzoy (population 455; acreage 1,600). — The parishes in this low ground have no resident squires, and so the people are not well taken care of. They are employed more or less all the year, but chiefly in spring and autumn. Girls work from 12 to 13 years of age. In potato-time, both setting and picking, nearly everybody, man, woman, and child, turns out to work. About 15 married women work out on an average, but at certain times many more. No girl under 15 should be employed in the fields, or boy under 11 or 12.

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"A school is provided at the charge of 1*d.* or 2*d.* "each child (according to age) per week, and an open "school on Sunday. It is impossible, however, to "keep them well at school, owing principally to the "great apathy of the parents, who do not see the "good of it. If remonstrated with, they say, "'O, we'll send Bill next week.' But next week "comes, and no Bill."

The cottages are mostly bad, poor, and overcrowded, few having more than two sleeping rooms, many only one. They are, however, improving; they used to belong to the University of Oxford, but many of the occupiers have now borrowed money at 6 per cent. to buy the cottage they live in. The overcrowding no doubt "tends to immorality." Girls do not go to service much, but stay about, and yet morals are not very bad, perhaps one illegitimate child a year. It is very bad for girls going out to work, they get about with the men, and learn to say things that they hardly understand the meaning of at first.

215. *Rev. E. Huxtable*, vicar of Weston Zoyland (population 894; acreage 2,661; cultivation about three-fourths pastoral, the rest arable, a considerable proportion of which is in potatoes).—"Boys are em- "ployed from 8 years old, from April to November." [N.B.—I suppose *employed* means *employed on hire.* It is right to observe that the parish is broken up into a great number of holdings, very many of which are very small, so that the children are very much employed by their own parents; the girls and young women (*e.g.*) do the milking, the mothers the dairy work.] "The girls are a good many of them employed "during August, September, October, and November "either in leasing or in picking up apples or potatoes, "or in setting potatoes for their parents, or in many "cases in the apple or potato crops for hire, from "about 10 years of age." Women, besides haymaking, in picking up and sorting potatoes. "I should like to "limit the hiring of boys to three days of the week, "requiring their employer to have a certificate from "the schoolmaster of the child having attended "school the other three days, up to 12 years of age.

"There is a good National school under government inspection; 100 scholars, winter. In winter there is also a night school; 30 or 40 attendance. From May to November inclusive attendance at the day school is slack, especially from August to November, in part owing to the indifference which many parents, themselves uneducated, feel to their children being educated.

"Condition of the cottages generally pretty good "with a proportion of cob." None attached to farms, all by the roads or in the street; not overcrowded, several vacant. Few gardens and no allotments, "though in some cases farmers will let an acre or "half an acre for potatoes at about 10*l.* an acre."

216. *Rev. H. Wood*, vicar of E. Lyng and Borough-bridge (population 319).—A very poor place with no resident squire; most of the parish lies beneath the level of the river Parrett, which is banked up; own home five feet below high water mark. Withy-peeling gives a good deal of work for women and children; a child can do it at 5 years of age; price, 4*d.* a bundle peeling, and a women often peels two bundles a day. Wages low, from 7*s.* to 9*s.*, and have to find a cottage.

217. *Rev. Henry Roberts*, vicar of Othery (population 698; acreage 1,820; cultivation chiefly pastoral).—Boys work from 8 to 10 upwards all through the year; would like them not to begin earlier than 10, if they go to school. Girls are not generally employed, women not much except in haymaking and harvest.

There is a Church day school and Sunday school; also a night school during four winter months; the congregational dissenters have also day and Sunday schools. "The girls generally attend the schools; "boys are prevented to some extent by early "labour;" in some instances the parents are indifferent.

"The cottages in many instances are the labourers' own property; such are often small, and not well kept up; some are held on lives under the lord of the manor, at a nominal rent; others are rented at a very low rate. There is no want of water. I cannot trace cases of immorality to the state of the cottages, though I think it desirable that every cottage should have a sufficient number of separate apartments. Most of the cottages have gardens.

(N.B.—"The last four parishes above are situate on islands in Sedgemoor.")

Axbridge Union.

218. *Rev. G. G. Beadon*, rector of Axbridge, and *Mr. Collings*, occupier, met me at the Town Hall, Axbridge, July 18, 1868.—The parish of Axbridge itself is small, and chiefly pastoral; the population a little under 900, chiefly living in the town. It has a feature of its own common also to the two adjoining parishes of Cheddar and Compton, the market gardens, which are situate on the slope of the cliff facing south, and where a large quantity of early peas and potatoes are grown. Potato and pea picking gives a great deal of employment to women and boys. Boys go also bird-keeping, beginning at from 8 to 10. Mr. Collings had a boy of 7 keeping birds for him for three weeks. Girls work very seldom, women a great deal. Mr. Collings has seen 15 to 20 working together, picking peas and potatoes at so much a day. They only work at times, seldom in the winter; perhaps sometimes pulling mangold and turnips. Perhaps 30 or 40 from the parish go, principally to work in neighbouring parishes. They work, as a rule, as long as the men; sometimes, however, do not begin till 8, but it depends. At a pressing time, such as pea-picking, they work 12 or 13 hours a day; for that they get extra pay. Usual pay 1*s.* a day and a quart of liquor. The language is very bad. Among dairies men and women get together too much, and that leads to bad results. Neither gentleman would restrict female labour. As to boys there are not enough of them for the work, but Mr. Collings would like to see more at school. There are enough schools, and no children who do not go to some one or other.

The cottages are not uniformly what they should be, but there is little crowding, except just at present during the railway works; there are a good many navvies lodging in the cottages.

219. *Woman at Axbridge.*—Work most of year for Mr. Henry Durston, picking potatoes, picking peas for a market garden; hoe mangold and turnips, or cut turnips, about three days a week all the year.

Works from 6 to 6. No over-work lately, as peas and potatoes are not so plentiful as usual this year.

Wages 1*s.* a day and pint of cider.

From 10 to 12 women go to Mr. Durston, perhaps 40 or 50 or more work out altogether in the town; eight or 10 go as often as me. The rest do not do so much out-door work.

(Kidney beans have failed this year. Used to be acres and acres.)

Long hours of work in wet have injured her health. Other people complain of the same.

Would rather work in the field than bide at home.

Many children are neglected because their mothers go out to work. Hers are not, she sent them to school.

220. *John Yatman, Esq.*, Winscombe (population 1,326; acreage 3,900).—The cultivation is chiefly pastoral and orchard, with a good deal of garden farming here called "cropping," *i.e.*, peas, potatoes, roots for Bristol market.

Women are employed "very greatly," as well as children and young persons of both sexes from 8 years old upwards, in pea-picking, potato-setting, apple-picking, weeding, and children in bird-keeping too. The hours of work are very irregular. In the "cropped" lands they are often up at 4 a.m. and work till 10 at night. "Certainly no girls ought "ever to be employed in agriculture, except perhaps

" in harvest." Boys' labour also should be restricted. " I would compel every farmer to have two boys, " as well as I do, and send them three days to " school."

School pretty well attended. There are Church and dissenting schools. Three schools in the five hamlets.

" The cottages, as usual in the West of England or in agricultural counties, are infamous, and are badly supplied with water. Most have good gardens, none allotments, that I know of, except mine, for which some of them pay gladly at the rate of 3*l.* an acre, and grow crops of wheat and potatoes alternately."

221. *Rev. J. N. Garland,* rector of Shipham (cultivation mixed; much more arable than in the valley; population 520; acreage 766).—A very bleak, cold place, and out of the general track. People live on potatoes and wheat bread, and it is a wonder how they manage to get on as they do. Yet some of the families that are best off do not seem so, owing to a defect in management. Last year the potatoes failed, and there was great distress. Wages from 10*s.* to 12*s.* There are many farmers who farm only from two to three acres, and of course boys go out working with them. They begin at 10 years, and work all the year round. " Girls occasionally, but at an age " senior to the boys, picking out weeds, cutting " turnips, setting potatoes, and other light work. " Women work occasionally in summer and autumn. " About one-seventh of the entire number are em- " ployed." Light work, weeding and cutting thistles. They must do it, as wages are so low. Boys should not work under 12. To restrict female labour is " desirable, but difficult in a poor parish like this."

" There is a daily National school for both boys and girls; 50 to 60 average attendance. Many do not take advantage of the school from the carelessness of the parents, who, not having had the advantage of education themselves, care not to have it for their children."

Cottage accommodation is bad, as it always is where there is no great proprietor. There is crowding " in " some few cases, but no evil result has come under " the notice of the enquirer during a residence of " three years. Some have small gardens, some small " allotments of a quarter to half an acre within easy " reach."

222. *Rev. W. H. Cartwright,* vicar of Butcombe (population 230; acreage 999; cultivation mixed, grain and roots, with occasionally a field of teasles; a large proportion of the parish,however,is pasture land).—Very much out of the way, and a very neglected parish. It belongs to many landowners, none of whom are resident. A good many Bristol people among them, who having made money like to invest it in land, and often give a good deal more for it than it is worth. Mr. Cartwright mentioned a case of 19 acres of very poor land not worth 15*s.* an acre per annum, selling for 950*l.* Consequently there is no one to take any interest in the property. It is let too in very small holdings, the consequence of which is, that there is no capital, and the farmers cannot afford to keep in order any cottage they possess.

" Women are not employed in the fields to any " great extent, and then usually at haymaking and " potato-dropping or picking-up." They prefer gossiping about the town. Girls are not employed, " that I am aware of." Boys work as soon as they can earn anything. Bird-keeping is generally one of their first employments, dropping potatoes at planting time, and picking them up at digging. They should work " certainly not earlier than 13 years, " and the labour should be of a kind suited to the " constitution of the child. One year at school after " that age will in most instances be of greater benefit " to the child than five previous ones, both as respects " moral training and bodily health.

" We have a good school under a mistress. Early labour is one great hindrance to its being as useful as it might be. If a penny can be earned in any way by a child, it is always kept away from school, so that not only is the child taken away from school permanently, but its attendance while there is very irregular."

The cottages " are very bad in general, neither " supplied with water, nor drained, nor ventilated. " Seldom more than one sleeping-room for father, " mother, children of both sexes, and sometimes a " lodger. As a rule they are very wretched, and " fertile causes of disease and immorality. A few of " the cottages have gardens. There are no allot- " ments. The farmers often let plots of land to the " labourer."

223. Visit to cottages at Butcombe. Extract from Diary, July 11, 1868:—

Mr. Cartwright is now restoring the church, and building a cottage for the schoolmistress. He built the school (at present there is no mistress temporarily, which accounted for the number of dirty children I saw running about), and seven cottages, which were infamous, he pulled down. He bought two semi-detached cottages near the rectory, and is now throwing them into one. He took me down to see some of the cottages. Mrs. Clarke has seven children (carpenter's wife) in two downstair rooms and two bedrooms; there is a lodger too, an unmarried labourer. A few doors off was a small shop, in which were 10 children in two bedrooms. These were favourable specimens, but we saw another thatched cottage in which lived a man and wife and five children in one room. There were holes in the roof. In winter they have to move the bed about to escape the rain. For this he pays 50*s.* a year to a Bristol man. I asked Mr. C. if he could not have got a better home for the money. It appears that he could, but the people are so listless they do not care. His name is also Clarke, a very common name here. It appears they intermarry very much, to which is much attributed physical inferiority, as also to their living so much on nothing but wheaten bread. He was one of a family of 14, who used to live like rabbits, scarcely dressed, and if any one came into the village, scurry away like rabbits to hide their nakedness. Mr. C. had got up a clothing club, since which they have dressed better, but even now they are sensibly inferior in personal neatness to the neighbouring population.

Yet he does not consider the morals lower than most of the neighbourhood. There is only one case in the parish of a married man living with another man's wife, and this woman was so barefaced that at a distribution of blankets, when purposely omitted, she came to ask the reason why. A young farmer had three children by a girl, but married her after at Bristol. There are some who marry just before a child is to be born, but it is the exception. (Of course they learn immodesty in the cottages, but it does not seem necessarily to lead to a lower state of morality.) Mr. Cartwright's impression is that the adults are hopeless, that the only chance of getting an improvement is by working on the rising generation. The boys are not taken from school till 10 or 12 years of age, but it is from 14 to 20 that he hopes to make his impression. He thinks this is only to be done by getting personal influence over them, and the way he hopes to get it is by not only establishing a night school, but by getting influence over one or two young men, and through this influence getting it over the other young men in the parish.

224. *Rev. Wm. Hunt,* vicar of Congresbury (population 1,258; acreage, 4,429a. 1r. 12p.; cultivation pastoral; farms, grazing and dairy).—About 50 boys in the parish are employed in the fields, but very few under 12 years of age. There are boys here who have never been to school, but that is their own or their parents' fault. " Distance does not affect the " school attendance, except in bad weather. The " actual school payment does not keep any away. " But the poor send their boys to farms and their " girls to service far too early, on account of their " poverty, and no wonder."

Somersetshire.

Mr. Boyle.

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	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
On the books - -	25	36	61
Average attendance -	21	29	50

"Sewing is taught every afternoon except Saturdays."

No women are regularly employed on the land, "but very many are employed as dairy and farm "servants. Their work is really in the farm yard, "and I think that the lifting heavy pails, &c. affects "the health injuriously, and I have observed that "there are several cases of disease (*e.g.*, ruptures, "&c.) from this cause.

"Hardly any cottages have three bed-rooms, and "I do not consider that two are sufficient for large "families. They are mostly with three rooms, the "two bedrooms often small; ventilation, on the "whole, good; accommodation insufficient for decency. The number crowded together in a bed-"room is most debasing, some young women over "13 and up to as old as 22 sleep in the same bed-"room with mother and father. In some extreme "cases worse arrangements are made. Modesty is "destroyed and the whole tone of the mind lowered. "I am sure much depravity exists from this source. "In cases of sickness and death this is especially detrimental to health and comfort, but at the best of "times it is much to be resisted, if possible. Many "are in the hands of Bristol charity trustees;" their cottages are well kept. The rest in the hands of small owners, sometimes of the poorest class above paupers. In consequence no repairs are done, no improvements made, and the cottages so bad that they are only inhabited by the worst characters, and quickly fall to pieces. Rent for a three-roomed cottage 4*l.* to 5*l.*

With respect to the application of the Factory Act to school attendance in agricultural parishes, half-day system, or alternate day, would not do for the work.

The Printworks Act would make any systematic arrangement of lessons so as to benefit the children very hard. I should strongly recommend a combination of the half-day system and the Printworks Act, "by school attendance so many half days in the six "months," to be greater in case of girls, and to include a good proportion of afternoons to be spent by those above 6 in learning to sew."

225. *Rev. J. B. Archer*, vicar of Churchill (population 806).—Complains much about bird-keeping, but his chief remarks on the subject of cottages. At Stock Lane, close by, there are some wretched cottages, which depend for water entirely on the brook into which their sewerage falls. Sometimes a flood comes off Mendip and scours it, but at present it is filthy. They do not believe when fever comes in it being their own fault, but look upon it as the hand of God.

226. *Rev. R. Lawrence*, Bleadon rectory (population 630; acreage 2,745, chiefly pastoral, under 300 acres of arable.)—Girls not employed, women hardly at all; boys from the age of 10 years. "There "is a National school, but many children are prevented "attending by their parents requiring their services "at home, and they come therefore irregularly. Few "boys remain after 10 years of age, being then "required for agricultural labour."

Cottages tolerable, and not much overcrowded; nearly all in the village, few on the farms; badly supplied with water; "the supply being chiefly from "a parish well at some distance from many of the "habitations." Ventilation poor. Gardens few, and mostly small, but some tolerable; there are allotments, of which many take advantage.

227. *Rev. Frederic Du Sautoy*, vicar of Mark, (population 1,217; acreage 4,495; chiefly pastoral.)

Employed in the parish in agricultural labour.

	Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.
Boys -	10	10	20	30	70
Girls -	—	—	10	20	30

Women over 18.	
Married.	Unmarried.
Wives of Farmers.	Daughters of Farmers.
50	50

The usual employment of both sexes is dairy work, and hay and corn harvest. Children work eight hours. Adults about four hours daily, milking (milking in wet weather is bad for the health); adults about 12 hours daily, agricultural labour.

No need to restrict female labour; would have no boys labour under 14, or would make them do half-day work up to 14.

Few cottages have more than two bed rooms, but ventilation and drainage are much improved. Rent moderate, water supply bad, "arising from the absence "of springs in the alluvial soil; the water used is for "the most part from the rhines and pits."

Approximate Number of children of the labouring class in the school at Mark.

On register of the school.

	Boys.			Girls.		
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.
Summer - -	32	8	40	20	5	25
Winter - -	38	12	50	20	12	32

Average attendance.

Summer - -	28	6	34	16	4	20
Winter - -	29	15	44	14	10	24

There are very few children neither at school nor at work; about 50 males and as many females growing up imperfectly educated. There is no night school, the distance the boys would have to come, making it impossible to maintain one. The school-room not being central, also materially affects the attendance at the day school, in a parish 15 miles in circumference. "The dames' schools also seriously "affect the attendance, and seem to require some "supervision; perhaps a certificated licence might "do good. The girls are taught sewing, knitting, "&c."

228. *Rev. J. Kempthorne*, vicar of Wedmore district, 12 hamlets.

Wedmore population	-	2,300
Theale „	-	800
Blackford „	-	600
		3,700

Acreage 10,000)—A very large parish, and one of chiefly dairy farms, which vary in size from a small one managed by a farmer and his wife, to one that employs two or three women milking, and boys driving the cows. A few boys are taken early to keep crows, but there is little corn grown; they pick apples also, as it is a cider district. Is against compulsory education, thinks it would never answer.

There are about 100 children on the school books, average attendance, 48. Irregular attendance is much to be deplored. "There is no great appreciation of the benefits of a good education on the part "of the farmers and labourers."

"Fresh and better cottages are being built. I wish the Prince Consort's plan of a greater number of rooms would be adopted."

WELLS UNION.

229. *Henry Davis, Esq.*, Oakhill farms about 1,000 acres (on Mendip), independent of 300 acres of plantation.—Employs one boy under 10 and over 8; four between 10 and 13 years of age; 10 between 13 and 18; total under 18, 15. Employs no girls under 18; none unmarried over 18, and three married women; they are employed in picking stones, hacking thistles, keeping birds, and other work; most live on the farm, but some about a mile away. No treatment that is injurious, nor is any restriction necessary on the labour of women or boys. "Parents "with large families would suffer greatly were their "children prevented from working. No rule of the "above kind (Factory Act, &c.) need be made for "this neighbourhood; the children at idle time may "go to school, but farmers could not employ them "were they to come and go as suggested above."

229. (*a*). *Edward Hobbs*, bailiff to H. Davis, Esq. Greenore farm.—Mr. Davis farms 1,400 acres, mostly arable. Used to be the biggest farm in the West, till last returns. Hardly any cottages on it, which is the worst of it, so some of the people have to come five miles; comes himself five miles. Very bleak and high, only four boys under 13 employed, none under 10; won't have any under 10; are of no use. The furthest they come is from Chewton Edge, 1½ mile distant; they keep birds, lead horses, &c. Only three women work on the farm; they weed corn, cut thistles, &c. There used to be 100 people employed on the farms, when wages were low; there are now only 13, principally owing to the use of machinery.

230. *Mr. Carville*, agent to C. Tudway, Esq., Wells.—It is entirely the fault of the parents if their children are not sent to school now, as there are so many schools. Little boys are only employed for six months in the year, when the corn is first sown; the age of such boys is generally from 7 to 10. They begin at six in the morning, and stay all day, but then the days are getting short, and they are off the field before sunset. Wages, bird-keeping, varies from 1*s.* to 3*s.* They keep off the birds by hallooing, and generally have a small hut to protect them from the bad weather; no holiday on Sunday; it is light work, but plenty of it. After they are too old to keep crows there is no regular work for boys, except taking care of cattle; used formerly to drive the plough horses, but that has gone out. Mr. Tudway's property consists chiefly of dairy farms, so there is in fact little work for women and children, who are mostly employed indoors. The children of occupiers of small holdings from seven to 10 acres are much more employed than those of labourers; they work with their father. Mr. Tudway's labourers live near Wells, and, owing to the extensive charities in that city, are well enough off without sending their wives and families out to work in the fields. Employment of women is quite exceptional; is has gone out a great deal of late years; they go out on their own account leasing corn after harvest, and then all the children have a holiday, and go out with them. No traces of gangs, and there never have been any, except that in hay-making time the farmers will get a few women and children together to make hay. The property is well supplied with cottages, and no one has to go far to work.

231. *Mr. Mildane*, bailiff to E. Lovell, Esq., Maresborough farm (acreage 600).—There are no women employed on the farm; they think it pays them better to stay at home; he does not like women in the fields, they make a noise when they do come, which is usually in hay and harvest time, to help their husbands drink the cider. Four boys employed on the farm, all from 10 to 13; none of them can read or write; never had a boy under 10. Two boys come from Croscombe (two miles); the other two live in a cottage on the farm. Their work, in spring bird-keeping, cutting turnips; in summer, weeding corn, haying, dressing land, picking stones, hacking thistles; in autumn, pulling turnips, keeping crows; picking and pulling weeds in winter. Never put to any work too hard for them. One generally assists the shepherd. Hours of work 6–6 in summer, not so particular in winter. When bird-keeping work all Sunday, but are paid. They are allowed half hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner. There are not enough cottages on the farm, and most of the labourers come from Croscombe or Horrington; does not much like his labourers, who are not such a good class of men as Mr. Tudway's. All the cottages are not let; it is a bleak cold place (near the top of Mendip). The cottages are let rent free to men labouring on the estate, 10*s.* being the wages, 12*s.* for carters and shepherds, and a cottage; but most prefer living down in the valley, and coming up to work, because holding cottages like this they can be turned out at a week's notice, and are not allowed poultry or pigs. The cottages are very good, all four rooms, with outbuildings at the back; two cottages to 100 acres the usual thing; there is no scrub-boy. I saw four boys working, two big ones hoeing mangold, the other two following and singling them. These Mr. Mildane told me are not regular workmen, but he hired two big boys, (17 or 18) at 6*s.* the acre, to hoe the mangold, telling them to bring two smaller ones to single; they give the little boys 6*d.* a day. A shadow of the gang system.

232. *Wm. Allen* (12 years old).—Had never been to school. Came from parish of Horrington, and was working with three other boys singling mangolds.

Wages 6*d.* a day, paid by his big brother who hoed. Usual work bird-keeping, thinning mangolds, &c. Seemed in a great fright, but his brother had just thrown a clod at him, and thought Mr. Lovell meant to ask about it.

233. *Joseph Allen* (19 next month), rather doubtful about his age.—Has been to school, but forgot all he learnt; never went to school much, cannot recollect how many years ago he went last.

234. *Joseph Allen*, father of above, shepherd to Mr. Lovell; wages 12*s.* and cottage.—Has four boys, all out at work; all boys been to school a little, but very little, at Horrington. As soon as they are able to work they get work, one or two at 7, generally not till 10. The work is bird-keeping and sheep-keeping. Only one of his boys can write; two of the boys working are his. He has one daughter at service.

235. *Thomas Penny* (does not know his age, thinks about 12 or 13).—Lives in one of Lovell's cottages. Came originally from Yeovil. Has never been to school, but wants to go. Does the regular thing in work.

236. *Alfred Foxwell* (age 10).—Has been to school but forgotten. Masons' boy.

237. *Rev. R. Lambert*, curate of Wells (has just been appointed to a Wiltshire parish).—The agricultural districts in the neighbourhood of Wells have lately been separated from the town. Believes the condition of Somerset very superior to Wilts, where the wages are lower. Has a parish of 2,000, and believes that five children in eight are illegitimate, which he puts entirely on female agricultural labour, the farmers setting the bad example themselves; one instance, a farmer and Mr. Lambert's own churchwarden, and not at all ashamed of it. Highly approves of the Commission, and hopes he will be visited in Wiltshire.

238. *Rev. B. Brewitt*, rector of Westbury (population 666).—The cottages are crowded, but it is difficult to interfere, as many of them are freeholds; the rest are held of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. There is a good deal of crowding, especially now with the railway coming, as the navvies lodge in the village, and of course that is a bad thing. The cottages are of a bad class, as is usually the case with Church property, where little is done to repair them.

Attendance at school is bad and intermittent. The number on the books 60, the average attendance about 35. The parish is chiefly grass land, but on the

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slopes of Mendip potatoes are much grown. In the potato setting and picking time nearly every boy and even girls are employed, for every child can pick up a potato. Then comes the apple-picking time, when much the same happens. There are a good many large gardens to the cottages, and small holdings of three to four acres, and parents find it pays them better to have their children working among the potatoes, or in the garden, than to send them to school. Mr. Brewitt thinks sometimes that the expense keeps people from sending their children to school; they had rather spend the 2*d.* in an extra glass of beer or cider.

There are a great many dissenters in the parish. Mr. Brewitt himself first established the school, and then would have no children in it but those who came to the Sunday school; then he had 80 on the books; since then he had to relax in deference to public opinion, and now he has but 60, and 25 in the Sunday school. He does not think there are any children who have never been to school, but they are taken so early to the fields that they forget all they have learnt. There is a night school in the winter, which begins with 40 pupils and dwindles to six perhaps; some as old as 40, who have never learnt before, come, but all seem to think they are conferring a favour, as when they go to church. Does not see how alternate-day system or half-day can be applied.

There are some large dairy farms in the parish; one man farms 400 acres; but few people are employed; but each generally has a big lad of from 16 to 20, and a dairymaid or farm servant of 15 to 20, who milks the cows and the lad drives them; it leads to immorality, as the farm being fitted up much with cheeses, &c., and the servants thrown together in the back part, the natural consequences result. There is therefore a great disinclination to send daughters out to farm service, and a wish to get them into gentlemen's service. The large farmer mows and does everything by machinery, and on whole farm has but four or five hands.

239. *Rev. Charles Dimsdale,* Priddy (population 251; acreage 1,300; cultivation, mixed and mining).—Over 80 women are employed. "I think that "females working mixed with the opposite sex is bad "for their morals, manners, and language, and begets "rudeness and coarseness."

About 40 children are employed; would not wish them to work under 12 years of age, or more than eight hours at a time. "Alternate daily attendance "would be most suitable, if not daily."

Approximate Number of children at school in summer.

—	Boys.			Girls.			Total Boys and Girls.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
On Register of the school.	20	10	30	25	15	40	70
Average attendance	10	8	18	20	12	32	50

There are more in winter. Bad weather seriously affects the attendance in this scattered parish. "The "people cannot afford to send more than two-thirds "of their children on an average through poverty. There is no night school at present. It is "not good "for females to go in the evening, and the weariness "and lassitude of the boys is the principal obstacle to "their learning in the evening, and it is most difficult "in this parish to obtain teachers."

"The cottages in this parish are mostly squatters' huts, and most of them no better than stables, and some so filled that it is impossible that morality and decency can exist. I believe the bad cottages of the poor throughout the kingdom is a great source of immorality and bad health. There are two or three private landowners to whom most of the land belongs. The place improves a little."

240. *Rev. F. Philpott,* vicar of Chewton Mendip.—A large parish, nearly 1,000 population, and extent 70,000 acres. Nearly all belongs to Lady Waldegrave. Has about 150 in his school, but attendance irregular, and believes will never be better unless legislated for by application of Factory Acts. Children taken away from school very early to go and keep crows, which they do by hallooing at them.

241. *Rev. — Brown* (curate of Horrington).—Thinks only system of education possible is to work half the year, and go to school the other half. Boys labour intermittent, and often out of work for weeks together.

The cottages at Horrington are very crowded, and the people take in lodgers whenever they can get them, at 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, which nearly pays rent, seldom exceeding 2*s.* Knows an instance of eight people living in one cottage of two rooms; in one case four people, husband, wife, grown-up daughters, and son of 18 all sleep in the same room. Most of the cottages have a good garden; a good many of the cottages belong to the occupants. Many Horrington people work at a distance from home, as the parish is large and thinly inhabited, and the school attendance irregular, especially in wet weather. The people do not like paying their 2*d.*

Mr. Brown has seen a few cases of women in the fields, and thinks the moral effect very bad.

He thinks it would be a good thing for the boys' hours of work to be restricted; has known instances of a boy having to go into Wells twice a day; got up at 5 and not get to bed till 11, one of the visits to Wells being late at night.

Attendance at school about 40, less in winter.

242. *Rev. T. Jeffery Bumpsted,* rector of Dinder (population 251; acreage 1071·1·39).—No female labour; only three or four boys in the parish work out, and that in different sorts of farm-work. "I would "say, let boys go to work as soon as they are worth "wages."

—	Boys.			Girls.			Total Boys and Girls.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
Attendance at School	9	4	13	10	7	17	30

There is an evening school open from October to March, two nights a week, two and a half hours a night. It is self-supporting, and adequately supplies the wants of the day school. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and dictation taught. Number of scholars, 11.

"Cottages better than the average in country "villages. Many belong to Mr. Somerville, the lord "of the manor; nine to tradesmen with whom the "tenants are expected to deal;" rent for a moderate cottage with a good garden about 4*l.* per annum.

243. *Rev. John Hickley,* rector of Walton (population 750; acreage 2,400; cultivation mixed).—There is female labour, but not among girls; they work for the most part in a small factory within reach. Female labour is not injurious, and those who work out are no worse class than others; they get 8*d.* a day, but do not really make any profit of it with wear and tear of clothes, &c. Principal work, bean-planting and potato-setting.

Boys begin work "very early, often at 7 (instances "even earlier, but then employed by parents); at all "times of the year," bird-keeping, plough-driving, and sheep-keeping, and when they once begin to be employed will get regular employment, there always being odd jobs for them to do about the farm. "It "is desirable that they should not be put to regular

"farm-work so early certainly; I do not feel sure 'that legal restriction could effect the object."

Partial work at an early age, 8, would not do harm; they must begin early to learn their business." Bird-keeping is very idle work. The parents are so poor that the extra money is a very great object to them, and it would be unjust to say that in a large family any sturdy boy who can make his living must go to school, and be all the time supported by his father. In face of rents increasing with the demand for land it is very difficult for wages to rise; the only means by which they could, would be a combination among the labourers; but that never occurs to them; they are a stupid down-trodden race, and then they have not the same opportunities of meeting enjoyed by people in the towns, who can combine, and form trades unions.

They are still very superstitious; the custom of roasting a cat alive, when any one is supposed to be bewitched, has not gone out. Recollects at a funeral seeing a bystander throw a handkerchief holding bread and cheese on the coffin, when he came to the passage "Deliver us from evil." It is supposed to be a cure for the king's evil.

"Ample means of education; good school, excellent master; for farm labourers and boys there has been a free night school all the winter for 15 years; advantage not fully used. Cause, chiefly the ignorance and degradation at home, and this the result of centuries of neglect.

"Cottages not much to complain of; some defective, but gradually improving, as leaseholds fall into the owners' hands."

244. *George Blindman* (mason), teacher at Admiral Tryon's night-school.—As a boy went to school at Dinder. Has two or three boys of 10 or 11 just left school; most of them from 14 to 16, but a few up as old as 22; some married men with families up even to 30. All are at work all day.

School twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reading on Fridays. It is under Admiral Tryon's management. The average attendance is 10; last winter 16 came.

Women came to the readings, often as many as 80; but not on other nights. Mr. Field and self only teachers.

Shepton Mallet Union.

245. Meeting of the Shepton Mallet Board of Guardians, Mr. Richard Norman in the chair.

Mr. Richard Norman says that children are much kept from school on account of the expense. Men with only 10*s.* per week wages cannot afford to send children to school, if they have a large family. He knows two families of seven children under 9 years of age, and in each of them the father would have to spend nearly 1*s.* in schooling for his children; at such a time pence are valuable. He thinks that in the case of large families the board of guardians ought to be allowed to advance money to parents of large families, who are not receiving relief. Where there is an able-bodied father who can get work no assistance can be given, and yet his wages are not sufficient for him. A married woman who called the other day about receiving aid for her children, got none until she received a hint to say that one or two of them were ill.

Very few boys are employed in any way in the union, as it is a dairy country, and boys are not wanted. They are not wanted to drive the cattle, which is generally done by disabled men; there is usually one boy, the scrub-boy, employed on the farm. But Mr. Pratt (rector of Shepton) complains that in the potato-setting time, and also in the beer-bottling at the great breweries at Shepton, and the cyder-bottling boys are much taken from school. Mr. Denman complains that it is generally difficult to get boys to work early enough.

The young women employed on the farms, who are only employed in dairy-work and milking, generally bear very good characters; and men will always rather take a wife out of a farm than out of one of the factories. Women hardly work at all except in making hay; in some places men will not work with them, on account of the incessant jokes that go on.

The impression on me was, the board seemed to wish that education should be compulsory, but they thought that neither the Factory Acts nor the Small Workshops Act were applicable to the case. The feeling seemed to be in favour of night schools; the difficulty being in the fact that boys go to sleep after a long day's work, and that many of the boys go to bed at 6, almost directly after they come in; and that the numbers dwindle gradually.

At Croscombe the Sunday school is very well attended by boys who work all the week. It is a populous parish, and provides labour for several parishes near. There are men and boys, who go up to work for Mr. Lovell, more than three miles; it is under no one's charge in particular, in which respect it differs from Dinder, where, as also at Doulting and Pylle, cottages were pulled down some years ago, because the landlords before the Union Chargeability wanted to escape rates, and found they could get labourers from other parishes.

They go some distance to work also from Wootton and Werminster; from Kelverstreet in Shepton they go to work at Doulting.

The great complaint was that the cottages are bad all over the district; the best are on Lord Portman's and Mr. Napier's property; there were 20 or 30 built the other day at East Pennard. No cottage should have less than three bedrooms. In Shepton as many as 10 or 12 live in one cottage of two rooms. The reasons seem to be that the people are content to live where they do; and that a good many of the cottages are copyhold, and others held under the town; of course nothing is so hard to remedy.

At Pennard the wages are 12*s.*, at Shepton 10*s.* and food, which comes to 5*s.* or 6*s.* more; at Pylle 9*s.* and a garden, which gives the landlord, whether for good or ill, a greater hold over the labourer.

246. *Berkeley Napier, Esq.*, East Pennard.—Does not believe that women are employed at all in field labour; and as for boys, no legislation can stop parents with small wages from sending them to work as soon as old enough. A widow with six children, if the children are not allowed to go to work, would be better off in the union than out, for there she is allowed 1*s.* 6*d.* for each child.

247. Cottages belonging to B. Napier, Esq. East Pennard. Extract from Diary, March 18, 1869.

Drove on to East Pennard, where call upon Rev. Mr. Goldney, who took me to see some cottages built by Mr. Napier, principal landlord. Four pairs built on a small plot of ground, of stone and slate; each cottage has about 25 perches of allotment round it. Let for 4*l.* to labourers; the policeman, whose cottage we went over, pays 5*l.* The principal sitting room has a window to the front, and the bedroom above has a gable; the entrance is rather thrown back, and from it a passage leads out to the back, the staircase and a small larder being on the left-hand side, the kitchen and back kitchen on the right. In the kitchen is an oven; the boiler is in the back kitchen (don't like boiler in-doors). The back kitchen window opens at right angles to the privy door, the privy being attached to the cottage, but the people say there is never any smell. Upstairs there are three bedrooms; the front very good and with a fire-place, but that, strange to say, was papered up; the smaller rooms were one over the back kitchen, the other over the larder and passage out at the back, neither with fire-places. A small family of four children, and, as usual, the third bedroom used for potatoes.

248. *Rev. Henry Pratt*, rector of Shepton Mallett (population 5,147).—Is very much in favour of night

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schools, but complains of the difficulty of getting them well attended. Grown-up men do not like to come with boys, who perhaps know more than themselves; the attendance begins well, and dwindles. Charges 2*d.* for attendance, and believes that that brings people; for having once paid their 2*d.* they do not like not to get their money's worth. Would like to have a Government grant, but fears that an examination would frighten away most of the pupils. It only goes on in winter. Does not at all approve of the Factory Acts being applied to agriculture; would not himself like to employ a boy alternate days or half a day; and as for the Small Workshops Act, they would forget very soon what they learnt unless they came to a night school. Is rather inclined to a plan of sending them to school for a few months in the winter, say four, when there is little work to be done in the fields.

There is great immorality in Shepton. In that respect thinks that towns are far worse than the country; can venture to judge, having himself come from a country parish, and found a great difference. The cottages are very bad, but what is to be done? There is no property that pays so badly.

249. *Hon. and Rev. Edward P. A. Talbot,* vicar of Evercreech (acreage 4,000; population 1,321; has much decreased; the census of 1861 included navies on railway and factories, which do not exist now. Cultivation pastoral; grass-land, dairy cheesemaking).—"No child under 12 years of age should be allowed "to work so as to prevent regular attendance at school; "Sunday schools should be included in school attendance. Education good, might be better by compulsion. No night school at present; tried for several "years without any success. Education of younger "children good, which seems to be the reason, most "can read and write, and those who cannot do not "care to learn.

Number of children at school.

—	Boys.			Girls.			Total Boys and Girls.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
On the register -	73	20	53	64	15	79	172
Average attendance	34	19	93	29	14	43	96

Winter and summer much the same.

Cottages generally bad; few with three bedrooms, mostly with one or two; chiefly belong to small owners of property. Rent low.

250. *Rev. A. Goldney,* vicar of East Pennard (population 656; acreage 2,880; cultivation chiefly pastoral; the farmers producing cheese; there are also orchards, and a very small quantity of arable).—In spring a few boys are employed in bird-keeping; in autumn women and children in apple-picking, in winter a few women and boys in ground-dressing. Would like boys not to work under 10; "mothers generally do not "consider the earnings of the little boys sent out to "keep birds sufficient to pay for wear and tear of "clothes, &c., they let them go to accommodate the "farmers, often very unwillingly. Moral evil is produced by the practice of sending dairy-maids into "the fields to milk the cows in company with a lot "of men. In bad winter weather this is injurious to "health, the milking taking up four or five hours "daily; the great amount of Sunday work is much "to be deplored;" but does not see how it is to be helped.

The total school attendance in summer is 65; 28 boys, 37 girls.

The total school attendance in winter is 54; 20 boys, 34 girls.

Nearly all the boys are insufficiently educated; scarcely any girls; "the boys generally forget what "they have learnt at school, or nearly so." There is a night school open 24 weeks from October to April open four nights a week, 1½ hour. Attendance 10. Inadequate to supply deficiencies of the day school, owing to late hours of work, and distance from the school-house. Reading, writing, and arithmetic taught.

Distance in bad weather interferes with attendance in the day school, especially with the very young children. "In a few families the parents are willing "to send their children to work at an early age for "the sake of the earnings; chiefly when the parents "are impoverished or demoralised by the public-"houses and beer-shops.

"In some cases the cottage accommodation is very "bad, both sexes and all ages being mixed together "in one bedroom; the moral effect is bad; the injury "to health is not very perceptible, as the cottages are "much scattered; the poor do not generally complain "of discomfort, being accustomed to be crowded "together."

The principal landowner has lately built eight cottages, with three bedrooms each, and out-buildings, ample garden ground, and water supply; he has a few other cottages, with two bedrooms each, roomy and substantial. Many cottages have been built on waste land (under the lord of the manor) by poor persons, and are small and badly built. Some are owned by farmers, they are mostly small and inconvenient. In some cases the drainage is bad.

The principal landowner lets his best cottages at 4*l.* a year each; the inferior cottages at rents varying from 8*d.* to 1*s.* per week. A few cottages, owned by small tradesmen, are let at a much higher rate,—much too high; the demand exceeding the supply.

251. *Rev. W. M. H. Leir,* rector of Evercreech (population 1,218; acreage, 4,509; cultivation chiefly pasture—dairy cows fed and good cheese produced).—Women work out in the bean-planting season, and occasionally weeding corn and haymaking; no girls; "boys as soon as they are able to earn a few pence per "week." They ought not to go "before 10 years of "age, or they have little chance of even the most "elementary education." There is a daily National school, and another kept by the Wesleyans besides two dames' or infant schools. There are "more "cottages than enough for the supply of the la-"bourers; they are, however, too small, and the usual "results are unfortunately too frequent;" most have gardens, and some labourers rent small plots of land of their employers.

252. *Rev. Wm. Meade,* rector of Binegar (population 258; acreage 1,220; cultivation chiefly pastoral).

Statement of children under 18 in the parish employed in agricultural labour.

—	Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.
Boys -	1	2	10	11	24
Girls -	—	2	3	8	13
Total -	1	4	13	19	37

N.B.—The only women employed in the fields over the age of 18 are two widows.

The employment in spring consists in bird-keeping, stone-picking, ground-dressing, weeding corn, potato-setting.

The employment in summer consists in thinning weeds and mangold; milking.

The employment in autumn consists in potato-digging.

The employment in winter consists in tending sheep and cattle.

As a rule they live near their work, but many of the parishioners go to work for Mr. Davis up at Greenore farm, a long way to walk, but Mr. Davis has not cottages on his property; this is, however, the exception.

Female employment ought to be discouraged, but it is hard to prevent it in large families, where girls preponderate; "it is not good for morals, or for pre- "paration for domestic duties; and dressing ground "in bad weather causes sickness. I think parents, "landlords, and employers ought to be constantly "reminded, *i.e.* yearly, of their duty to see that "women and children are not overcrowded. Some "Government recommendations might well be read "out in churches and chapels every spring on the "subject. Some boys of 6 can be of use, some of 8, "and if they come to school in the winter, they might "be allowed to earn something in the spring." An application of the Printworks would be more feasible than the Factory Act. But to ensure attendance at school would recommend "night schools in winter "months, from the middle of October to the end of "February for big boys, and regular attendance in "winter months and whenever not employed for "smaller children."

There are on the school books, 11 boys under 10, and 2 over. Total 13.
There are on the school books, 13 girls under 10, and 8 over. Total 21.
} Total 34.

About 20 under the age of 13 attend very regularly, the rest are irregular. It is a drawback that the school is three-fourths of a mile from the village, and poverty sometimes prevents the parents having the pence ready on Monday morning. There is no evening school; it has been tried, but given up owing to all the work falling upon the rector. All the children in this parish come to school, but some of those in Wells parish, which is very extensive, stretching up Mendip to within a short distance of Binegar, are too far off to go to school, and have never been.

"Our cottages are moderately good; some are thoroughly bad and dilapidated, being held on lives, which is a great evil in cottage property; several have two bedrooms, hardly any three; they take a lodger if they can cram him in. The landowners cottages are pretty good, but those which are sub-leased are in various stages of dilapidation and discomfort. The landlords ought constantly to be reminded of the necessity of having privies or closets for their cottages. This is a great point; morality, education, health, and comfort are all affected, in my opinion, by the absence of privies. Nothing done in building new cottages, because the whole parish is agricultural, and is held on lives under the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Rent varies 4*l.* to 6*l.*

253. *Rev. John Davis*, vicar of Ashwick (population 573).—There is no school in the parish; but the children go, some to Binegar, and some to the new district of Oakhill that has been formed out of part of this parish and part of Shepton Mallet. There are very few who do not go to school somewhere, with the exception of some girls, who go out nursing as soon as old enough; but there are no boys utterly uneducated, though taken sometimes for occasional work, such as keeping birds. The women work very little, except as farm servants, milking, &c. (nearly the whole parish is dairy), and some go out for milking only at 2s. a week. They are quite as good characters as the other women. There is a good Sunday school, but no night school; it is a long straggling parish, and you would have to have two or three to do any good. The population has gone down one-fourth since 1840, principally owing to some colliery works being closed, and the parish is now purely agricultural, except for the great brewery, that generally takes the best hands, as the wages are higher. Some of the cottages are bad, but they are being improved; there are some with large families, and only one bedroom; yet, though it seems they must see things they ought not to see, Mr. Davis does not consider the young people more immoral than in most country villages.

254. *Rev. W. J. F. Edwards*, vicar of Stoke Lane (population 694).—Boys are not taken away from school till 10; population too large for all to work in the farms; go earlier to collieries. The population has decreased one-third since 1841, through the railway coming, and some young married couples going to Wales.

The school much interfered with, inasmuch as at 10 a boy begins to learn something; taken away for potato-digging.

Alternate weeks would be better than alternate days.

The population is so large for the acreage that many people are obliged to go far for work, even boys, as far as Vobster, four miles.

Coal carriers make it populous.

Many old families who never have moved, been here for 200 years.

Very little employment of women and girls; perhaps wives of labourers sometimes hoe wheat and weed; only about the fields near home. No worse characters than other people; not a sufficient number to make it tell upon their character.

The parish is high, with a fine healthy air, and good water.

Cottages inferior to most parishes, but being improved steadily, owing to the cottages being on lives (under Mr. Knatchbull), and of course the interest of the lessee to get as much as he can at as little outlay as possible. The bedroom accommodation very bad; many with only one bedroom yet morals not very bad. Birth of illegitimate children not thought such a disgrace as it ought to be, considered a creditable thing to be married 12 months before a child is born. Mr. Edwards thinks it depends very much on how the church work is carried on, This parish has always had a bad name; a rough lot, but not a dangerous lot. Since the coal-carrying went out, not so much drunkenness. Some of the cottages very good, and as the leases fall in Mr. Knatchbull lets them to the farmer, who lets them to the tenant; these are the best cottages, and the general character is improving.

Children and girls kept at home to knit, and don't go to school at all. Still there is a good National school and Sunday school and there is a night school; last year the schoolmaster taught, which is hard on him; labourers used to give 3*d.*, then he lowered it to 1*d.* and now it is better attended.

Entirely dependent on the land; a thorough agricultural parish.

Wincaunton Union.

255. Resolution passed at the meeting of the Board of Guardians, Wincaunton, March 17, 1869, T. E. Rogers, Esq., Yarlington, chairman of the board, in the chair:—

That in regard the employment of women and children in farm labour the Board of Guardians are strongly of opinion that in this particular district there is nothing whatever to *call for legislative interference*, but if it should be deemed desirable on general grounds to legislate on this subject, the board consider it important in the interests as well of the labourer as of the employer, that any absolute prohibition of all such employment of children should not extend beyond the period of 9 years of age in the case of boys, and of 13 years of age in the case of girls.

256. Minutes of the above meeting, Wincaunton, March 17, 1869.

(1.) Boys first work in picking stones, keeping sheep, driving horses; at seed-time they are employed in bird-keeping, and would not go to that under 9. At Marston there is hardly a boy under 10 in regular work. These small boys are quite able to take care of horses. The boys themselves would rather do work than go to school.

(2.) Girls do some apple-picking in the autumn, but none under 10; their principal work is gloving, and where not gloving, weaving.

(3.) Very few women work out, generally not five or six in a large parish of 1,000. A farmer mostly expects his labourer's wife to come out with her

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husband in hard-working times; but there are not 10 in the union who work out all the year round. Those who do work are mostly on the job, such as weeding corn, apple picking, &c.; bean planting for women has almost entirely gone out of fashion. Most of them do gloving, and would not come out to work in the fields, because gloving is so much more remunerative. They work out most at Shepton Montagu. It is a dairy county, and milking is done very much by men, and the farm-servants.

(4.) Few live a mile from work; the parishes are small and close together. Many work near enough to their homes to be able to go home to dinner. Generally the shepherd and carter live on each farm, and sometimes one or two more; the other labourers as a rule hold of the landlord.

(5.) Women work 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; boys the same hours as the men, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and they all take meal hours out of that, generally two hours, half an hour at 11 for luncheon, an hour at 1 for dinner, and in haymaking and harvest another half hour at 4.

(6.) (See resolution above.) Mr. Rogers would like boys to begin work at 9, Mr. Richards at 10 years of age; but hopes are expressed that the Legislature will consider in this case how parents are to be able to support their children. Mr. Rogers thinks that in this district no legislation is really necessary. The case of a family at Meare, in Wilts, was mentioned, a husband, wife, and 8 children all under 12 years of age. The husband's wages are only 10*s.*, and it would be impossible for them to get on were his boy of 9 forbidden to earn his 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. Mr. Rogers proposed the above resolution. Mr. Richards proposed 10 years as an amendment instead of 9, but no one would second him, and the amendment dropped. Mr. Richards gave the want of more schooling as his reason.

Mr. Wood complained much of the gloving taking girls early from school. Mr. Rogers proposed to limit the age at which girls might begin out-door labour to 13; others proposed rather higher on moral grounds; Mr. Rogers' proposal was carried. Both in the case of girls and boys the meeting wished it to be understood that they were distinctly against any legislation on the subject, but that if that was unavoidable owing to the circumstances of other parts of England, the above are the ages beyond which it was their opinion no legislation ought to go.

(7.) In the case of women restriction is unnecesary, they place sufficient restriction on themselves.

(8.) The schools in the district are generally good. Mr. Rogers thinks there are few children who cannot read and write; in Charlton Mr. Wood says there are few who can. There are generally sufficient means of education, though not always taken advantage of; parents are apathetic about it, and many will not send their children even if the pence are paid for them.

(9.) Great improvements are going on in cottages. Mr. Rogers mentioned that he himself, amongst other people, was putting up some new ones with three bedrooms. They are good at Cadbury and at Barrow, and also at Mr. Digby's property; some very bad, and a good deal of overcrowding, but not to be compared to the overcrowding in towns. The population in the agricultural districts is decreasing, so there is no lack of accommodation. Whereas formerly he had plenty of applications directly a cottage was vacant, Mr. Rogers now often finds it difficult to let them. If you build a good new cottage you cannot ask a higher rent; the people do not value improvement in accommodation at 1*s.* a week. Overcrowding is not general, nor is lodging. Mr. Rogers does not allow lodgers, and it is generally discouraged by landlords; there are some at Charlton, where a company is now draining.

(10.) About Wincaunton there are no gardens or allotments, and it is impossible to get a bit of ground. At Bruton Sir H. Hoare and Lord Ilchester have both two fields let out as allotments. There are not many allotment parishes, except the towns such as Castle Carey and Bruton; but a farmer lets out a lug of ground on his own farm to labourers. Mr. Wadman says that at Horrington there are good gardens.

257. *Genge Andrews, Esq.*, Rimpton, president of the Somerset Chamber of Agriculture.—Farms his own land, and about half the parish belongs to him; lets out his cows to dairymen, which is the usual custom in this district; one takes 120 of him. One hand can milk about 10 cows in 1½ hours, which is the time necessary to do it in, so a good many hands are required for the purpose. The farmers themselves are a very ignorant set, most of them never have an account; their system is one of small profits on each article, and so they come to think it an important economy to save a few pence gained by having a boy from 8 to 12 to keep birds for them, instead of one a few years older, to whom they must pay rather more.

258. *Mr. Amor*, occupier, Bruton.—Boys go out very early to work, some at 6 or 7 years old; they drive plough, keep birds, pick apples, &c. They must work because wages are so low. The men are entirely dependent on agriculture, but women work mostly in a factory and gloving; some go out in the fields to work, but these chiefly the old school of women, and those labourers' wives, and only in the busy time; they clean ground, cut couch, plant beans, &c.; they plant beans with a stick, making a hole, and dropping one or two into into it. It is tiring work owing to the stooping position. The girls glove; this they prefer to service, and it is often difficult to get servants.

A good man can make 11*s.* or 12*s.* a week; am perfectly ready to pay a good man well, it is well worth while. Some are worth the 12*s.*, some not worth 6*s.* The usual money given is 9*s.*, some give 10*s.*; some cider, two pints, and more in summer. It is not a regular custom to give cider.

259. *Mr. Sealey*, occupier, Milborne Port.—Women and girls are occupied mostly in gloving, this place being a gloving centre. It is a big village, population 2,000, Sir W. Medlycott the landlord, and a labouring population. Do not think that education is much wanted, but the cottages should be improved, and that is to be done through the landed gentry. The question of how it is to be done is one very hard to answer, as cottage property does not pay. Has two cottages on his farm, each having only two rooms, into which the most you can put is a married pair, when children come it would be overcrowded; pay 6*d.* for one, 9*d.*, for the other, and let them to the labourers at the same rate. Prefers that system to giving a cottage as part of the wages. Most of the labourers live in the village, and come out to work, but it is only half a mile.

260. *Mr. Brain*, occupier, Corton Denham.—Gives 9*s.* a week and three pints of cider in winter; in summer, haymaking and so on, as much as ever they can drink. They have to pay for their cottage out of their wages, generally 1*s.* a week; for some of the better rather more. Employs three women regularly at any job about the farm, such as with the straw for threshing, turnip-singling, weeding, apple-picking, &c.; pay 8*d.* a day. In the weeding time has to get extra women. Has only two boys in regular employ under 12; don't think them much good; but of course in bird-keeping time has out a few younger to keep birds. Farm mostly dairy, but a good deal of arable too.

261. *Wm. Bird*, relieving officer, Wincaunton.—Reckons usual wages in the district at 9*s.*; some give cider; few higher wages than the above; an unmarried man, though good at work, will often get no more than 7*s.* Cannot make out how they live at all; they have nothing to eat and drink but bread and cheese and cider, and sometimes a bit of pork. There is not much out-door work for women except at Cucklington, and the Wilts border generally. Planting beans by women goes on to a certain extent, clearing ground, potato-setting, &c.; but it is mostly a grass country, and most of the work is done by women, who

live in the farm house. The people get very good cheese at 6*d.* a pound, it is called Somerset cheese here; the cider is good. Cottages in some parts of the district are bad, and there is a good deal of overcrowding, chiefly owing to the admission of lodgers; immorality naturally follows. Some large proprietors, such as Lord Westminster, about here, are building good cottages now. Rent usually 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, sometimes lower.

262. —— *Ridley*, Bayford.—Had a bad hand and could not work; generally jobs about and makes 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, not more. Has a wife and four children.

263. *Rev. Canon R. Meade*, Castle Carey (population 2,060; acreage 2,581; chiefly pastoral; a cheese district).—"Some boys are employed constantly; "their employment then consisting in keeping sheep, "and keeping birds off corn, and in weeding; the "bigger ones in milking. Boys are employed in "October and November in picking cider apples and "potatoes, and in dressing ground." Women and girls earn better wages in the factories, so hardly work out at all. "Children are not employed at a "very early age, and are well treated. There is a "National school for boys and girls, an evening school "during the autumn and winter, an infant school, and "Sunday schools."

The cottages are fair. "Some have too many "occupants. I can hardly specify immorality as a "direct result, but overcrowding must have that "tendency. A few cottages have small gardens "attached. A benevolent inhabitant, the Rev. "F. W. Gray, who now resides at Penge, lets out "about 36 or 37 acres of good land to the working "poor."

264. *Hon. and Rev. Walter Portman*, Corton Denham (population 410; acreage 1,296; cultivation mixed, arable preponderates).—"Abstract of condition "of parish, schools, &c.:—

Farms five (not including glebe).

Freeholds seven (of which five are held by labouring men now in receipt of wages; four of them very bad houses).

Shops, two. Carpenter, one. Blacksmith, one. Shoemaker, one.

Innkeeper, one (with a little land).

Carriers or contractors, three. Dairymen, two.

Labourers cottages (strictly) 55, of which 46 are divided among the tenant farmers, the rest are in the landlords' hands. I should be glad to see all cottages in the hands of the landlord excepting two, three, or four to each farm, according to its size, for carters and shepherds.

There is overcrowding in some instances, but considering that some men, heads of families, and several young single men work out of the parish altogether, it cannot be said that the cottage room is not sufficient for the labour required in the parish. Average one house to 24 acres. Women employed about three to a farm; a few more at special times, viz., hay, apple-picking, and the above number not always out. The strictly labouring population may be said now to consist of 50 families, containing, living at home, 232 souls. About schools, 58 at school of some kind during the week; very few lately over 13; at present only one girl in day school.

Field work removes the boys about 9 years old. Gloving or domestic employment the girls from 11 to 13. Attendance about even, except in the autumn quarter, viz., July to October, when it is worse.

Night school, 1868–69. November, December, January, February three nights a week from 6.30 to 8.30 or 7 to 9. 15 or 16 weeks. Three R's taught, with some dictation. Number on books, 32. Five under 12, 27 over 12; average 18. Boys are wet and tired, and have to begin almost from the beginning each year. Can do little more than keep them able to read and write with the average, but the system is popular with them and is becoming more so each year.

Employment of children, very variable; boys go out young, 9 to 10, seldom younger for any farmer, but they do to help in allotments and such like, *e.g.*, one brother bird-keeping will perhaps take out a younger one. I should say, as a rule, young women never do field work; the glove trade keeps them employed for the most part.

There may be six children in the parish, certainly not more, about 8 years old, neither at school nor at work. "There are 12 boys and four girls growing up "with insufficient education." They have been at school some time, but very irregularly, or are newcomers (three are so). Can read and write badly; left early, before being properly grounded. Some of these boys attend night school but are very much behind the rest. With the girls and young women the fault is their own, they will not try to learn anything.

"The parents means are so small that they remove "children who can earn anything; the girls for "glove-stitching, the boys for field-work, otherwise "they send them very well. Owing to the cir-"cumstances of the parish it would be difficult to "enforce attendance for six consecutive months, but "I should consider that attendance for six months in "the year would be desirable. The Factory Act "would not answer here." Boys should not work out till 10 years of age, nor more than 10 hours a day; no restriction need be placed here on female labour; "they work quite as much from choice as from com-"pulsion."

"The crowding of young persons together in cottages is not conducive to morality, but sometimes a large crowded family turns out well, sometimes the reverse; as to health it seems to make little difference. All that are crowded are crowded with family."

265. Cottages at Corton Denham.

(1.) "In newest built one storey high, sitting-room 13 ft. 9 in. by 13 ft. 2 in. and 7 ft. 6 in. high; bedrooms 13 ft. by 9 ft. and 7 ft. high. A good old cottage would have a sitting-room 12 ft. square, about; bedrooms 13 by 12; the worst (not freehold), sitting-room 10 by 12, bedrooms the same. Ventilation is put in good, if the people will use it; drainage generally bad, in some cases none.

(2.) The newer, two largest cottages, three bedrooms, sitting-room, pantry, and backhouse; some have two rooms under. With most of the others two bedrooms, sitting and back room; a few only one bedroom and one room under, and no backhouse; outhouses deficient except in the newest cottages; in some cases none of any kind. Water supply very good by nature. Pumps very rare; garden attached to nearly all the landowner (Lord Portman's) cottages, but not large. There are 15 acres of allotment ground let in one rood plots. Rent 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a week. The farmers hold 46 cottages with their farms, the landlord 10.

266. *Rev. Hy. Bennett*, rector of Sparkford (population 305; acreage 983; cultivation four-course arable, and pasture for dairy purposes).—No girls work out; boys from 10 years upwards, and about 12 women "in haymaking, harvesting, and apple-picking, only "the able-bodied." No restriction necessary in either case. There is a weekly and day school fairly attended to about 8 years of age. Cottages good and not crowded; "all have good gardens, about a quarter "of an acre each."

267. *Rev. Wm. Castlehow*, rector of North Cadbury (population 966; acreage 2,688; cultivation chiefly pastoral; "there are many large dairies in the "parish and several apple orchards for cider").—Boys are employed all the year from the age of 10; "a few under that age occasionally in bird-keeping "and apple-picking; a few girls occasionally in "ground-dressing and apple-picking; about 10 women "in the whole parish, besides a few in milking only. "Since the introduction of steam power the number "of females employed has much diminished, and a "few girls only are employed as stated above, so

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" that I do not think any restriction desirable. I " think it desirable that boys should not be removed " from the school so early ; but if they were restricted " from working on the land before the age of 12, for " instance, they would not, in the case of large " families, be necessarily sent to school, as the wages " are too low (about 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week for an able-" bodied man) to allow school pence for more than one " or two in a family. There is a parochial school, at " which the average attendance is about 40. The " chief cause of non-attendance is early labour ; the " boys are taken away at about the age of 10 to work " on the land, and the girls at about 11 to glove-" making."

The cottages are generally bad, some overcrowded and " several cases of immorality in consequence have " come under my notice ;" most have small gardens ; a few have none; " there are allotments of glebe in " three parts of the parish."

268. *Rev. C. F. Tink*, rector of Shepton Montague (population 433 ; acreage 2,424; cultivation mixed ; a long straggling parish ; principal proprietor, Lord Ilchester).—Boys begin to work at 8 at all times of the year. Usually begin by bird-keeping. As a rule girls are not employed ; now and then there are one or two; for instance, there is a grown-up girl, rather weak in the head, who cannot go out to service. Most go out to service ; but there is a little gloving too from shops at Milborne Port. Labourers' wives work out sometimes, but have no regular work, and not necessarily for the farmer for whom the husband works. No boy should go out to work before 11 years of age. Women's work is not desirable ; the cottages of those who work on the land are usually untidy. There is a National school and a parochial school in the hamlet of Stoney Stoke ; a night school in the vicar's house during the winter months for boys.

The cottages are bad ; there are a good many with only one bedroom. Not much overcrowding, except in one or two cottages in Stoney Stoke.

Frome Union.

269. *Henry Blathwayt Festing, Esq.*, agent to the Duke of Somerset. Maiden Bradley (population of Maiden Bradley, 653 ; acreage, 4,567a. 3r. 37p. ; cultivation mixed.)

Number of women and children in the parish employed in agricultural labour.

—	Under 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.
Boys -	—	40	30	70
Girls -	—	—	40	40
	—	40	70	110

Besides 47 married women. Total females 87.

In winter there is little work for women and children ; in spring, weeding ; in summer and autumn, the hay and corn harvests. " I consider the employment " of females in agricultural work most detrimental " to their morals ; and it totally unfits them for their " domestic duties, thus driving the husband nine " times out of ten to the public house for necessary com-" forts, which he does not find at home when he returns " tired from work. At the present rate of wages, " I am not prepared to recommend any restriction " should be placed on the employment of females. 10*s.*, " 11*s.*, and 12*s.* is too little for one man to keep a family " on honestly, and in winter the wages are lower than " in summer. If the present unfair system of assessment " for the poor rate was changed, whereby towns would " have to keep their own poor instead of country parishes " so greatly doing so, the farmers could raise the wages, " and thus help the women to remain at home. How-" ever, in this parish the women like the freedom of " out-door work."

" There is a steady willingness on the part of the parents generally to send their children to school, for which they pay 1*d.* weekly ; but if the families are large, the parents take them away to work at about 10 years of age for the boys, and 12 for the girls. There is a great disinclination to go into service, but it decreases gradually as education increases. No boy under 13 ought to work more than five hours a day, and no woman more than six, and no boy under 12 ought to work at all. To secure attendance at school, I think a discretionary power given to the magistracy at petty sessions would work well. "

On the register of the school at Maiden Bradley.

	Boys.			Girls.			Grand Total.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
Summer -	51	3	54	33	7	40	94
Winter -	52	5	57	33	8	41	98
In average attendance.							
Summer -	43	2	45	29	5	34	79
Winter -	43	3	46	29	6	35	81

There are no boys neither at school nor at work, but 10 or 12 girls under 10 years of age, and eight above There are 8 or 10 boys and 6 or 7 girls growing up with insufficient education. There is a night school open 15 weeks from October to February, three nights a week, two hours each ; reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught.

—	Under 12.	Above 12.	Total.
There are on the books of the night school.	4	31	35
There are in average attendance at the night school.	3	15	18

It does not supply the deficiences of the other school, " but it is doing good." The difficulties " in its way are " want of teaching power, a large " staff of instructors is necessary to keep this class of " scholars orderly, as also to attend to them as they " are difficult to classify, both from age and previous " acquirements.

" I believe the cottages in this parish are as good generally as any in England, and what are out of order are gradually re-built or done up, as required. The Duke of Somerset is a good landlord, and the rents are cheap, from 4*d.*, as a minimum, to 1*s.* 2*d.* a week maximum, being charged to agricultural labourers. I do not think cottages can be built to pay, unless the tenant is ground down harshly. I consider cottages as necessary to an estate, independent of the profit and loss question.

" The cottages as a rule have one living room, about 13 to 14 or 15 feet by 12, 13, or 14 ; one back place or scullery, 6 by 8, or 8 by 10, with two or three bedrooms over, from 10 by 8, to 12 by 8 ; If three, the third is smaller ; famous gardens, good outhouses ; all belong to the Duke of Somerset.

270.—*Fussell, Esq.*, iron-master and churchwarden, Mells. There are very few boys under 13 or 14 who go out to work, one of 12 goes out to work with his father, but Mr. Horner takes great care that they go to school regularly, and do not go out to work too young. If there are any boys who have not been to school, it is an exceptional case in a large family, but Mr. Fussell cannot recall any.

Farmers do not like women working, they are too independent, and will not submit to any control,

They do not come out in time, and are idle when they are out.

Farmer Bull employs women, most of them older, for ground-dressing, and weeding, and milking, for which last they get extra pay. Employs one girl of 15, but that is an exceptional case. On some farms there are no women employed at all. Farmer Coxe, where farm is mostly corn, employs no women.

There is a night school.

All the women employed, except the one girl, are married women or widows, and he does not see that there is any loss of character; the girl works with her mother. But Mr. Fussell remembers one or two single women going out and they were very bad.

The village is not well provided with cottages, that is, its worst part, and capital is needed to build new. At Vobster, the coal companies have built very good cottages for their workmen. Mr. Horner looks very carefully after the cottages, moving the families into larger cottages as their numbers increase.

Mr. Horner used to say that no Wells man ever went a mile out of the parish to work.

No Wells man will learn any particular thing, such as hedging and ditching; when Mr. Fussell wants a man for the purpose, he has to go to the parish. When one or two old men die off he does not know what they will have to do for such work.

Women used to weed in high corn, but that is not needed now, as the corn is drilled, and so men hoe it instead of weeding it.

271. *Robert Porteous*, agent to Lord Cork, Marston Bigot (population 379; acreage 2,238; the cultivation may be called mixed, but the pastoral predominates over the arable).—Few women are employed in the parish, perhaps one or two on each farm; there are hardly any boys in the parish to employ, and even if there were, in a dairy country few are wanted.

Their employments consist in cutting thistles, raking, serving pigs, and bringing the cattle home, and bird-keeping; in the winter, cleaning and pulling, driving plough, &c. Would not wish to prohibit females doing light work. The boys require to be kept at school later; they forget everything they learn. Thinks the Factory Act quite inapplicable, and the Workshops Act little better, for boys will speedily forget what little they have learnt in six months. "I would suggest that children should be kept at "school until they are 10 years old, and after that "by all means to get them back to evening schools "in the winter months, until they arrive at the age "of 14." Evening schools are an admirable institution, and the only way of keeping up what has been learnt.

"Three or four miles are too much for boys to go "to work." There is a great want of cottages in the parish, and some boys come from Frome. Some labourers come all the way from Cloford, four or five miles, to work on Ashby's farm. Ashby has no cottages on his farm. Crees is the only farmer in the parish who has sufficient. "There can be no "doubt that the faulty and miserable construction "of many old cottages is very injurious to the health "and comfort of the labouring poor." They are small, and never have more than two bedrooms, which in a large family is not enough; there ought to be at least three, and the rest of the cottage sacrificed to it; but there is no reason, as people seem to think, that all cottages should have three bedrooms; some ought to be built larger than others. Recollects how a very large family was brought up in the cottage under Gaer Hill, and turned out badly; also a widow with a large family in Marston; her sons are receiving good wages, but send her none of it, so she has to live on charity.

"I have found the farmers very willing to pay a "per-centage on the cost of the construction of cottages "sufficient for their farms. This may be done by "charging a per-centage sufficient to repay the landlord "in 25 or 35 years, or by burdening the next heir with "a proportion of the cost of cottages on each farm." Does not see why the living landlord should bear the charge of building cottages; thinks it ought to be charged on the estate. The garden ground is good, and the rent moderate. The owners are "the "landowners, who are considerably more kind and "considerate than tradesmen to cottage tenants." Improvements in cottage accommodation are being made, but slowly.

272. *Mr. Crees*, occupier, Marston.—Farms 300 acres of vale, all grass except 25 acres. Pays better, as ground wet and heavy, and it is impossible to sheep it. It is a fair specimen farm in the vale. (Lovell's sheep even on Mendip had a good deal of foot-rot.) Farmer Crees only employs one woman all the year, if weather good, at 6*s.* a week (men's wages about 12*s.* a week). She only does light work, such as raking hay, cutting thistles, no hoeing or weeding. It does not generally pay for women to work, particularly if they have children to look after. Lord Cork has two women employed in his garden, and one of them has four children. Farmer Crees only employs one boy, and he goes to school by day, only working in morning and evening at driving cows, milking, &c. Mr. Boyle does not like the boys to go to work early, as they cannot go to school in that case. Mr. Pulham (schoolmaster) says this one is a bad'un to learn.

273. *Mr. Phippen*, occupier, Vallis.—Farms about 300 acres in three parishes, under Lord Cork. Mostly grass, but has more corn than some neighbours. This he is diminishing, as country does not do for sheep, who breed staggerers. He employs two women in light work, such as cutting thistles, raking hay, and another in the house. Has but one boy under 12 in his employ.

274. *Mr. Compton*, occupier, Marston.—Farms 300 acres odd under Lord Cork. About half arable, half dairy. Employs three women, as Mr. Croome, and two boys, age 13 and 10. Neither have ever been to school.

275. *Mr. Croome*, occupier, Manor House, Nunney.—Farms 400 acres, of which only 80 are arable; he employs only three women and two boys. All the boys have been to school; two go sometimes now, and one attended a night school last year. They come from Cloford. His youngest boy is 12. Of course gets boys for a short job sometimes, such as crow-keeping, potato-setting, &c. The usual work of his boys is weeding, leading the horses at the plough, stone-picking, &c. The women do much the same work, and work pretty regularly for him all the year. He has far more corn than any one else near Nunney. His farm is at the back of Nunney, and the land light, having been a good deal of it old common. Mr. Theobald is his landlord.

276. — *Marsh, Esq., M.D.*, Nunney.—The condition of the cottages in Nunney is very bad. There are many very small, with only two rooms, and much crowded. In Mr. Selk's cottage he lives with three or four children in two rooms. Cannot say, however, that ill-health is produced, except in times when there is an epidemic going about. The parish is morally in a very bad state, most of the bad characters from neighbouring parishes settling there, and it becomes a sort of receptacle for such. Knows several instances of men living with other men's wives, and the proportion of illegitimate children is very large. The bad moral state he attributes to the crowding in the cottages, and the want of visiting, for the rector never visits. The landlord (Mr. Theobald) has no home at Nunney, and takes little pains to improve the cottages. There are quantities of idle children always about, and many of them have never been to school. In fact, but for Turner's charity, Mr. Marsh thinks there would be little schooling at all. Turner's charity is worth 400*l.* or 500*l.* a year, and is administered by trustees. They give a schoolmaster a house and 80*l.* per annum. Many of the children are put to school by the charity, and apprenticed from thence. It also provides relief for paupers, which is not pro-

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Mr. Boyle.
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ductive of good, and a lying-in fund. Also in the two parishes of Nunney and Cloford there is annually 40*l.* distributed between the girls married in the past year. At Cloford they do not give it to those who have had a child before marriage; at Nunney they do. Cottages at Ridgway very bad. Women not much employed in the fields, not enough for it to exercise a bad effect on the morals of the village, but the worst characters certainly do go out to agricultural labour.

Mr. Marsh thinks that weeding in wet is very bad for women, and brings on rheumatism. They are not expected to work when it is wet, but many do so for the sake of the money they earn. They earn about half as much as a man.

277. *Mr. Adams*, schoolmaster, Nunney.—In the school there are 45 boys, and nearly as many girls. There are two other schools in the parish, containing, perhaps, 30 between them. There is no night school. One was kept some time ago by Mr. Cotton, a superannuated exciseman, but it is abandoned now. He does not believe there are 20 boys in the parish who do not go to school at all; but, except for Turner's charity, there would be little schooling. The attendance is very slight in the haymaking and potato-setting time.

278. — *Lush*, occupier, Kilmington (population 587; acreage 2,740).—Farms himself 650 acres, of which 150 are dairy. Employs on his farm—

	Children.	Young Persons.	Women.
	4	6	7
Are employed in the parish	16	24	28
Total - -	20	30	35

Of whom 16 are married, 13 unmarried over 18, and 6 unmarried under 18.

Of boys there are 8 employed between the ages of 8 and 10
„ 12 „ 10 „ 13
„ 30 „ 13 „ 18

Total boys - 50

The employments are, for boys, in spring, keeping birds and keeping sheep; for women, in spring, weeding corn and picking stones.

In summer, women haymaking, turning corn, and weeding, and a few assist in reaping; in the autumn, harvesting and spreading manure; in winter very few go out, and they with the threshing machine.

Would not restrict the labour of boys or females; they know how to take care of themselves. Does not consider out-door employment bad for the morals. Matters are changed from what Mr. Lush can recollect. There used to be kissing and pulling about in the hay time, but very little goes on now. Boys prefer going to work to being kept to any discipline. They are obstinate, and like dawdling about and having their own way.

Wages 10*s.* a week for an ordinary labourer; shepherd and carter 12*s.* and a house and garden. Shepherd also gets 30*s.* in lambing time, and 5*s.* for five weeks beer-money. Wives of the labourers can make 4*s.*

The farms are generally well provided with cottages, and few have to go as far as one and a half miles to work. One farmer (Jervis) has no cottages. Mr. Lush has seven or eight fair cottages, but people will crowd them with lodgers and married children. They have no self-respect, and do not mind being crowded, children and married sons and daughters all sleeping in the same room. Few have but one bedroom. Charges 1*s.* a week rent, but for one 1*s.* 4*d.* Gives some free, viz., to bailiff, groom, shepherd, and carter. There is no want of cottages; several are empty.

279. *Mr. Sperring*, occupier, Buckland Denham.—Employs three women, but not in regular work. All are married, as is the usual case; one is 70. Girls do not go to work often. Farmer Phippen employs four women.

Mr. Sperring has only one boy employed regularly under 12. He does not like them under 12. If they are picking apples they eat more than they carry. He has boys on the job in potato-time and apple harvest, and for bird-keeping. The farm is his father's freehold. It is half dairy and half arable. Most farms in the parish are chiefly arable.

Most of the cottages are in the village, and the people like it better. They will not take them much on farms; but the parish is too small for them to have to go far to work, but some go to work at Hardington.

He does not like to have many women, for they chatter, and do no work if they get together.

280. *Mr. Hoddinott*, occupier, Philips Norton.—Has thought on the subject, and thinks no boy ought to go to work before 12. But of course farmers cannot speak up for schooling in their own interest, as a well-educated boy thinks himself above his position, and goes away.

He thinks that a woman working in the fields does injury to her home, not to herself or character. The farmers do not want them, but they are better at work in the fields than gossiping in the village.

281. *Mr. Hoddinott, junior.*—Seldom take boys till 10; has one of 9 employed on the farm; they begin bird-keeping and driving cattle. The sooner they begin work the better. A boy of 13 or 14 who begins cow driving is liable to be timid, and will never get over it; a younger boy will. They learn their work better too. Of course intelligent, well-educated men are best, especially in these days of machinery, but it is a bad thing for a boy to stay at school too long; out of school-hours he gets idling about the town. Men better educated go away to railways or places where they get better wages; a higher class man will not stick to the mere mechanical part of farming, so of course it is not a farmer's interest to encourage education.

The difficulty of the half-day or alternate day system is that there would be relays of boys wanted, and even now there is a scarcity of labour.

Crow-keeping goes on up to December. It prevents boys from being able to go to school in the winter, and takes the younger boys; an objection to the idea of working in the summer, and learning in the winter. Still he thinks that an enactment of some kind is wanted.

His two mowers are intelligent men; they average 16*s.* a week, working by the piece. His ordinary labourers receive 11*s.* and beer. Two-thirds of this farm are arable; Mr. Pike's is half and half, the usual thing here.

Does not want women; thinks them better at home. There are only six employed in the village, and of them only three at regular work. But in case of widows, it would be very hard to stop them going out. They are no worse characters than any one else, and he does not think it generally bad for married women. It is bad for girls, but none work here.

282. Extract from letter from the Rev. G. Mahon, Leigh on Mendip. (Population 534.)

"Let me say that I think few reports could be more important affecting the education of the people than such an one as proposed. The difficulty always is in agricultural parishes to prevent the early employment of our children. It is a fight I am always having with the guardians, and have hitherto, as far as my parish is concerned, fairly succeeded. The difficulty of brick-yards, and top-ground work in coal mines, has not yet been considered; in both cases children under 10 are frequently employed. The Workshop Act does not touch them.

"Yours faithfully,
"George D. Mahon."

Extract from letter from the Rev. James Moore, vicar of Cloford. (Population in 1861, 218.)

"Number of children of the labouring class between the ages of 4 and 12, 33.

Of these on the school books 27 ; at work 3 ; kept at home 3.

"Women are employed in harvest time, and a few other times, but to no great extent, and I do not think their hours are excessive.

"I humbly think that legislative measures would be beneficial which enforced a certificate of reading, writing, and ciphering before a child was allowed to go to farm work.

"The certificate should be renewed each year up to 15. A fixed standard of what is meant by proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic should be agreed upon, say third reading book and simple and compound rules in arithemtic.

"I should like to see a further rule that no child should be employed under 12, but whilst wages are as low as 10*s.* and 11*s.* weekly, this would be a hardship to parents.

"Children are sent into the fields at about 8 years old ; sometimes younger.

"JAMES H. MOORE."

283. *Hon. and Rev. R. C. Boyle*, rector of Marston Bigot (population 369).—The school at Marston comprises 70 boys and girls, but a great part of them are admitted from Frome ; only about 25 from Marston, and the same from Tetherington. Mr. Burney has a night school in the winter ; the best attendance about 30.

284. *Rev. A. D. A. Burney*, curate of Gaer Hill. —Knows of a child of 5 who goes out to hold horses, and a boy of 6 years old goes bird-keeping, picking stones, &c. When he asked a woman why she did not send a boy of 7 to school, she said she found him useful at home, hay-making, gardening, &c.

Nearly all the women in the parish work in the fields more or less ; some of them get a winter's work and a summer's work ; they become thoroughly degraded, working with the men, and often doing a man's work ; and meantime their families and homes go to ruin.

The young women are very immoral; from 15 to 16 they take a summer's work, and after that life are not inclined to settle down into service or regular work. They go out late at night, and the mothers resent it if Mr. Burney interferes. Nearly half the children are illegitimate, and women come to be married a month or two before a child is born.

A boy (Wheeler) goes down to Monksham to milk. He has done it for three years ; he is now 16. Distance three miles, and he goes down twice on Sunday.

Another boy goes to the iron mills (two miles). A woman goes down to young Ashby's farm (two miles).

The worst thing of all is the want of regular labour, even among the men, who are often rich one week and out of work the next ; work is intermittent. The fact is, it is a trying time while machinery is coming in ; when once in, work will be regular.

Very few women do not go to work some time or other in the summer; wages are low, 11*s.* is the highest. Some who are regularly employed get a cottage too.

The children come to school well except in hay and harvest time; there are 27 on the books, and Mr. Burney thinks there are none who have never been to school. They forget their lessons when they go out to work, but it soon comes back in the night school.

The cottages are improving ; Mr. Boyle's the best, built by Butterfield. No cottage should have less than three bedrooms, unless intended for an old couple. The cottages used to be mere hovels.

There were formerly two beerhouses ; two people, women especially, used to come from villages near and hold free fights. Beerhouses now abolished.

285. *Rev. Mark Warburton*, rector of Kilmington (population 587 ; acreage 3,470; cultivation mixed). —Would prohibit female labour altogether, except at hay-making, as he regards it "highly prejudicial "to morals, and subversive of all regard for domestic "duties." Would wish to keep boys from farm work till 10.

Formerly Kilmington had a very bad name, and many of the children were illegitimate; such children were much less well-cared for than the others, and left about at the street doors instead of being sent to school. The farmers used to set the example of immorality ; and he believed it mainly due to the baneful custom of women working in the fields. Some of them work regularly all the year round ; he had gone to 20 cottages in an afternoon and found 12 of them locked up, and the women gone to work. If remonstrated with they appeal to the lowness of wages, and what more can be said. Another evil is they often leave an elder child in charge of the babies while they go to work, and so that child is unable to go to school. Mr. Warburton has to support the school almost alone ; he incurred much odium by abolishing the Sunday school when he first came ; but he found that the people made the sending them there an excuse for not sending them in the week. He has a night school ; but he considers its advantage an open question, as it is open to the same objection as the Sunday school. Most of the land belongs to Sir H. Hoare, but Lord Ilchester, Lord Bath, &c. have some. Sir H. Hoare's cottages are in hand ; but most of the rest are held of the farmer, a very bad plan as the farmer cannot afford to repair them.

"The gardens are good, but the cottages are bad, neglected alike by landlord and tenant; rent high and accommodation small ; walls and floors in ruinous condition, and sadly wanting in cleanliness."

TABLE of children, women, and young persons employed in agriculture in the parish.

—	Under 8.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	13 to 18.	Total.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Males - -	3	5	12	23	43	—	—	—
Females -	2	4	6	14	26	25	15	66

TABLE of children of the labouring class attending the school at Kilington.

On the register.

—	Boys. Under 10.	Boys. 10 to 13.	Boys. Total.	Girls. Under 10.	Girls. 10 to 13.	Girls. Total.
Summer - -	37	13	50	25	15	40
Winter - -	35	20	55	20	15	35

In average attendance.

Summer - -	15	10	25	9	6	15
Winter - -	12	22	34	9	15	24

APPROXIMATE NUMBER of similar children neither at school nor at work.

—	Boys. 8 to 10.	Boys. 10 to 13.	Boys. Total.	Girls. 8 to 10.	Girls. 10 to 13.	Girls. Total.	Grand Total.
Summer - -	15	8	23	10	7	17	40
Winter - -	18	5	23	12	5	17	40

There is an evening school open 14 weeks in the year, from November 1 to February 1. Reading, writing, and accounts are taught ; the principal diffi-

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culty attending it is the irregular attendance at day school in former years.

On the register 21, of whom four are under 12, 17 above 12.

Average attendance 13, of whom three are under 12, 10 above 12.

The difficulty is to make the boys read; they can write, but that is mechanical, and are not bad at accounts.

286. *Rev. J. L. Carrick*, vicar of Witham Friary (population 581; acreage 6,000; chiefly pastoral (dairy farms) with a small quantity of arable land).—The school is almost entirely supported by the farmers, who have a voluntary rate for the purpose; they are a sensible set of men, and wish the boys to go to school. However, the boys, as elsewhere, are taken away very young, and sent into the fields at 6 or 7 years of age; a case of a boy 5 years old nearly run over by a horse he was leading came under Mr. Carrick's notice the other day. The wives are expected to go out with their husbands in busy times; their wages are only 4*s.* 6*d.*, but of course that is an object. About 20 women work out in the parish; all married. "It might be prohibited, except "at hay and corn harvest. It causes homes to be "much neglected, and the women themselves admit "that in the end they lose as much as they earn "for this reason."

The work for women and boys consists—

In spring, in weeding, hoeing, and bird-keeping.

In summer, in harvest work.

In autumn, in hoeing, weeding, and cattle-tending.

In winter (few women), only in bean-planting.

The total of boys working in the fields is 53; three from 8 to 10, 24 from 10 to 13, 26 from 13 to 18.

Would "recommend attendance at school for at "least six months in the year be required of all "children below 13. Do not know of any children "except little infants, neither at school nor work, "except some of the girls who are kept at home to "mind the baby." There are 12 males and 10 females (about) growing up unable often to read at all, and ignorant of the most ordinary matters.

"I myself generally teach the young men, who come "to my house in November, December, January, and "February for two evenings in the week from 7 to "9." Scholars number 23, average attendance 18; none admitted under 12. The difficulties in the way are the want of teachers and the fatigue of the boys, who have sometimes to be told to go and lie down and sleep.

Approximate Number of children attending the day school.

On the register.

—	Boys.			Girls.		
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.
Summer - -	38	7	45	34	8	42
Winter - -	42	7	49	40	8	48

In average attendance.

Summer - -	35	6	41	32	7	39
Winter - -	39	6	45	38	7	45

"Very much has been done by the Duke of "Somerset in providing good cottages. Some, I "regret to say, have been so accustomed to inferior "dwellings that they do not always appreciate their "better accommodation; nor does the improvement "always raise the moral standard." There is little crowding. "The cottages, such as are of the better "class, have at least one good living room (some "have a second small room), with convenient back "room for cooking, washing, and also generally a "small back-house. Three bedrooms of good size "where the family requires it. For single persons, "or those without children, there are smaller cottages. "There are bake-houses for the use of sets of cot-"tages. The water supply is not good, and in some "instances better arrangements are required for the "privies. The only proprietor is the Duke of "Somerset. Much has been done, and much is now "in hand."

287. *Rev. R. W. Church*, rector of Whatley (population 221).—A strong boy is taken away from school at 8, to keep crows, for six weeks in the spring, and the same in the autumn. At 10 he is allowed to leave school, and generally gets some light work on one of the farms; all the work they do when they first go out is light, such as cow-driving, keeping sheep, &c. The parish is nearly all dairy.

Mr. Church has a night school, which he encourages boys to come to after leaving the other. The attendance is good, but apt to dwindle towards January. Stupid boys go to sleep after work, but not generally the case. In 1867 he had 13 on his list, and the average attendance was nine, dwindling in February to six. They are only charged for lighting the school. Mr. and Mrs. Church teach. There are men of 23 and 21, the rest boys down to 10.

Few women are employed in the fields, only two as a regular thing; there is a strong feeling against it, and they are not the best characters in the parish; both are strong and have no ties at home, but they are not put to hoeing or weeding. One is a widow, and the other married. Two girls go out for odd jobs, one of 15, who is called the garden-girl, and goes to weed gardens in the village; one of 12, who goes out to assist her mother picking stones. Formerly women were much worked, and the old women recollect breaking stones, and working with the men.

288. *Rev. W. D. Furneaux*, rector of Berkley (population 386; acreage 1,800; two-thirds grass, the rest arable).—A small parish, with no village, and the cottages mostly on the farms; the only disadvantage being that it is so near Frome; many of the people who work in the town take cottages to the exclusion of the farm labourer. The cottages have been improving for some years, and are now generally very good. Nine out of ten belong to Sir Charles Mordaunt; rent 30*s.* to 60*s.* a year.

Very few women are employed, and it is difficult for the farmers to get as many boys as they want, so that the Factory Acts would never answer. In summer and spring, boys are employed in bean-dropping, potato-setting, and bird-keeping. In autumn, harvest and "acorning;" in winter, in general work.

289. *Rev. S. L. Sainsbury*, rector of Beckington (population 1,036). Beckington is a rectorial manor.—Has a well-attended school, but no night school; does not think there are any boys who do not go to school. Has 18 cottages in his own hands, and there is no overcrowding, as the population is diminishing, and there is lots of room; some cottages have been lately pulled down. There used to be cloth manufactories, but that has disappeared, and now there is only one factory, a dyer's, which generally takes the best and most intelligent hands, the wages being higher, the ordinary men remaining at agricultural labour. The parish is compact, 1,800 acres, so that though there are few cottages on the farms, the people in the town have not to go far to work. Women very little employed in the fields.

290. *Rev. H. B. Burney*, vicar of Norton St. Philip (population 625; acreage 1,500; chiefly pastoral).—Considers this a very favourable specimen of a Somerset village, but most in this neighbourhood are so. The cottages are fair, but the population is diminishing, and there are about 30 empty; they belong mostly to tradesmen.

No girls work out; about nine married women; it is "prejudicial to the formation of domestic habits.'

The children left at home wear out more than the parents earn abroad. The work in spring consists in weeding, in autumn rooting out, in winter dressing land.

The number of boys working in the farms is 19, of whom two are between 8 and 10, seven between 10 and 13. Thinks they ought not to work under 10 years of age. "No child under 11 years of age should "be allowed to be employed by a farmer who does not "present a certificate of his having passed the third "standard. There are 50 persons, 30 males, 20 "females, growing up with insufficient education."

TABLE of children neither at school nor at work.

	Boys.			Girls.			Grand Total.
	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	8 to 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
Summer - -	8	4	12	8	5	13	25
Winter - -	10	6	16	10	7	17	33

TABLE of children attending school.

On the register.

	Boys.			Girls.			Grand Total.
	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	Under 10.	10 to 13.	Total.	
Summer - -	23	11	34	25	13	38	72
Winter - -	23	13	36	25	15	40	76

In average attendance.

Summer - -	22	9	31	23	11	34	65
Winter - -	23	11	34	24	13	37	71

There is a night school open 16 weeks in the winter twice a week, two hours at a time, at which reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught. The difficulties in way of its success are want of teachers and funds. The total on the books is 37, of whom four are under 12, and 33 above 12. Average attendance is 24, of whom three are under 12, and 21 above 12.

291. *William Roberts*, schoolmaster, Philips Norton.—The infant school is the best attended; the children come as young as 18 months or 2 years.

Some boys go to work at 8, but the majority a little older. They are much kept at home to carry their parents' dinners.

There is a large night school, half of the pupils of which are over 18; the eldest is 24.

At the day school there are about 40 on the books and 30 infants.

292. *Rev. Charles Down*, rector of Hemington (population 449; acreage 2,794; cultivation mixed).—A large scattered parish, owing to which weather interferes with the attendance at school. There are on the register of the school 35 children, 15 boys 20 girls. In average attendance 32 children, 14 boys 18 girls. There is a night school open from October to March two and a half hours two nights a week, at which reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, as well as the Holy Scriptures; attendance last year 18.

Ten women work out in the fields, of whom two are girls under 18, the rest married. "I should say that "no young female should be employed in field work," nor boy under 8 years of age. There are 21 boys employed, of whom six are under 8, four between 8 and 10, five between 10 and 13, six between 13 and 18; they are principally employed as carter boys; also in weeding, driving cattle, &c.

"A few of the cottages in this parish are old and "inconvenient, and in two or three cases are over-"crowded; which, I believe, has an injurious effect on "the morality as well as on the comfort of the in-"mates." They have good gardens; most belong to the landowners. Rent 4*l.* to 5*l.*

293. *Rev. H. Clutterbuck*, vicar of Buckland Denham (population 459).—There are from two to four women employed on every farm in this and in the parishes beyond (Hemington and Hardington); not regularly, most of them, but going out by the job. They do a good deal of work about the farms; he himself saw a woman thrown off a thrashing machine. She said she went up it because master asked her. All the women employed, except one, and she is deformed, are married or widows. It does no harm to their character; the objection to it is that they go out and leave their homes, often leaving a child to mind the baby who ought to be at school. At bird-keeping, potato-setting, apple harvest, nearly all the boys in the school from 9 and upwards go off to work. They do not consider them much good under, and eat as many apples as they gather. It is very hard work for the schoolmaster, as they forget most of what they have learnt, and it is beginning over again. He has often had to teach the same boy the elements of reading and writing three times. The rest of the year the school is well attended. There is a night school in the winter, and a Sunday school makes up some of the lost ground. Mr. C. does not think the Factory Act would work; is inclined to think that most will be done by forcing the boys not to go to work till they have a certificate of a certain proficiency; but this must be renewed, as they are liable to forget again. They hate reading, and learnt it with difficulty. At writing and arithmetic, as more mechanical, they are cleverer. The farmers prefer the more intelligent workman, he understands machinery better. On one of the farms the other day the farmer went in and found they had put weights on the safety-valve to stop its noise while they were at dinner; in five minutes more they would have been blown up. Wages, 10*s.*, for carters 12*s.* The cottages, having been on lives, are improving. When Sir Henry Strachey sold the property it was mostly bought up by the farmers, and the cottages belong a good deal to middle-men, who seem to make it pay, but are liable not to spend money on repairs.

294. *Rev. C. A. Oak*, Road (population 663).—There is no National school at Road, but a capital Wesleyan one, endowed about 30 years ago. Children who do not go there go either to Road in Wilts, where Mr. Peacocke has a capital school, or to Wolverton, which is joined with Road, and is a very small parish. The school there has 15 on its books. The rector of the two parishes (Mr. Glossop), who is 87, lives there. There are hardly any boys who have never been to school. There is no Sunday school, but Mr. Oak, who has only been here six months, intends to establish one, as well as a National school. There are a great many dissenters in the parish.

The boys begin bird-keeping at 8. He himself farms a little, and employs a small boy.

Women are very little employed in the fields; those that are bear a good character; it is only women from towns who work in the fields that are bad.

The cottages are good, and have good gardens.

295. Rev. E. Peacocke's school at Road, Wilts.

Absentees at work:—

J. Howell, getting in cows.

Parrott (9), helping his mother in the fields.

Edward Blake (12), working at Beckington.

Henry Broadway (8), haymaking with his mother.

No girls ever work in the fields, and the women, as a rule, won't go there; the wages are good, and they do not find it necessary.

Has one boy of 15 in the school only; the next oldest is about 11.

CLUTTON UNION.

296. Extract from letter from *J. Hippesley, Esq.*, Stoneaston, to *Sir E. Strachey, Bart.*:—

In answer to my questions Whitaker says that boys of *all ages*, from 10 and upwards, are em-

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k.

ployed, but that there are very few. Except in haymaking times there is enough of adult labour for the work of this an almost non-cereal growing district.

Whitaker does not know a single farmer who employs a girl out of doors.

Eight hours is the normal period of women's work; but of them, except at haymaking time, there are very few employed in agricultural labour.

297. — *Coulthurst, Esq.*, Chew Magna. Farms between 300 and 400 acres at Chew Magna Believes the boys are very idle. Has one very clever intelligent lad of 15 in his garden, who has a great dislike to learning anything. Employs about four boys and as many women. Bird-keeping is really necessary; he has known rooks dig up a whole ridge of potatoes just planted, and devour every one of them. Thinks the people of Chew Magna a very idle set.

298. *Mr. Stallard*, occupier, Stanton Drew.—Has 80 acres of arable out of 260, a larger proportion than usual.

Boys begin keeping birds as early as 7.

He gives his labourers 10*s.* and a house; carter, 12*s.* and a house; in summer all have 2*s.* more, besides cyder and lunch. Mowers and reapers work by the piece.

Wages have risen in consequence of the railway coming.

The boys go to school in winter.

He has a family, father, mother, and two boys, all working for him. Girls do not go out to work, but do not go to school any the more for that.

In summer nearly every man's wife earns 1*s.* a day; in winter, 9*d.* It does not degrade them in any way; they are very poor. The prices asked at the small country shops are very high. Has heard men say that if their wives do not work they will not support them, they must go to the parish. They do not work when the weather is bad.

He employs more men than most farmers; as many as six in constant employ.

299. *Mr. Fear*, occupier, Stoney.—Employs boys of from 10 to 11. Has one at present bird-keeping, and one in the house. He has seldom more than one bird-keeping. Gives him 4*d.* per day. Would not restrict the age at which boys begin.

Employs two women in weeding or haymaking for, perhaps, five or six months in the year, chiefly summer months. They go out very little in winter.

Never employs girls. They never begin to work young.

Boys are kept at school too long in this parish. They come to work when too old to learn their business, and are above their position. Schooling should not be carried too far; to read and write is enough.

Girls are kept at school till they are 14 or 15, and then they will not be farm servants; and even if they do not go to school stay at home, and learn idle habits.

Mrs. Veale's children are at home, running about the streets. Is going to call a vestry about it, and hopes Sir E. will come.

Rooks do the principal damage to seed, and wood-pigeons, but there are few of them; jays do some, but keep mostly to the woods. Small birds do little damage. Has a boy now keeping the rooks from four acres of peas. Bird-keeping is a necessity.

300. *Mr. Veale*, occupier, Denny (saw his nephew).—Farms about 58 acres. Employs one boy and one old woman regularly. Does not think many are employed about, and those with large families and widows. Mostly dairy, and has no bird-keeping.

301. *Mrs. Veale*, Stoney.—Goes out to work; dresses ground and weeds. Leaves her daughter at home in charge of the house. She has no regular work. There are three bedrooms.

302. *Mrs. Mapstone*, Stowey.—Used to go out to work, but has three young children, and does not now. Three bedrooms, but only uses two, as family small.

303. *Mrs. Hoddinot*, Stowey.—Has five children at home. Three bedrooms upstairs. Used to go out to work, but it is a bad thing to leave children at home alone. Washes now.

Has a boy of 10 at regular work, but he is out of work now. Was at school up to 10.

304. Cottages at Stoney. Extract from Diary, July 13, 1868.

Went with *Sir E. Strachey* to see some of his cottages. He rather complains of the low state of morality. One, Mrs. Veale, who we went to see, and who married Mr. Haines, gardener, from service, had had a child either immediately before or after marriage, and was considered no worse in the village; she seemed a quiet respectable sort of woman. Women very often marry when the child is just going to be born. Sometimes the man refuses, but, as a rule, he marries her. Saw some cottages belonging to *Mrs. Stallard*, wife of Sir E.'s old butler, who, of course, has no money to keep them in order. They were, however, better than I expected, though each only two rooms, above one another. *Mrs. E.* lives in one, with her husband and four children. Does not bear a very good character in the village. Used to go out to work, leaving her children at home, put to sleep by a basin of poppy flowers! Sir E. had two cottages there, which each had four rooms, so were better; but in Mrs. Stallard's they were all families of small children, so there was no excessive crowding of young men and women.

305. *Rev. Horatio Ward*, rector of Radstock (population 2,227).—A large and increasing parish, owing to the mines. The cottages are generally good. Lady Waldegrave, to whom it all belongs, has just added 40. The women work very little in the fields, and such work ought to be put a stop to, as it degrades them, and people do not like having them in the house; but generally men and boys get such good wages in the mines, that it is not necessary for women to work at all out of doors. A boy of 17 will earn as much as a man in the coal mines, for they work by the piece.

306. *Schoolmaster* at Radstock.—There are not 12 boys employed in the fields under 12. Most of them go as soon as they have a certificate of competency in the three R.'s to the mines; but there are many boys who do not, and have never been to school, but simply idle about the place; he would say half as many as come to school.

The number on the school books is 203, of which 173 were at the inspection; 128 is the average attendance. He should remark that many have left in the current year after having attended, and supposes that 400 at least have been to the school who are now no longer on the books.

A night school has been often tried, but failed; the men do not like seeming to know less than the boys, and to be laughed at by one another at the pits.

They have a difficulty in learning arithmetic.

When the Acts to ordain that no boy who could not read, write, and figure should work came out, there was a difficulty at first what standard of reading was sufficient; he has settled it here at words of two syllables.

307. *Rev. R. S. Savory*, rector of Cameley (population 526).—Has a very good schoolmaster. No boys go to work under 12, but the farmers come and complain much sometimes of high education, which prevents their getting young boys to keep crows. Thinks no legislation necessary, but no harm in settling an age before which they may not work. Hardly any women work in the fields in the parish. Does not like their doing it at all, but very hard to forbid them, in the case of widows for instance. Only about three or four work, and they not regularly.

309. Extract from letter from *Rev. R. S. Savory*, Cameley:—

"Cameley, Temple Cloud, Bristol,
"Dear Sir, July 11, 1868.

"There are a few observations upon the statistics you are seeking for I should like to have made

last Thursday. They refer to both women and children; but as to the latter I do not feel so sure, because though I am inclined to think that on the whole it would be as well to let them alone, yet it does seem hard that they should work before 10, especially if they can neither read nor write. As to women, however, I can see nothing but evil resulting from any interference with their working. 1st. I believe it will be very bad for themselves, making a number of strong, hearty women, with strong passions, idle, and worse, and interfering with the appointment of One who is much wiser than we are. But, 2ndly, suppose on the whole it does good to them, it throws a tremendous evil upon others; for there is a certain amount of work to be done, and there are a certain number of people to do it; if you abstract some from the work, you throw so much more work upon the rest, so that kindness to some is cruelty to others; and even if you say, if they work they shall have a certain wage, you don't mend the matter, at least not much, for there is a certain amount of money to be spent in wages, and if a person can't employ five he will employ only four. Take any one case; we are what may be called moderately well off; we have a certain number of regular servants, but if we have a little pressure we never hesitate to employ a woman from the parish. I believe it is a great blessing to her, but if her charge was higher, we should simply do without. I believe all attempts to raise wages otherwise than by the demand regulating the supply must end in failure, and produce more evil than good. If people demand higher wages, there will certainly be fewer employed, and is not the present state of things in England an evidence of this? You don't see it in country places, because people flock to the towns; but what numbers are out of employ there, 10,000 in Bristol and Clifton unions at present. If you try to raise the wages by which food is supplied, there will again be a double evil, for food will be produced *less* in our own country, and the price will be higher, and if a man can buy as much for a shilling as he can for two, where is the good of an increase of wages? There is a great deal more might be said, as, for instance, the curious anomaly that seems to be getting ground, that while we are saying that women shall not work, ladies shall. Everywhere are ladies beginning to recognize what, I believe, is their happiness, and to enter into the law of work, whereas a spirit of idleness is creeping into the lower orders, and their cry is more pay and fewer hours. I won't, however, take up any more of your time, but conclude by saying I only wish that people could put out of their heads the impression that change is improvement.

"I am, &c.
"R. S. Savory."

309. *Rev. E. F. Johnson*, rector of Hinton Blewett (population 302).—In this place the school is disappearing very much; there are only 25 children on the books, and but a small proportion of them come; a good many go to school at Cameley. Government gives no aid; the present system denies all aid to poor places like Hinton. There are two small dames' schools; many of the children go out to work very young. The women work much with their husbands, and quite right they should, where wages are so low. Wages vary from 9*s.* to 12*s.* The population is diminishing much. Mr. Johnson himself had five cottages on his hands the other day. This makes house-rent low, which is one of the redeeming features of the place; you can get a good cottage for 1*s.* a week. But there is no landlord of any means to spend money in the place; no one owns more than 150 acres in the parish, and they stare if asked for 5*l.* towards the school. Most of the farms are small, 30 or 40 acres, and the farmer's family aid in working it.

310. *Rev. Robert Haynes*, vicar of Stowey (population 181).—There are in the parish only about 12 families altogether, and four women only work in the fields. The women weed, hoe, and pick stones; he considers weeding up to the knees very bad for their health, and the employment generally demoralizing. The best men will not let their wives go out, but the drunken and idle find it a great assistance. Mrs. Lodge, who was a respectable young women, having married, and having a child every year, goes out in the fields to assist them, leaving her children at home in charge of a lodger. Their manners become like a man's from working with them, and she is much spoilt. Besides, they get into a way of going to the public house with the men, not drinking much, but staying from 6 to 11, sipping and making a noise. They are thirsty after work; they do not care so much for their children. One woman went down to get drink, as she said if she left her husband there he had it all, if she went down she had her share. It ought to be put a stop to, women working, except, of course, that of widows would be a hard case.

The cottages are much improving, and are good now; most with three bedrooms; but people do not care much about it. In one three-bedroom cottage a large family lives down in a lower room, leaving the others empty, and when expostulated with, said that the children were afraid of ghosts.

Early work destroys the *health and morality* of boys. They get out in the field at 7 or 8 years old, and have a little hut of four hurdles and a bundle of straw, and dawdle away their time; then if, when it is over, they come back to school, they have forgotten everything, and will not take the trouble to learn it over again. Most of the girls leave school too at about 13 or 14, and wish to get into service, nursing children or servants to tradesmen in Bristol. They have tried a night school several times at Sutton, but it always lapses in time; one great objection is that the boys of 14 know more than the men, and the men hate being beaten by them; besides, they are very open to ridicule, and if chaffed about mistakes made will not come again. They find it very difficult to read, harder than to write; but they forget their writing again, and many men cannot sign the parish register. Is in favour of compulsory education, and approves of the half-time system. If farmers were not allowed to employ the boys more than half the day, they would fall into it, and comply with necessity of having two relays. Of course it would be an unpopular measure. Yesterday they sent for to the examination a girl who they had nearly been sending up for examination as a monitress; she had been out at service six weeks only, and it was astonishing how much she had forgotten.

311. *Rev. Wm. Wait*, rector of Chew Stoke (population 758).—Boys work little under 12 years of age; women make hay, plant potatoes, &c. Mr. Wait has built a capital reading-room for the parish, but has been much disappointed in its being a failure, as very few ever come. Admission was given to any one in the parish on his subscribing 5*s.* to one of eight societies in which he was interested, and it is used for concerts, readings, &c. The cottages are usually good, but he mentioned a case of one under Blackdown, where 10 used to live in one room; that was, however, an exceptional case. Every facility for education.

312. *Rev. E. A. Ommaney*, vicar of Chew Magna (population 1,855).—Has himself a good many cottages held of him by copyright tenure, which are very difficult to get hold of and improve. Women work a good deal in the parish, which is a large one, but they are of little good. The people generally are a lazy idle set, and like dawdling about the parish. They are very proud of belonging to Chew; much of it is due to continual intermarriage. Some of the cottages are very bad, particularly some 19 or 20 belonging to Mr. Adlam, where large families are huddled together.

313. *Rev. C. H. Nutt*, vicar of East Harptree (population 651; cultivation chiefly pastoral).—The people are a rough lot, hardly knows why, but attributes it much to local influence, force of bad example.

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There was an unenergetic clergyman there before him. There is, however, a good deal of education, and it has been called in the neighbourhood young Oxford. There is a fair National school, and a large British school. But the latter is rather a disadvantage, as it prevents the children coming so much under the eye of the rector. It is a great stronghold of dissent.

It is difficult to interfere with children going early to work. The parents require their earnings where wages are low, and the supply of labour is in excess of the demand, that to apply the Factory Act would amount to prohibiting the labour of boys altogether.

A great many women go out to irregular work, few are regularly employed; but they go on the job, weeding and hoeing.

The state of morals is bad, though the women who work in the fields are no worse than the others; several women in the parish have had children before marriage.

There being no squire, many of the cottages are very bad, and some mere hovels, with large families living in two rooms; of course it has a natural effect in a loss of modesty among the girls. The girls mostly go out to work at the farms and elsewhere; but Mr. Nutt considers the sights they see among the beasts even as conducive to a loss of modesty. Since he has been in a rural parish, he has had his ideas of arcadian simplicity very roughly dispelled.

314. *Rev. Charles Foster*, rector of Compton Martin (population 558).—The curse of this place is the small holdings, which are found much along this valley. The farmer and his family are enough to work a small farm of 40 acres, and there is no work for labourers. Besides, there is a want of capital, and no one rich enough to do anything for the poor.

The men go up to work at the lead mines on Mendip, but not the women or children.

The state of morality is very low. There is a girl going about in the village, well dressed and taken care of, who has had a child by a Bristol man, and her parents are anything but ashamed of it, while she is envied by the neighbours.

The cottages are very bad; the squire never repairs them, but lets them go to ruin, while he turns out any one who improves on his own account.

The children are taken away very early to work, and forget everything. A night school was attempted but did not last long. Mr. Foster had to teach it himself. The young men thought they were doing him a favour by coming, and he had to work separately with each, as their attainments varied so that it was impossible to classify them.

Mr. Foster considers the chief signs of the degradation that prevails in this valley, that the people see no use in education, and believe in witchcraft. If anyone has a fit or the cow gives no milk, they consider they have been overlooked, and send to the wise woman in Bristol. The older people themselves are utterly uneducated, and do not see why the children should be better off than themselves.

The women go out very little to work; they are better at home.

Most of these remarks apply to Blagdon; but it is better there, as they have an active squire, Captain Valpy.

315. *Rev. Samuel Trueman*, vicar of Nempnet, (population 259). A scattered parish, covering an area of nearly 1,800 acres. "15 labourers' children be- "tween the ages of 1 and 10. Circumstances good, "morality low, but equal in my opinion to the "morality of the farmers as a class. Content and "fairly remunerative employment in manual labour "is the chief temporal good for the labouring class." Children are usually employed "from about 9, in the "care of boys; a great demand for even incapable "men and boys. Women prefer field labour to "housewifery; they cannot sew or darn. I should "say they do not hurt themselves. Field labour "engenders unfeminine habits, tends to make the "female sex generally loose; breeding in and in "very prejudicial. Compulsory education is, in my "opinion, injurious. I would confine it to the merest "rudiments. We want industry and morality.

"Twenty-two labourers' cottages, some of them "their own freeholds; the supply of labourers below "the demand; competent labourers fewer still; high "wages. With ordinary good management and moderate thrift every one (man, woman, and child) in "the labouring class would be very well off; the "poor-law allowances very liberal, but the poor-rate "vastly in excess of any benefit, and all the benefit "that is desired. The paupers get a very inadequate "portion of the extravagant amount collected. The "present poor-law system works most laboriously, "expensively, and to a large class of struggling, "deserving people almost ruinously, certainly injuriously. The huge workhouses, with their absurdly extravagant machinery and arrangements, "are an enormous evil, a grinding oppression. What "is given in *out-door* relief is ridiculously disproportionate to the levies raised.

"The number of labourers' children above 1 year "of age and under 10 years of age would average "about 15 (stands at that now); there are available "for these and have been actually made use of, four* "National schools (Butcombe, Ridge Hill, Blagdon, "Chew Stoke), and one private school (at Butcombe), and one that partakes of the mixed character of national *or parochial*, and private (Ubley), "within distances more or less convenient, and at "payments ranging from 1*d.* to 3*d.* a week for each "child.

"Any wear or tear arising to the children's clothes "from exposure to weather is amply and abundantly "met by a charity equally distributed each half-year "*in money*, subject to strict printed rules (which "are scrupulously observed), between the labourers, "their wives, their children over 1 and under 10 "years of age, and the old people and imbeciles, and "paupers *resident in* the parish, and having in time "past been householders; mere lodgers (*e.g.*, young "men till they marry) are ineligible. Thus, a family "of six would and do receive 3*l. yearly*.

"I believe the poor-law system is very demoralizing "to the class which it is (benevolently) intended to "help and benefit. I would have it abolished, extinguished, and I would remove all incentive and encouragement to this kind of dependence.

"We pauperise, and induce degradation along with "indigence.

"Red-tapeism stimulates, nurtures, and fosters a "great deal that is necessarily inevitably evil, and "that admits of only at the best imperfect and very "partial remedies. I believe the late Dr. Chalmers "had more insight into political economy than many "of our statesmen and so-called reformers."

Bedminster Union.

316. *Sir William Miles, Bart.*, Leigh Court (parish of Abbots Leigh; cultivation mixed, two-thirds arable).—Boys are employed from 9 till 13 or 14 bird-tenting. "Boys from my school are employed during "the spring and summer with the schoolmaster in "spudding thistles, pulling docks and charlocks, and "weighing mangel-wurzel in fine weather." They ought certainly not to be employed before 9 years of age. "I have a school at which all children in the "parish have a right to admission. One child pays "1*d.* a week, any number of the same family 2*d*; "besides which, upon application, I take in children "not belonging to the parish." In winter the schoolmaster opens an evening school for the young men, which is attended regularly by 12 to 18.

Girls never work out. "I used to employ two "women, but for some years have employed none "except for occasionally picking charlock. Within "my recollection the employment of women has "much diminished, which I attribute greatly to the

* Middle-class schools or schools for farmers' children are not noted.—S.T.

" spread of education, and the consequent need found " by the labourer for home comforts."

"Since my occupation I have built several cottages, " all good and not overcrowded. Many of the old " ones have about three bedrooms; they are well " situated as regards their farms, they are well ven- " tilated and adequately supplied with water, except " in such a season as this: owing to the residence of " six gentlemen in the parish, and the necessity of " providing their married servants with lodgings, " I have not enough cottages for the whole of my " farm labourers. Those that have not cottages re- " side at Pill."

317. *Wm. Sturye, Esq.*, land-agent, Bristol.—There is little or no employment of women to any hard extent anywhere in Somerset. There are some employed in the south, for there is more corn there, and about Axbridge, which is a peculiar place, as it is devoted to the growth of early potatoes. The condition of the cottages generally is much to be deplored, and yet there is no way he can see for their improvement. It wants a man to have a large capital to be able to afford to receive so little return for his money, and Somersetshire is a county of small squires. Speculators in cottages only make it answer by charging an enormous rent, and never repairing. The Land Enclosures Commission has been a great failure. They insist on their own plans, and it is impossible following them to build a good double cottage, with three bedrooms in each, under 400*l.* The scantling they insist on is good enough for a large house. He himself can build similar cottages, plain and substantial, under 300*l.* They take 6½ per cent. on the outlay for 22 years, and the man who builds the cottages has to be content to be at a loss all that time, unless he charges an exorbitant rent. There are two or three companies do the same, but of course it is more difficult for them, as they have to make it answer. They charge 7 per cent. for 30 years. In this part of England they find little custom. The drainage of cottages is so bad, often owing to all conveniences being on the same roof or at any rate close to the cottage. A country village is in consequence often far more unhealthy than the town. Can see no way of improving cottage accommodation on self-supporting terms. "The only hope is raising " the condition of the labourer so as to enable him to " pay a higher rent."

318. *Thomas Ward, Esq.*, land-agent to Sir Arthur Elton, Clevedon Court (acreage of Clevedon parish 2,986; cultivation pastoral, grazed one year and mown the next; two white crops not to succeed one another).—No girls or women are employed out in the fields; being so near the watering place of Clevedon, enough washing, &c. is to be obtained to employ them. Boys are employed "from 8 years old upwards, say, four " to six months in the year." They ought not to work before 12 or 13 years of age, firstly, on sanitary grounds, because it undermines the constitution, and often ends in decline; secondly, that they may be able to take full advantage of the means of education, which are ample in the town.

"The cottages are very much overcrowded; people who have a good cottage with three bedrooms will often take in as many as eight lodgers, and herd with their families in the kitchen. It is impossible to build good cottages and make them pay. Built for Sir Arthur, in Clevedon eight cottages of money borrowed from the Lands Improvement Society, at 280*l.* a pair, Sir Arthur's annual loss upon which is 2 per cent."

319. Cottages at Clevedon. Extract from Diary, July 16, 1868:—

Sir Arthur Elton's bailiff came, and took me round to see some cottages. Went first to what he said were bad ones; but beside what I had seen they seemed very good. Mrs. Coles, who had half a double cottage, lived with a husband and eight children. Two rooms above and two below, but spacious. The other half consisted of one room under and one above, and six people lived in it.

Drove on to see some of the cottages built by Sir A. with money borrowed of the Lands Improvement Society. Built in blocks of two each, with small gardens at the back; stone, red tile, and very clean inside. They have two rooms below and three bed-rooms. In the centre block each had an extra ground-floor room at the back. The only objection seemed to be that the privy was in the building, though opening into the outer air. The plan had, however, been approved by an inspector; but the bailiff seemed to agree with me in preferring it detached. There are two fields of allotments in different parts. It is not so good a system as gardens, but seems to answer pretty well.

320. —— *Talbot, Esq.*, principal of the middle-class school (Failand's Lodge).—Considers that I have little or nothing to do in Somerset, and especially in this part. Very few women work, and those mostly of the old school, who go out because they like it, and could not bear to be kept in-doors. But there is little necessity for them now; the men's wages in this part are so much higher (12*s.* to 14*s.* besides drink), and so much of the work that women used to do is now done by machinery. Mr. Talbot farms 60 acres himself. He seldom employs boys in crow-keeping; in fact, though most of this district is arable, he considers that they are not wanted. They are idle and lazy, and do not attend to what they have to do. Crow-twine stretched all over the field is cheaper in the end, and does the work better. The only bird that it does not scare is the pheasant. Pheasants are very numerous just here, owing to there being so many gentlemen's places, and they run in under the twine and dig up whole rows of potatoes. He has seen a flight of small birds alight on a field of corn, and a bird settle on nearly every ear. The soil in the valleys is deeper and richer, and used for pasture; on the hills like this it is much more cultivated; but when Mr. Talbot came himself nearly all this was bare, a great part covered with fern, which he destroyed by sending boys round with sticks to beat it down; cutting does no good, it must be knocked over. The mowing machine certainly does knock down the grass to a certain extent; it does not cut it sharp off like a scythe; but he does not believe it kills the grass. Mr. Talbot does not think legislation necessary as far as Somerset is concerned.

321. *Rev. H. J. Barnard*, vicar of Yatton (population 1,450; cultivation almost entirely pastoral).—No girls and few women work out in this parish. " Very few boys are employed under 14 or 15, and " those generally in the spring and autumn for potato- " digging and planting. I think no boy should be " permitted to do regular work under 14. There is " a National school under a master and mistress, and " a British school under a master. The children " generally attend; when they do not, it is generally " the fault of the parents."

The cottages as a rule sufficient, pretty good, and not overcrowded, except in the case of one or two large families. "There is a great lack of good " gardens, and very little allotment land."

322. *Rev. E. P. Vaughan*, rector of Wraxall (population 918; acreage 3,496; chiefly pastoral, with some arable).—This is rather a pattern parish, as several rich people live here (the Gibbs') and take care of it. Yet there are families who never send their children to school. He thinks it runs in families; there is an apathy about it; the parents never learnt themselves, and do not see the good of it. The women do not work much. Wages are good; but if a boy can make 3*s.* a week it is only natural that his parents should wish to increase it; he told me only to fancy one's own case. If a father has 4,000*l.* a year and his son could earn another 1,000*l.*, it would be hard to forbid him doing it. But Mr. Vaugham is all in favour of an age being fixed. " I should be inclined to say that no child under 12 " years of age should be permitted to be employed in " any agricultural work without a certificate that he " could read without spelling any common book,

Somersetshire.
Mr. Boyle.
k.

"such certificate to be signed by the master and "mistress of the school he has attended, the clergy- "man of the parish, or the minister of the chapel, or "some householder in the parish rated about, say, "20*l.* in the parish book, not being the child's "employer; an appeal as to the truth of the certifi- "cate to be allowed to Her Majesty's Inspector of "Schools, or, in the case of the Church of England "children, to the bishop's inspector. There are good "and well attended schools; but there are certainly "families who take away their children too early "from the school, and many who send them too "irregularly, that they may do odd jobs and pick up "sixpence or a shilling; families in which ignorance "is hereditary." Forgetting is one of the greatest evils. Mr. Vaughan believes that of all the able-bodied labourers who have been through the school, not one quarter can read and write when grown up. This would be an interesting inquiry, though difficult to carry out.

"Girls are scarcely ever employed in any agri- cultural work. Women are employed in hay- making, turnip-hoeing, wheat-hoeing, and in dairy work, and in gentlemen's gardens."

Cottages, "good on some estates, very bad on "others. Few have sufficient sleeping rooms or "proper drainage. I believe many cases of im- "morality I have known may be attributed to this. "Might not the power to recover rent depend on the "certificate of some public health officer that the "house was fit for human habitation? The cottages "have all gardens, with very few exceptions, but "they are not always large enough. We have all "allotments."

323. *Mr. Chapman*, schoolmaster, Abbots Leigh.—Manages to keep some of the boys at the day school till the ages of 13 or 14. Has a night school open from September to March, during which time they come pretty well; about 16 is the attendance, and they vary in age from 14 up to 30 or 40. Do not take boys younger than 14.

324. *Schoolmaster at Clevedon.*—Perhaps one-ninth of the boys go off to work. The earliest age they go at is 8, but few do that. The brick-field takes them very much. They come back in the winter. They are very dull; and those who come so irregularly seldom learn to read. Some few have been to school, and resisted the discipline, so gone away having learnt nothing. Mentioned an exceptional case of a family who never learnt anything when little, but have come since and turned out well. There are 300 children on the books, the youngest aged $5\frac{1}{2}$; on the books of the British school are 150 children.

The night school is very regularly attended, and the scholars seem to take much interest in it; but it is composed chiefly of mason's labourers and young apprentices, scarcely a third from the agricultural labouring class. It is open four nights a week; but it is never much good keeping it open after Christmas; from October to Christmas they come pretty regularly. The attendance is sometimes as many as 32, sometimes 16. The oldest scholar is the foreman at the gasworks, aged about 45.

Answers to the Commissioners' Circulars.

Of the larger circulars I have received 30 filled up, of which 24 were filled up by clergymen; of the smaller circulars 61, of which 47 are filled up by clergymen. Of course there are great differences in the extent and value of the answers, some gentlemen having merely filled up the paper with monosyllabic replies, others having been good enough to furnish me with statistics and particulars that must have cost them a great deal of time and trouble. To these gentlemen I wish to express my gratitude. At the same time I regret very much that I kept no return of the number of circulars issued, but calculate that I received back about two-thirds of them answered. In the following arrangement of answers, the answers to the larger circulars are placed first in order to avoid confusion; those to the smaller circulars follow. There is only one exception to this rule, and that is in the case of the answers to 22 (*m*) in the larger circular and 6 in the smaller. Under the head of 22 (*m*) will be found a table summarising the answers to both questions, which are identical in substance.

ANSWERS TO COMMISSIONERS' CIRCULARS.

6. Does any system exist in your parish of employing persons in agriculture in "private gangs?"

To this question the answer in every circular, except one, that of the *Rev. Mark Warburton*, rector of Kilmington, is a decided negative, and he says, "Yes, but on too small a scale to be worthy of "notice." Kilmington is on the borders of Wiltshire.

Mr. Hancock, who farms largely at Halse, says, In July and August I send out a man into the village to get all the children, boys and girls, he can find to come and single turnips; some come at 9 years. They work in a row, and there is a man to look after them, who tells the younger ones what to do, if they fall behind the others. It is light work, and no unkindness is used.

In these two circulars only is there an allusion to a gang-system.

22.

(*a.*) *Rev. W. P. Anderson*, Winsford.—"One or two women are generally employed on each farm. The children who are employed are in service in the farm-houses, except sometimes for bird-keeping.

Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman, Staple Fitzpaine.—No girls are employed; boys go about 10 to guide the plough; some stay till 13 or 14. The girls stay on longer at school, but go away at about 12 to sew gloves. They go out to domestic service about 15 or 16 years of age, usually after gloving.

Rev. W. D. Furneaux, Berkeley.—So few women as to be hardly worth specifying. As a rule women are only employed in hay and corn harvests. It is difficult to procure boys in sufficient numbers for the farmers' needs.

(*b.*) Give as nearly as you can the following particulars as to the number and age of such persons so employed.

I have had many complaints of the great difficulty of filling up this table with any accuracy, owing to the uncertainty of the periods and duration of labour for women and boys.

The *Rev. W. P. Anderson* writes, The women are chiefly wives of workmen on the farms. The age of children going to farm service is seldom under 12. I cannot give the exact statistics without making minute inquiries, for which I have not time.

The *Rev. Cyril Wood*, Stogursey, writes, It is impossible to find time to answer this under a month's time.

Even where gentlemen have been good enough to fill up the table, they have complained of the difficulty of doing so accurately, as may be seen in the table

below, in which I have drawn out side by side the statements of the Rev. M. Warburton and Mr. Lush, both of the parish of Kilmington, whose estimates differ considerably.

—	Males.					Females.						
	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 & 10.	Between 10 & 13.	Between 13 & 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.
Rev. M. Warburton	3	5	12	23	43	2	4	6	14	25	15	66
Mr. Lush - -	—	8	12	30	50	—	—	—	6	16	13	35

Subjoined is a table of returns of employment of women and children in six parishes, supplied by the rector or vicar, with the population of each parish subjoined, and the proportion of women and children to that population. The parish of Philips Norton is in the most flourishing district of Somerset; that of Wootton in one of the poorest. The large proportion of women employed in such parishes as Mark is owing to the dairy work.

—	Name of Parish.	Cultivation.	Males.					Females.							Population.	Proportion of women and children employed in agriculture to the population of the parish.
			Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Total Males.	Under 8.	Between 8 and 10.	Between 10 and 13.	Between 13 and 18.	Over 18. Married.	Over 18. Unmarried.	Total Females.		
Rev. F. Du Sautoy -	Mark - -	Chiefly pastoral -	10	10	20	30	70	—	—	10	20	50 wives of farmers.	50 daughters of farmers.	130	1,217	1 in 6⅓
Rev. Wm. Meade -	Binegar - -	Chiefly pastoral -	1	2	10	11	24	—	2	3	8	2 widows		15	258	1 in 6½
Rev. H. B. Burney -	Norton St. Philip.	Chiefly pastoral -	—	2	7	10	19	—	—	—	—	9	—	9	625	1 in 22
Rev. J. L. Carrick -	Witham - -	Chiefly pastoral -	—	3	24	26	53	—	—	—	—	20	—	20	581	1 in 8
Hon. and Rev. W. B. Portman.	Corton Denham	Arable preponderates.	1	2	12	18	33	—	—	—	—	13	—	13	410	1 in 9
Rev. Charles Sainsbury	Wootton Courtney.	Mixed - - -	—	1	10	12	23	—	—	—	1	30	2	33	350	1 in 6¼

(*c.*) In what kinds of work are they employed during the different seasons of the year?

(1.) In Spring.

Rev. F. Du Sautoy, Mark, says, dairy-work.

Rev. W. Meade, Binegar, says, bird-keeping, stone-picking, dressing ground, weeding corn, potato-setting.

Rev. H. B. Burney, Philip's Norton, says, weeding.

Mr. Lush, Kilmington, says (boys), keeping birds and keeping sheep; (women), weeding corn and picking stones.

Rev. W. Furneaux, Berkeley, says, bird-keeping, potato-setting, bean-dropping.

Rev. J. King Eagles, Hill-Farrance, says, occasionally in weeding wheat.

Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, says, keeping birds, a few boys, perhaps one on each farm, for two or three weeks.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman, Corton Denham, says (boys), shepherding, bird-keeping, and leading horses; (women), pulling turnips, weeding and dressing ground, *i.e.*, grass.

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford, says, pulling turnips, planting potatoes, bird-keeping.

Rev. Charles Sainsbury, Wootton, says, picking meadows and weeding wheat.

Rev. Cyril Wood, Stogursey, says, agricultural weeding, ploughing, &c.

(2.) In Summer.

Rev. W. Meade says, dairy, also hay and corn harvesting.

Rev. F. du Sautoy says, thinning swedes and mangold, milking.

Rev. H. B. Burney says, harvesting, haymaking.

Mr. Lush says (women), haymaking, sowing corn, and weeding, and a few assist in reaping.

Mr. R. Porteous says, cutting thistles, making hay, serving pigs, and bringing the cattle home.

Rev. W. Furneaux says, bird-keeping, potato-setting, bean-dropping, harvesting.

Rev. J. K. Eagles says, weeding wheat and spring roots.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman says, haymaking and weeding; boys used for leading horses.

Rev. W. P. Anderson says, hoeing and hay harvest.

Rev. C. Sainsbury says, haymaking and harvest.

Rev. C. Wood says, haymaking.

(3.) In Autumn.

Rev. W. Meade says, dairy, also hay and corn harvest.

Rev. F. du Sautoy says, potato-digging.

Rev. H. B. Burney says, rooting out.

Mr. Lush says, harvesting and spreading manure.

Mr. R. Porteous says, bird-keeping, &c.

Rev. W. Furneaux says, harvesting and acorn gathering.

Rev. J. K. Eagles says, harvesting.

Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman says, mazing and keeping pigs.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman says, harvesting, apple-picking, bird-keeping.

Rev. W. P. Anderson says, harvesting, bird-keeping.

Rev. C. Sainsbury says, digging potatoes and apple-picking, turnips dug for sheep.

Rev. C. Wood says, children in harvesting; women take little part except in gleaning.

(4.) In Winter.

Rev. W. Meade says, dairy.

Rev. F. du Sautoy says, tending sheep and cattle.

Rev. H. B. Burney says, dressing land.

. Somersetshire.
Mr. Boyle.
. k.

Mr. Lush says, attending threshing machine; very few go out.
Mr. R. Porteous says, driving plough, &c.
Rev. W. Furneaux says, general work.
Rev. J. K. Eagles says, pulling roots.
Hon. and Rev. W. Portman says, turnip-pulling, shepherding, serving cattle; but little work for boys or women.
Rev. W. P. Anderson says, turnip-pulling.
Rev. C. Sainsbury says, not much done.

(*d.*) Do they live on or near the farms on which they work?
If not, how far have they to come from their homes to their daily work?

As a rule this question was answered in the affirmative. There used to be some parishes in which cottages were pulled down to send the people into the neighbouring town or large village, but that custom is going out now, and landlords are seeing the wisdom of building cottages on their property.
Henry Davis, Esq., Oakhill.—Most of them live near the farm, but some about a mile away.
Mr. Lush, Kilmington:—Mostly near. In the case of two farms a few women and boys may have as far as half a mile to their work.
Mr. Porteous, Marston Bigot.—No. Frome. One mile and upwards.

(*e.*) What are their usual hours of work upon the land?

For boys the usual rule is the same hours as men, 6 to 6, leaving off with dark, however, when the days are short. Women seldom begin work till 8, and sometimes leave off an hour before the men and boys.
Rev. J. K. Eagles, Hill Farrance.—6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton.—Women, 8 o'clock till 5; boys, 7 o'clock till 5.
Mr. Lucas, Wiveliscombe.—Nearly the same as the men, say, they start 1 hour later in the morning; may have half an hour longer at dinner.
Rev. F. du Sautoy, Mark.—Children 8 hours; adults about 9 hours, those engaged in milking; adults about 12 hours, those engaged in agriculture.
Rev. W. Hunt, Congresbury.—About 12 hours; varies according to light.
H. Davis, Esq., Oakhill.—From 6 to 6, except in short days.
Hon. W. Portman, Corton Denham.—Boys 12 hours, if bird-keeping; less according to daylight, and not so much at other work. Women, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(*f.*) What are their hours, reckoning from the time of leaving home to go to work in the morning to the time when they come back to work?

Hardly any answers given to this. The above hours seem to include the time of going to and from work.
The *Rev. J. K. Eagles*, who has given as answer to the above question 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., answers to this, "12 hours, including the meal-times."

(*g.*) What are the times allowed for meals?

H. Blathwayt Festing, Esq., Maiden Bradley.—One hour. They breakfast before going to work, and sup after returning.
Henry Davis, Esq.—One hour allowed for dinner, and half an hour for breakfast.
Rev. J. K. Eagles.—One hour for dinner, and two half hours.
Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—One hour for dinner; half an hour for breakfast.

(*h.*) Does the demand upon their physical powers injuriously affect their health and constitution?

Rev. E. A. Salmon.—Their health is good, but hard work and low diet impair their energies, especially mentally.
Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—Not to any great extent. The worst is apple-picking, late in autumn, and minding sheep on the hills.
Rev. M. Warburton.—Not so much as low diet and intemperate habits.
Rev. C. Wood.—By no means; quite the contrary; they don't work hard enough to hurt themselves.
H. Davis, Esq.—Work does them no harm.

(*i.*) Are the young or the females, whether young or grown up, subject to any ill-treatment?

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—The boys get roughly handled in some cases, which brutalises them, but there is no serious ill-treatment.
On the other hand the *Hon. and Rev. F. Portman.*—No; if a farmer thrashes a boy, the parents have him up before a magistrate directly, or take him away from his employment.

(*j.*) Do any special employments injuriously affect females or the young generally?

H. Davis, Esq.—There is no employment injurious to young persons or others.
Rev. F. du Sautoy, Mark.—No, except milking in wet weather.
Rev. W. Hunt, Congresbury.—Although no women are regularly employed on the land, yet very many are employed as dairy and farm servants. Their work is really in the farm-yard, and I think that the lifting pails, &c. affects the health injuriously, and I have observed that there are several cases of disease (*e.g.*, ruptures) from this cause.
Hon. and Rev. W. Portman, Corton Denham.—Apple-picking in wet weather in long grass, drawing turnips in wet while the tops are strong, I consider the most injurious, though there is seldom much to complain of in either work.

(*k.*) Have you any observations to make as to the effect of the employment of females in agriculture on morals, and on their proper training for domestic duties?

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary.—It causes home to be much neglected, and the women themselves admit that in the end they lose as much as their wages for this reason.
Rev. H. B. Burney, Philip's Norton.—Prejudicial to the formation of domestic habits. The children left at home wear out more than the parents earn abroad.
H. B. Festing, Esq.—I consider the employment of females in agricultural work most detrimental to their morals, and it totally unfits them for domestic duties; thus driving the husband nine times out of ten to the public house for necessary comfort, which he does not find at home when he returns from work.
Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—Moral evil is produced by the practice of sending dairymaids into the fields to milk the cows in company with a number of men. In bad winter weather this is injurious to health, the milking taking up four or five hours per day.
Rev. E. P. Anderson, Winsford.—I think that the conversation among people working in the fields is often coarse, and when young unmarried women go out to work it conduces to immorality; but there are cases in this parish of the most tidy married women working out, and also of the most dirty, idle, and gossiping staying at home.
Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton.—The mother cannot attend to her domestic duties as she ought if she goes

out to work, and is obliged to keep at home *from school* an elder child to look after any too young to be at school.

(The following opinions are in direct opposition to the above.)

Rev. C. Wood.— My observation in Stoyurcey leads me to say that as far as I have seen female agricultural labour is not necessarily, or even probably, detrimental to morals. In general here one sees several women weeding, and if there be a man with them he is generally the husband, father, or son of the woman, or some one of them.

H. Davis, Esq.—The employment of females in agriculture in this neighbourhood is not injurious to morals, or otherwise.

Mr. Lush, Kilmington.—Very different now from what Mr. Lush can recollect, kissing and pulling about in hay-time; none goes on now.

(*l.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females in field work?

If so would you limit the restriction to females of a defined age, or would you prohibit female labour in the fields altogether, excepting at hay and corn harvest?

The answers given to this question vary from the wish to put a stop to female labour altogether, to the expression of a wish that there should be no interference.

Mr. Porteous, Marton Bigot.—I would not prohibit females doing light work in the fields.

Rev. M. Warburton, Kilmington.—Prohibit it altogether, except at hay and corn, &c.

H. Davis, Esq.—Females should not be restricted from employment in field-work.

Rev. W. Meade, Binegar.—They should be discouraged in sending females to work in the fields, but in families where girls preponderate it cannot well be helped.

H. B. Festing, Esq.—At the present rate of wages I am not prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed on the employment of females. In this parish the women like the freedom of out-of-door work.

Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—Not in such a parish as this; though the great amount of heavy work (*i.e.*, milking, &c.), is much to be lamented.

The *Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman*, Staple Fitzpaine.—Certainly not; because the women so employed are employed as much to their own advantage as that of the farmers. In Bickenhall there are one or two widows, who would starve if they had no field-work.

Rev. J. K. Eagles, Hill Farrance.—Not in this parish, or, so far as I know, with an experience of 30 years, anywhere in this district.

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—I do not think that in this parish, whatever may be the case in others, there is any need of any restriction on the employment of females; but speaking generally, I think it would be well to prohibit young unmarried women from working in the fields altogether, excepting as above.

Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton.—In our parish girls do not go out to work. I cannot venture an opinion as to the prohibition of female labour altogether; yet would gladly see it abandoned by mothers of families.

(*m.*) Taking into consideration the demand for labour in your parish and neighbourhood, and the pecuniary resources of the agricultural labourers, are you prepared to recommend that any restriction should be placed upon the age at which boys should be permitted to be employed in farm labour?

In like manner the answers to this question vary from a decided negative to a wish to put a complete stop to the labour of boys below a certain age; that age differing in the various circulars from 8 to 15.

The *Rev. C. Wood.*—I am not. The supposed evil rights itself; boys are of no use until physically qualified to be of use.

Rev. C. Sainsbury.—Unless the wages were higher it would be hard to restrict the age to a higher figure than 11.

Rev. W. Meade, Binegar.—Some boys of 6 can be of use, some of 8; and if they come to school in winter they might be allowed to earn something in the spring.

Rev. T. J. Bumpsted, Dinder.—I would not recommend any restriction. I should say, let boys go to work as soon as they are worth wages.

Mr. Lush, Kilmington.—They know how to take care of themselves.

If so, please to state the age below which you would recommend that boys should not be so employed.

Of the 91 circulars, large and small, this question is left unanswered in 21.

15 gentlemen have said that no restriction of age is necessary, of whom 11 are clergymen.

2	think that no child should work under	8 years,	all three clergymen.
1	thinks ,, ,,	8 or 9 years,	
4	think ,, ,,	9 years, of whom 3 are clergymen.	
17	,, ,, ,,	10 years, of whom 15 are clergymen.	
1	thinks ,, ,,	10 or 11 years, a clergyman.	
3	think ,, ,,	11 years, all three clergymen.	
2	,, ,, ,,	11 or 12 years, of whom one is a clergyman.	
18	,, ,, ,,	12 years, of whom 14 are clergymen.	
2	,, ,, ,,	12 or 13 years, of whom one is a clergyman.	
2	,, ,, ,,	13 years, of whom one is a clergyman.	
2	,, ,, ,,	14 years (clergymen).	
1	thinks ,, ,,	15 years (clergyman).	

70+21, in which the question is passed over = 91.

(*n.*) Do you see reason for recommending that the distance to which children and young persons should be allowed to go to work in farm labour should be restricted according to age?

If you think some restriction of distance in reference to age desirable, do you approve of the following, which assumes that boys under eight years of age would not be allowed to be employed at all?

Somersetshire.

Mr. Boyle.

k.

No boy of 8 years of age and under - - -	10		1 mile.
No girl under the age of - - - -	13		
No boy of - - -	10 years of age and under	11	To be taken to work beyond a distance from his or her home of — 2 miles.
	11 „ „	12	
	12 „ „	13	
No young person of - -	13 „ „	14	3 miles.
	14 „ „	15	
	15 „ „	16	4 miles.
	16 „ „	17	
	17 „ „	18	

Have you any modification to propose in the above table ?

To this question the answers are very scanty, owing to the fact that it is only in exceptional cases in Somersetshire that labourers live far from their work.

The *Hon. and Rev. W. Portman*, says, "As regards the younger boys it would not affect us materially; nor would the latter part of the table affect the labourer in this parish, but I should think it desirable, on the whole, to restrict distances, as lads go long distances to work in other parishes."

Mr. Robert Porteous.—Three or four miles are too much for boys to go to work.

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—I think no one could complain of the above table. It certainly does not go too far. I speak from experience in other scattered parishes.

Rev. J. K. Eagles, Hill Farrance.—I think any distance beyond two miles excessive for any of these ages; but in this parish no such distances are necessary as there is no lack of cottages.

H. B. Festing, Esq.—I think that no boy under 12 should go more than half-a-mile to work. Unless the three short distances in the table mean "to work and back," I would exactly halve them.

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary.—There is no need for any restriction here.

(*o.*) Do you see reason for recommending that any restriction should be placed upon the hours of work of children and young persons employed in agriculture; and if so, what amount of restriction would you propose?

H. B. Festing, Esq.—I think no woman, or child under 13, should work, the woman more than six, the child more than five hours.

Mr. R. Porteous.—Yes, decidedly; when children have to go far distances to their work. It would be difficult to say what amount without knowing the distance, the age of the boy, and whether he is a robust boy, or otherwise.

Rev. C. W. Dimsdale, Priddy.—Eight hours for children, and 10 for young persons should be sufficient.

Rev. C. H. Nutt, Harptree.—I believe that in this parish the supply of labour is generally greater than the demand, and any such restriction would have the effect of absolute prohibition.

Rev. F. Du Sautoy.—Eight hours only for children under 14.

Rev. J. K. Eagles.—I have not known anything which would lead me to think any restriction of the present system here necessary. I have never known any consequences of overwork.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—I see no reason, as regards those from 13 to 18. They do not seem the worse for it; but it is a question for the farmer, if he would not get more work done by the younger, and better done, if the time were shortened. I would not let boys from 10 to 13 be out more than 10 hours altogether.

III. As to requiring some Amount of School Attendance in the case of Children earning Wages by Employment in Farm Labour.

23. The Commissioners being instructed to inquire to what extent, and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted in reference to children employed in agriculture, "especially with a "view to the better education of such "children," your opinion is invited on the following points:—

24. The three modes by which the prescribed amount of school attendance of children employed in trades and manufactures is obtained are—

By the Factory Act (7 Vict. c. 15. ss. 31–9).

1. By half day at school and half day at work.
2. By alternate whole days at school and whole days at work.

By the Print Works Act (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70. ss. 2, 3, 26).

3. By school attendance for a certain number of hours during the preceding six months.

25. Accompanying this circular you will find brief extracts from the above Acts, together with some remarks from the Sixth Report of the Children's Employment Commission (1862), ss. 65 to 74, and ss. 80 to 83, referring to the difficulties to be encountered, and the possible modes of meeting them.

26. You are requested to state which of such modes of enforcing some amount of school attendance would seem most applicable to the circumstances of your parish and neighbourhood; or whether a combination of one or more of them would better meet those circumstances; or whether any other mode that you might wish to suggest appears to you preferable.

There seems to be an almost unanimous opinion among the gentlemen who have been good enough to fill up circulars, that it will be most difficult to apply any of the above systems.

H. B. Festing, Esq.—I think a discretionary power, given to the magistracy in petty sessions, would work well.

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary.—I should feel disposed to recommend that attendance at school for at least six months in the year be required of all children below 13.

Mr. R. Porteous, Marston Bigot.—I should suggest that children should be kept at school until they are 10 years old, and after that use all means to get them back to evening schools in the winter months, until they arrive at the age of 14.

Rev. H. B. Burney, Philip's Norton.—Would have compulsory school attendance in winter. No child under 11 years of age should be allowed to be employed by a farmer who does not present a certificate of having passed the third standard.

Rev. W. Meade, Binegar.—Thinks Factory Act hardly practicable, Print Works Act more feasible; would suggest, "night schools in winter months from "middle of October to end of February for big boys; "regular attendance in winter months, and *whenever* "*not employed*, for smaller children."

Rev. C. W. Dimsdale, Priddy.—I think an alternate daily attendance would be most suitable, if not daily.

Rev. W. Hunt, Congresbury.—Scheme 1 would not do for the work, nor 2 very well; 3 would make any systematic arrangement of lessons so as to benefit the child very hard. I should strongly recommend a combination of 2 and 3. "By school attendance "so many half days in the six months," to be greater in case of girls, and to include a good proportion of afternoons to be spent by those above 6 in learning to read.

Rev. F. Du Sautoy, Mark.—By half days under 14.

Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—No. 1. By half day at school and half day at work.

Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton.—Neither "the half "day" nor "the alternate day" Act would suit agricultural districts; a requirement that the children should attend so many times at some time of the year would be more practicable.

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—The third (10 & 11 Vict. c. 70.) is the best of the three. I should recommend compulsory education up to 10 years of age, the guardians paying the school pence in all cases where there are three children in one family under 10 years of age.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—Nos. 1 and 2 would not answer here. According to the circumstances of the parish, it would be difficult to enforce attendance for six consecutive months; but I should consider that attendance for six months *in the year* would be desirable.

The following gentlemen think neither of the Acts, or a modification, practicable or advisable.

H. Davis, Esq., Oakhill.—No rule of the above kind need be made for this neighbourhood. The children at idle times may go to school; but farmers could not employ them, were they to come and go as suggested above, and parents with large families would suffer greatly, were their children prevented from working.

Rev. C. H. Nutt, Harptree.—I consider that any such regulation, as mentioned above, would deter boys from agricultural work altogether.

Rev. C. Wood, Stogursey.—None of the three seems compatible with farm work. The night school and Sunday school instruction are sufficient considering the position in life of the agricultural labourer to keep up and improve upon what they have learned at the day school, before they were fit for work.

Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman.—Thinks 1 and 2 impossible; 3 would do no good, is not long enough. Practically the boys come most of the winter to school, Michaelmas or Christmas to Lady-day, and work the rest of the year, *i.e.*, boys of 12 and under.

Rev. J. K. Eagles, Hill Farrance.—The children at present go to school until they are put out to work, which is frequently earlier than they ought to be put to labour; but I do not think either of the modes above specified applicable to the district.

27. How far is the school attendance affected by the distance that the children have to go to school?

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary.—Frequently those at a distance attend more regularly than those whose home is nearer to the school.

Rev. C. J. Down, Hemington.—The parish being a large and scattered one, the attendance of children is much affected by the state of the weather.

Rev. W. Meade, Binegar.—Considerably: our schools lie three-quarters of a mile from the village, which I think is a disadvantage.

Rev. C. H. Nutt, Harptree.—Not to any great extent, except in winter, and in the case of very young children.

Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—In winter, especially in bad weather, the distance is a considerable hindrance. At all seasons it affects the very young children.

Rev. J. K. Eagles.—The parish is very scattered, and if it were not for schools in other parishes the attendance would be much affected. As it is the attendance at school is a fair average.

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—Not much; some who live the furthest off come most regularly; two little girls, 10 and 8 years old, come three miles to school.

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—The school is too far for the very young children in the outlying hamlets.

28. How far is the school attendance affected by the pecuniary resources of the parents?

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary.—The charge of 1*d.* per week is one which all the parents here can afford. I think that a higher rate would ensure greater regularity in some cases.

H. B. Festing, Esq.—There is a steady willingness in the parents generally to send the children to school, for which they pay 1*d.* weekly.

Rev. Wm. Littlehales, Compton Bishop.—The payment is so small, all can send their children if they like.

Rev. J. K. Eagles.—I do not think at all, as the sum paid is so small, only 1*d.* a head.

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—Most parents are able to afford to send their children to school.

Rev. W. D. Furneaux, Berkeley.—Not at all, they are only charged 1*d.* per week.

Whereas:—

Rev. M. Warburton, Kilmington.—Very materially.

Rev. Wm. Meade, Binegar.—Some find it difficult to have the pence ready every Monday morning.

Rev. C. H. Dimsdale, Priddy.—The people cannot afford to send more than two-thirds of their children on an average through poverty.

Rev. Wm. Hunt, Congresbury.—The actual money payment does not keep any away. But the poor send their boys to farms and their girls to service far too early, on account of their poverty, and no wonder.

Hon. and Rev. F. B. Portman, Staple Fitzpaine.—Not at all. There is a great and increasing desire on the part of the parents to send their children to school. Nine out of ten fully appreciate it.

Rev. T. Brancker, Limington.—Only in the case of one, or perhaps two, families.

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—I believe that want of means is often an excuse for want of will; some of the largest hardest families being the most regular at school.

29. Are any efforts being made for the industrial training of girls, in connexion with elementary education, with especial reference to preparing them for their domestic duties?

Rev. J. L. Carrick.—So far as we can do so, by making the elder children keep the school premises in order.

H. B. Festing, Esq.—Some of the ladies of the place privately endeavour to help the girls; but there is a great disinclination to go into service, but it lessens gradually, as the education increases.

Rev. M. Warburton.—None beyond sewing, knitting, darning, and cutting out, taught at school.

Rev. Wm. Hunt.—Sewing is taught in school every afternoon except Saturday.

As a rule there are few answers to this question, and what there are very scanty. Sewing in the schools seems to be almost the only preparation. *See* the remarks of the *Rev. Cyril Wood*, Stogursey (App. 31) in the general evidence.

30. Have you any remarks to make on the subject of cottage accommodation, in regard to its effect on morality or education; or on the health and comfort of the labouring poor?

In reply to this question the gentlemen who have filled up circulars are almost of one mind in complaining of the cottage accommodation in Somersetshire, except in cases where efforts are now being made by some well-to-do landlord.

Somersetshire.
Mr. Boyle.
k.

Wm. Sturge, Esq., land-agent, Bristol, writes: "Cottage accommodation is generally bad in the "western counties, deficient in bedrooms, repairs, "and draining."

Rev. Wm. Hunt, Congresbury. — The number crowded together in a bedroom is most debasing. Some young women over 13, and up to as old as 22, sleep in the same bedroom with father and mother, and in some extreme cases some arrangements are made. Modesty is destroyed, and the whole tone of the mind lowered; I am sure much depravity exists from this source. In cases of sickness and death, this is especially detrimental to health and comfort, but at the best of times it is much to be resisted, if possible.

Robert Porteous, Marston Bigot.—There can be no doubt the faulty and miserable construction of many old cottages is very injurious to the health and comfort of the labouring poor.

Mr. Lush, Kilmington.—The people have no self respect, and do not mind being crowded, children and married sons and daughters in the same house. People will crowd good cottages with lodgers.

Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—In some cases the accommodation is very bad, both sexes and all ages being mixed together in one bedroom; the moral effect is bad, the injury to health is not very perceptible, as the cottages are much scattered; the poor generally do not complain of discomfort, being accustomed to be crowded together.

Rev. T. Brancker, Limington. — In most parishes hereabout it is capable of considerable improvement.

Rev. Prebendary Coles, Shepton Beauchamp.—I have no doubt that want of proper chamber accommodation in cottages is a fruitful source of immorality by destroying or at least lessening a right sense of delicacy. Very few cottages in this parish have three bedrooms, and many only one. Any measure which could improve chamber accommodation would be a great blessing.

Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton.—The want of proper bedroom accommodation is obviously injurious to the morality of young people. *This is the great evil of our cottages.*

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—The cottage accommodation in this parish is not what it should be. I cannot say that the morality or health of the poor is perceptibly affected by the bad accommodation; their comfort certainly must be.

Rev. F. Du Sautoy, Mark.—But few dwellings are suited for families.

31. How many cottages per hundred acres are considered sufficient for the accommodation of the persons employed on the land in your parish?

32. Is there that proportion of cottages in the parish?

Answers to these questions and the few following are scanty.

Mr. Porteous, Marston Bigot, says, there is but one cottage to 70 or 80 acres, and that is not sufficient.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman, Corton Denham.—There is an average of over four labourers' cottages to 100 acres. It seems to be enough.

Rev. J. L. Carrick considers two necessary; there is that proportion, and rather more.

The *Rev. F. Du Sautoy*, Mark, considers 15 necessary, and there is that proportion.

33. If not, what is the proportion?

Besides *Mr. Porteous*, who, as above, gives one cottage to 70 or 80 acres as the proportion at Marston Bigot, we have only answers from *H. B. Festing, Esq.* rather over three per hundred acres, in default of four, which he considers necessary, and from *Rev. W. Hunt*, Congresbury, 136 cottages to 4,429a. 1r. 12p. or about three to 100 acres.

34–37 inclusive. *See* the general evidence.

38. If there is deficient cottage accommodation, is any progress being made towards increasing it?

For answers to this question, see also general evidence. Little progress is being made except by some of the larger proprietors.

H. B. Festing, Esq., agent to the Duke of Somerset, writes, that "during about 13 or 14 years there "has been an increase of 20 cottages" at Maiden Bradley. *Wm. Sturge, Esq.*, speaking generally, writes, "some progress on a few larger estates, and "in populous places."

The *Rev. Wm. Meade* assigns as a reason in his parish (Binegar) for nothing being done: "The whole "parish is held on lives under the agricultural com- "missioners."

39. Is the Union Chargeability Act (28 & 29 Vict. c. 79., March 1866) having any effect in causing an increase of cottage accommodation?

The almost universal answer to this question is "not at all," or "very slightly," with no particulars or reasons given, except by the *Rev. Wm. Meade*, who explains, "we are not freehold property; no one "will build under lives." Where any slight improvement may be attributed to this Act, it is of course in close parishes.

40. By the Act 27 & 28 Vict. c. 114., July 1864, the Enclosure Commissioners are authorized to advance public money for the improvement of land, including, by s. 9, "The erection of labourers' cottages, * * "and the improvement of and addition to "labourers' cottages."
Have you any remarks to make upon this Act in regard to any additional facilities, or any reduction of cost, that might cause greater progress to be made in supplying the want of good cottages?

In reply to this question, see the remarks made by Mr. Ward (App. 318), Sir Arthur Elton's agent, in the general evidence.

Writing of Kilmington, *Mr. Lush* says, "I do not "think it would here; cottages are not wanted, "several empty."

Wm. Sturge, Esq.—The Commissioners' requirements make cottages much too expensive. (Mr. Sturge's opinion is more than valuable on questions of this kind, owing to his intimate acquaintance with the agriculture and condition of Somersetshire.)

41. Can you suggest any mode by which good cottage accommodation could be provided on self-supporting terms, and involving no disadvantage to the tenant?

Most of the answers to this question seem based on the conviction that in the present state of poverty it is impossible for the labourer to pay the real value of the cottage, and consequently that the landlord must lose by his cottage property.

Thus, *Wm. Sturge, Esq.*—I know of none; the only hope is raising the condition of the labourer so as to enable him to pay a higher rent.

Wm. Festing, Esq.—I do not think cottages can be built to pay unless the tenant is ground down harshly. I consider cottages necessary to an estate independent of the profit and loss question.

Mr. Porteous, Marston Bigot.—I have found the farmers very willing to pay a per-centage on the cost of the construction of cottages sufficient for their farms. This may be done by charging a per-centage sufficient to repay the landlord in 25 or 35 years, or by burthening the next heir with a proportion of the charge of cottages on each farm.

Rev. M. Warburton.—Take away the cottages from the farmers, and place them in the hands of the landowner.

Rev. Wm. Meade. — Cottage property, in my opinion, is always a loss to the landlord, especially if he is a gentleman.

Rev. Wm. Hunt.—If cottages of three bedrooms or two large ones were built on the farms in which the tenants work, they would pay. The man would be nearer to his work; the master would have him close at hand in case of calving, &c. and the illness of cattle. In the case of men not permanently attached to any farm (very constant in this part) I think that better cottages would pay better, especially if a garden was attached. I believe the Bristol Charity Trustees get their rents paid more regularly than the owners of small and tumbledown cottages.

Rev. A. Goldney.—I do not think good cottages can be built here, so as to be a directly profitable investment.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—I should be glad to see all cottages in the hands of the landlords, excepting two, three, or four to each farm, according to its size, for carters and shepherds. If proper supervision were exercised by the agents in such cases there would probably be a decided improvement in the buildings themselves, and the comfort of the people.

Rev. W. P. Anderson.—It seems to me to be the duty of the landowner to provide good cottage accommodation on all his farms; such cottages being of the nature of a necessary charge upon the land, could hardly be considered as self-supporting.

For statistics required by 42 and 43, see General Evidence.

44. Approximate number of children of the agricultural labouring class neither at school nor at work.

There are few children in any parish who are not at school nor at work. Those who there are, are to be found in one or two families generally, where the parents, being uneducated themselves, do not see the advantage of education for their children. Compton Dunden is, I think, the only parish in which there is no school.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—I can make no exact returns under this head. There might be six children, perhaps, taking the year through, certainly not more, above 8 years old. (Corton Denham, population 410.)

Rev. W. P. Anderson.—Hardly any except infants.

45. Approximate number of young persons of the agricultural labouring class growing up with insufficient education.

Rev. J. L. Carrick gives in his parish (Witham Friary, population, 581), 12 males, and 10 females, or 1 in 26, "unable either to read or write at all, and "ignorant of the most ordinary matters."

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman, Corton Denham, population 410, gives 12 males, four females, or one in 25: "have been at school some time, but very "irregularly, or are new comers (three are so). Can "read and write badly; left early, before being pro-"perly grounded."

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock (population 3,154), gives 40 males, and 110 females at least, or one in 21: "cannot read a chapter of the Bible, or write "intelligibly, and know nothing of arithmetic. Could "not pass standard three, many of them not even one "or two."

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—It is difficult to say, very few actually belonging to the parish, but there are farm servants of both sexes, who come from other parishes, with very little education. They are a constantly changing element of the population.

Rev. Charles Sainsbury, Wootton (population 350), gives 12 males, seven females, or one in 18. Some of them may yet have some schooling; five cannot read, or very little, inclusive of servant girls at farmhouses, who are not parishioners.

46–49. To the following four questions on the subject of night schools, the usual answers, where they exist, are about 20 weeks a year, for two nights a week, and two hours per night. The following gentlemen have given the answers appended to their names:—

—	Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham Friary (population, 581).	Rev. A. Goldney, E. Pennard (population, 656).	Hon. and Rev. W. Portman, Corton Denham (population, 410).	Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock (population, 3,154).	Rev. C. Sainsbury, Wootton Courtenay (population, 350).	Rev. C. Wood, Stogursey (population, 1,500).
47. How many weeks in the year is it open? At what periods of the year?	Nov. to Feb.	24 weeks.	15 or 16 weeks.	About 16, mid-winter.	About 22. Sept. to April.	20 weeks. Oct. to March.
48. How many nights per week?	2	4	3	4	3	3
49. How many hours per night?	2 hours.	1½ hours.	2 to 2½ hours.	2 hours.	2 hours.	2 hours.
50. What is the number of Scholars?	23	10	32	126	About 12.	55
51. What are the subjects of instruction?	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and Scripture history.	Reading, writing, arithmetic.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and dictation.	Reading, writing, arithmetic.	Reading, writing, arithmetic.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, religious teaching by the vicar.

52. Do you consider that the evening school adequately supplies the deficiencies of the day school?

H. B. Festing, Esq.—No, but it is doing good.

Rev. J. L. Carrick, Witham:—Its chief use is a little geography and history, to keep up what has been learnt at school.

Rev. C. Wood, Stogursey:—The evening school would adequately supply the deficiencies of the day school, if all who need the teaching attended it.

N.B.—Almost all the answers are in the negative.

53. What do you find to be the principal difficulties in the way of maintaining an efficient evening school?

H. B. Festing, Esq.—Want of teaching power. A large staff of volunteers is requisite to keep this class of scholars orderly, as also to attend to them, as they are difficult to classify both from age and previous acquirement.

Rev. M. Warburton, Mark.—The irregular attendance at day school in former years.

Rev. Wm. Meade, Binegar.—The want of teachers or a teacher; for an evening school to be effectual

Somersetshire. Mr. Boyle. k.

ought to be held every evening in the week, except on Saturdays.

Rev. Wm. Dimsdale, Priddy.—Not good for females to go in the evening, and the weariness and lassitude of the boys is the principal obstacle to their learning in the evening. It is very difficult in this parish to obtain teachers.

Rev. Wm. Littlehales, Compton Bishop.—The irregularity of the scholars.

Rev. A. Goldney, East Pennard.—Late hours of work, and distance from school.

Hon. and Rev. W. Portman.—Distance, bad weather, natural fatigue after work all day, and the necessity of taking up so much time in the first half of the season in picking up what has been forgotten. So the annual improvement is small, but perceptible, and the system becomes more popular every winter.

Rev. T. Brancker, Limington.—That I have no one to depend upon for keeping it but myself. My mistress has enough to do in the day time.

Rev. E. A. Salmon, Martock.—As to males, they are tired and sleepy after a hard day's work, and by the time they have walked home and had their supper they are ready for bed, as they have to be up early in in the morning: when the evenings are light, they work in gardens. As to females they cannot spare the time from gloving.

Rev. C. Wood, Stogursey.—Irregular attendance; from (1), indifference; (2), distance of home from school; (3), objection of some farmers to allow boys out from 7 to 9 p.m.

Rev. W. P. Anderson, Winsford.—There is no difficulty; I keep it myself.

Of the 61 short circulars, 48 are filled up by clergymen.

1. At what ages, and at what times of the year, are boys employed in agriculture on your property or farm, and in your parish generally?

The following answers imclude ages from 6 years old till 12, in various parishes.

W. Gray, Esq, Kingweston.—Principally as carters boys about 12. Very little employment for boys under 12. Bird-keeping generally done by an old man with a gun at 1*s.* a day; worth half a dozen boys. You cannot depend upon them.

Mr. Hancock, Halse, employs eight or nine boys altogether all the year round; the youngest is 11. Boys go younger to keep birds, but that is done as often or oftener by little girls, the boys getting regular work very soon, such as keeping sheep or leading horses.

Rev. Wm. Castlehow, North Cadbury.—In the parish generally all the year round from the age of 10. A few under that age occasionally in bird-keeping and apple-picking.

C. Harris, Esq., Ilchester.—At least at 10; bird-keeping, some even earlier; they drive plough, and go with horses. Thinks bird-keeping a cruel thing; keeping a boy out on a wintry day; parents want to get the 1*s.* a week. Twine does just as well.

Rev. F. Kinglake, Monckton.—Boys are employed from the age of 10 years. There are exceptions, but this age may be taken as the rule. They are employed during the whole year; but it is not an unusual thing for a boy of 10 to 12 or 13 to go to work at a busy time and to attend school at slack time of the year.

Rev. Edward Yarde, Porlock.—From 10 years upwards; part all the year round, part by the job. Drive horses. At 10 principally picking stones, keeping birds, planting potatoes, apple-picking, picking acorns for the pigs.

Sir Wm. Miles, Bart., Leigh Court.—From 9 till 14, bird-tenting. Boys from my school are employed during the spring and summer with the schoolmaster in spudding thistles, pulling docks and charlocks, and singling mangold-wurzold in fine weather.

Rev. J. W. Robinson, North Petherton.—From 9 years old and upwards. Bird-keeping in the spring and summer, apple-picking in the autumn. As they get older they get into permanent employment on the farm, either about horses or cattle.

Mr. R. Pittard, Kingsbury.—8 to 9 keeping sheep or pigs, or birds from the corn. Driving plough they would begin at 10, picking stones, &c. A small boy often assists a bigger in parting sheep, &c.

Rev. G. W. Grogan, Somerton.—Children are employed from very early years, from 8 to 9, cattle-tending, bird-watching, and other light jobs. Very young children are sent out with waggons, boys of 9 or 10 years old, younger than is allowed elsewhere.

Thomas Ward, Esq., Bristol.—From 8 years of age and upwards, say from four to six months in the year.

Jno. Yatman, Esq., Winscombe.—From 8 years old; in summer chiefly bird-scaring, pea-picking, potato-setting, picking apples; children and young persons of both sexes from early day to 6 p.m.

Rev. R. Watson Moor, Stoke St. Gregory.—At all times of the year from 8 years of age. A good deal of withy-peeling, at which a child of 5 years can earn 1*s.* a week. Keeps them much from school.

Rev. J. Beadon, Axbridge.—Boys go from 8 to 10, a good many. Mr. Collings had a boy of 7 keeping birds for about three weeks.

Rev. J. H. Evans, Merriott.—A great many boys work in the garden ground all through the year from 7 years old and upwards.

Rev. J. G. Hickley, Walton.—Very early, often at 7 (instances even earlier, but then employed by parents). At all times of the year, bird-keeping, plough-driving, and sheep-keeping, and when once begin to be employed will get regular employment. Odd jobs about the farm.

Rev. C. L. Pemberton, Curry Mallet.—Boys go to work from 6 years old in some cases, but are not all taken so young.

Rev. G. A. Mullens, Chedzoy.—Boys are employed in the parish at all ages from 6 years of age and upwards, and all through the year, but chiefly in spring and autumn.

Rev. C. L. Southey, Kingsbury Episcopi.—From 5 or 6 at all times of the year.

Rev. W. P. Michell, Carhampton.—Boys go out to service at 9 years old to drive horses and carts; but many are employed at a younger age for some parts of the year in keeping birds off the cornfields, &c.; they begin at 6. A month now (March), a month in November, and a month harvesting. Farmers think themselves bound to take labourers' sons as soon as they are old enough.

2. Are girls so employed? And, if so, how many, at what ages, and in what occupation?

Girls are most extensively employed in the Western division of the county, but never to the same extent as boys. In the south gloving is almost their only employment. In the east they are little employed except on the westerly slopes of Mendip.

1. Thus from Winscombe, *Jno. Yatman, Esq.*, writes, "Yes, from extreme youth in picking peas, "weeding, &c." From Shipham the *Rev. J. N. Garland:* "Occasionally; but at an age senior to the "boys, picking out weeds, cutting turnips, sorting "potatoes, and other light work."

2. From the gloving districts, the *Rev. W. G. Grogan*, Somerton: They are employed in light field-work; very young, but not so many as boys, being employed in gloving at home or in the factory.

Rev. J. H. Evans, Merriott.—Yes; but not to the extent that boys are. Some boys and girls under 13 work in the factories at half-time.

Rev. R. W. Lambert, Fitzhead.—I do not know of any girls so employed, but in haymaking time; there may be very few in leasing or gleaning on their own account for three weeks or a month. Many go out with their mothers to glean, but a very large

proportion of girls are constantly employed in making gloves.

3. From West Somerset,—

Rev. E. Huxtable, Weston Zoyland.—The girls are a good many of them employed during August, September, October, and November, either in leasing or in picking up apples or potatoes, or in sorting potatoes, *for their parents*, or in many cases in the apple or potato crops *for hire*, from about 10 years of age.

Rev. J. D. O. Crosse, Pawlett.—Merely as gleaners, and in apple-picking and potato-setting, from 9 years old.

Rev. F. C. Kinglake, Monckton.—Girls usually go into service. In this parish there are usually a few girls engaged in agricultural labour. When so employed there are very few under 15 years, and their work would consist of such things as weeding, hoeing turnips, picking up stones, apples, &c., and they would take their share of work at haymaking and harvest.

Rev. E. J. Carter, Kingston.—Girls are employed, but to a very much less extent, and not quite at so early an age, in apple-picking, potato-digging, and assisting women on the farms.

Mr. Hancock, Halse.—Girls keep birds just as much as boys, perhaps more, as boys get regular work very soon. Girls will do such work till they go out to service, generally at about 13 or 14.

Rev. E. Spurway, Heathfield.—Girls under 13 are employed only at certain seasons of the year, viz., keeping birds, picking apples, singling turnips, and mangolds, and picking stones. Girls above this age generally go out to service. There is only one above this age who works all the year round in this parish.

Robert Featherstone, Wiveliscombe.—Some 15 to 20 girls aged 12 to 16 are employed picking stones, weeding, &c.

Rev. A. Tate, Kingsbrompton.—Girls are not generally employed in out-door work. They are taken as household servants into farm houses, at about the age of 12.

Rev. F. K. Warren, Exford.—Girls of 14 and upwards, if they happen to be out of a place, are occasionally employed in harvesting, and very rarely in weeding. Girls under 14 very rarely employed.

Rev. W. P. Michell, Carhampton.—Girls are not employed to any great extent in agriculture; nearly all of them go out to service as indoor servants. All who go out are in the worst families, *i.e.*, those which have never been educated.

Rev. E. Cox, Luscombe.—Girls are employed in agriculture occasionally from 11 to 12.

Rev. E. Yarde, Porlock.—Very seldom. Occasionally girls from 10 years of age to 13 are employed bird-keeping or planting potatoes. Generally go to service about 15 in the farms.

3. To what extent are women so employed?

In reply to this from the gloving district, *C. H. Harris, Esq.*, Ilchester, writes, "None work in agri- "culture. All do gloving." Over the rest of the county female labour is pretty general, usually among married women and widows.

Rev. Wm. Castlehow, North Cadbury.—About 10 are employed in the whole parish (population 996), besides a few in milking only.

Rev. C. F. Tink, Shepton Montagu.—Labourers' wives occasionally, but not necessarily for the farmers for whom their husbands work. No regular work all the year round.

Rev. W. M. Leir, Ditcheat.—During the bean-planting season, and occasionally weeding the wheat, and haymaking.

Rev. J. G. Hickley, Walton.—Principal work bean-planting and potato-setting. It is not injurious to them and those who work are of no worse class than others. They get 8*d.* a day, but do not really make any profit of it, with wear and tear of clothes, &c.

Rev. G. Pugh, Shapwick.—Both girls and women are very generally employed with their own families in the turf-moors of Shapwick and Ashcott alike, many of the labouring men being engaged in cutting turf on their own account, or with, or for others, as partners or helpers.

Rev. J. Warren, Bawdrip (population 450).—About 20 women are employed in the ordinary field work in the spring, summer, and autumn.

Rev. J. W. Robinson, North Petherton.—They are employed to a certain extent, but generally on the farm, or where their husbands are employed. The majority of the women do not work in the fields.

Mr. Hancock, Halse.—Has seven women in regular employment, labourers' wives, at 8*d.* and a pint of cider a day. On an average in winter they will work four days a week, nearly every day in summer; but very often they do not come for some time, and then come again at their discretion. If it is wet there is work always to be done indoors among the roots.

Rev. E. Spurway, Heathfield.—A few women are employed all the year round, having the option of staying at home to mend clothes, wash, &c. They bind and stitch corn, pick turnips for sheep in winter, assist when corn is threshed, and other general work. But they are less inclined to work in the fields now than formerly.

Rev. E. J. Carter, Kingston.—Generally. In most cases a farmer will not engage a man to work unless his wife undertakes to work also. The wages being so low, the women think it necessary to work to make up a living.

Rev. J. K. Warren, Exford.—The labourers' wives are generally employed in weeding, picking stones, and harvesting. The union does not allow relief to widows, if able-bodied, so they must go out.

Rev. J. M. King, Cutcombe.—Women are regularly employed if they choose to work, and farmers much prefer those men whose wives do so; the practice is, however, going out, and I think much to the detriment of the women themselves, and their families. I am very positive on this point.

Isaac Clarke, Lynch.—I should say on the average three days a week.

Rev. W. P. Michell, Carhampton.—Women are employed in agriculture to a considerable extent. Most of the labourers' wives, who are not kept at home by ill-health or infants, work in the fields.

4. To what distances do the children, young persons and women employed on your farm and in your parish generally go to work?

As a rule the distances are not great.

The *Rev. Giles Pugh*, Shapwick, many of whose parishioners work in the turf-moors, writes, "From "two to three miles gives, I think, the extreme dis- "tance, both as to farms and turf-moors."

The *Rev. E. Huxtable*, of Sedgmoor, writes, "From $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to $1\frac{1}{2}$, and in some cases 2 miles.

Sir W. Miles, Bart., Leigh Court.—From the village, except bird-tenters, who usually come from Pill, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile distant from the arable farm.

C. Harris, Esq., Ilchester.—A good many labourers go into the neighbouring parish of Sock to work, a parish which originally had no cottages, but is now getting better owing to the new Bill.

Rev. G. Phillips, Chillington.—About a mile; occasionally they have further to go, two of the farmers having land in adjoining parishes.

A. S. Lovelace, Winsford.—Short distances, because if a farmer has not sufficient cottages on his farm for his labourers, he keeps them in his house.

5. What are their hours of work?

The *Rev. E. Spurway's* (Heathfield) answer is a very fair specimen of the hours that women work over most of the county:—Women's hours in summer are 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Winter, 8 to dusk, with about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to 2 hours for meals; but they very often work half days, being obliged to stay at home to attend to their own domestic mattters.

Somersetshire.

Mr. Boyle.

k.

Rev. J. N. Garland, Shipham.—From 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with intervals for breakfast and dinner; but punctuality is seldom observed.

Isaac Clarke, Lynch.—Children 10 hours a day and women eight.

T. P. Brodmead, Esq., Enmore.—The women come to work at 8 o'clock, and leave at 6, having one hour for dinner. In winter the women leave work at sunset.

Rev. C. Carey, Kingweston.—From 6 to 6 in summer. Some boys come earlier to work. Women at 7 or 8 o'clock.

Rev. C. Beadon, Axbridge.—Women work as long as the men. Sometimes not till 8, but it depends. At a pressing time they often work 12 to 13 hours, picking peas; then they get extra pay. Usual pay 1*s.* and a quart of cider. It is a market-garden district.

Jno. Yatman, Esq., Winscombe.—Very irregular in the "cropped" lands, *i.e.* market gardens, where they are sometimes up at 4 a.m. till 10 at night.

6. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work on the land, and, if so, at what age would you place the limit?

The following are specimens of various shades of opinion on this subject, varying from a direct negative to a wish to fix a rather advanced limit of age prior to attaining which boys should not be allowed to work in the fields.

Rev. C. C. Southey, Kingsbury Episcopi.—The rate of wages is so low that to restrict the labour of any able to earn would be a great hardship, if practicable. Farmers do not want the boys so much as parents come to ask for work for them, owing to wages in the parish being so low as 8*s.* or 9*s.*

Rev. Wm. Castlehow, North Cadbury.—I think it desirable they should not be removed from school so early; but if they were restricted from working on the land before the age of 12, for instance, they would not in the case of large families be necessarily sent to school, as the wages are too low (about 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week for an able-bodied man) to allow school pence for more than one or two in a family.

Rev. C. Carey, Kingweston.—I do not think it desirable that boys should go to work before 10 or 11 years; but do not think any legislative restriction is called for, or could be rightly enforced. It is only in the poorest families where the boys go to work so very young, when their earnings (2*s.* 6*d.* a week) is almost a necessity to the parents.

Rev. J. C. Hickley, Walton.—Desirable that children should not be put to regular farm work so early certainly. I do not feel sure that legal restriction would effect this object. Partial work at an early age, 8, would not do harm. They must begin early to learn their business. It is hard with wages only 9*s.* to expect a father still to go on supporting a sturdy boy who can make enough to keep himself.

Rev. R. W. Lambert, Fitzhead.—Nine years of age for actual work, but at 8 they might be employed at some seasons picking up potatoes and apples, keeping birds off corn in summer or watching sheep. But I believe they gain nothing by such employment, though farmers find advantages from their services.

Rev. A. H. F. Luttrell, Minehead.—I do not think it desirable that boys should be allowed to work on the land for any purpose earlier than 9; but at 10 they should be allowed to be earning something towards their maintenance. I do not see how agricultural labourers could live without such help, having large families.

Rev. E. Yarde, Porlock.—I think that no boy should be allowed to work on the land under the age of 10 years. If sent to school from 5 to 10 they learn quite enough, and there are several large families in the village to whom the loss of their labour would be a great blow.

Rev. W. P. Michell, Carhampton.—I think that boys should not go out to service until they are 10 or 11 years old, instead of at 9 years old as at present. If you have a good school a boy can learn quite enough by 11. He will not settle to manual labour if kept at school later, and gets into idle habits.

Rev. H. Roberts, Othery.—Not younger than 10, provided they go to school.

Rev. F. King Warren, Exford.—I think it is desirable that boys should not be allowed to go to work under 12, as the small sum earned by boys under that age does not at all compensate for the want of schooling. Not more than 2*d.* or 3*d.* a day does not pay for tear of clothes.

Rev. W. H. Cartwright, Butcombe.—Certainly not earlier than 13 years; and then the labour should be of a kind suited to the constitution of the child. One year at school after that age will in most instances be of greater benefit to the child than five previous, both as respects moral training and bodily strength.

Rev. E. P. Vaughan, Wraxall.—I should be inclined to say that no child under 12 years of age should be permitted to be employed in agricultural work without a certificate that he can read without spelling any common book, such certificate to be signed by the master or mistress of the school he has attended, the clergyman of the parish, the minister of the chapel, or some householder in the parish rated above, say, 20*l.* in the parish books, not being the child's employer. An appeal as to the truth of the certificate to be allowed to H.M. Inspector of Schools, or in the case of the Church of England children to the Bishop's inspector.

Jno. Yatman, Esq., Winscombe.—I would compel every farmer to have two boys, as I do, and send them three days to school.

Rev. E. Huxtable, Weston Zoyland.—I should like to limit the hiring of boys to three days in the week, requiring their employer to have a certificate from the schoolmaster of the child having attended school the other three days—under 12 years of age.

7. Is it desirable to place any restriction on the employment of females, and especially of the young, in agriculture?

The general opinion seems to be that girls should be restricted, if not altogether, at any rate those under a certain age, usually 15. The following answers represent pretty well the various shades of opinion:—

Rev. R. W. Moor, Stoke Gregory.—No, as their labour is optional. Those who do not work are not a better class than those who do.

Rev. J. Higgin Evans, Merriott.—Not on women, but on young girls until 10 or 12.

Rev. J. Hancock, Haselbury.—I should say yes, but I do not think the employment of females and young persons in agriculture is quite so injurious to morals and health as the employment of them in factories.

Rev. J. K. Warren, Exford.—No harm, or very little, arises from the employment of women in agriculture in this parish, except when the mothers are at work, the elder girls are kept from school, to look after the house and baby, if any.

Isaac Clarke, Lynch.—I think it would be desirable to place some restriction on the employment of young girls.

Rev. Alex. Tate, Kingsbrompton.—The employment of mothers of large families in field-work necessitates the keeping at home of one of the elder children, who ought to be at school, and in this way is undesirable.

Rev. J. G. Carter, Kingston.—I would prohibit it at all times of the year except harvest, hay or corn, and where females are working by themselves, such as picking apples or potatoes.

Henry Robertson, Esq., Over-Stowey.—I think it desirable to place a restriction on young girls under 15 years of age.

Rev. C. Kinglake, Monckton.—I should be glad to see a restriction placed on girls working in the fields under the age of 15.

Rev. G. O. Mullens, Chedzoy.—I do not think girls should be employed in the fields under the age of 15 years.

Rev. A. N. Bull, Woollavington.—I think girls should not be allowed to work in the fields under 13; better not at all, as it has a tendency to corrupt their morals, and to unfit them for domestic duties and service.

Sir W. Miles, Bart., Leigh Court.—Certainly for the young; but within my recollection the employment of females has much diminished, which I attribute greatly to the spread of education, and the consequent need found by the labourer of home comforts.

Rev. G. W. Grogan, Somerton.—Young females should be restricted as far as possible, but whether by legal enactment, or improving the general condition of the labourer, and enforcing a certain school attendance by landlords and employers, or through bringing public opinion to bear on the question, it is hard to decide.

Rev. J. A. Miller, Isle Brewers.—If young women are employed in the fields they should be kept at work by themselves, or should work under the eye of some one whose presence would be a protection to them.

Rev. C. L. Pemberton, Curry Mallet.—The restriction is not necessary for the women, I think, but is certainly desirable for the children.

Rev. C. F. Tink, Shepton Montagu.—Most desirable. Cottages of women who work on the land most untidy.

Rev. G. Pugh, Shapwick.—Out-door work, especially on the turf-moors, has, I am convinced, had a very demoralizing and hardening effect on females in these parishes, especially in Ashcott, where those resident on the moor, two miles from the parish, are very uneducated and uncivilized, besides irreligious.

8. What means of education are provided in your parish for the children of the agricultural labouring class? Do they take advantage of them?* If not, are there any other causes besides early labour to which you attribute their non-attendance?

*For answers to the two first of these questions *see* General Evidence. The following are specimens of answers to the third :—

Rev. W. P. Vaughan, Wraxall.—There are families who take away their children too early from the school, and many who send them very irregularly, that they may do odd jobs and pick up 6*d.* or 1*s.*, families in which ignorance is hereditary.

Rev. J. N. Garland, Shipham.—Many do not take advantage of the school from the carelessness of their parents, who, not having had the advantages of education themselves, care not to have it for their children.

Rev. J. N. Robinson, North Petherton.—They take advantage of their opportunities till a child can earn anything. Home duties interfere with the girls' education.

Rev. H. Roberts, Othery.—The boys are prevented to some extent by early labour; in some instances indifference on the part of the parents.

Rev. J. W. Moor, Othery.—Distance from the schools, bad roads, apathy. Farmers have a good deal to do with children not coming to school. There is no squire, and the farmers will not subscribe.

Rev. J. A. Miller, Isle Brewers.—The attendance is improving, but there are several who either do not attend, or attend very irregularly. For this various reasons might be assigned: the utter indifference of some parents to the welfare of their children; the unwillingness of the parents to send their children clean and tidy, and to take the trouble even to mend their clothes; the drunken habits of some parents, in consequence of which their children are left very much to themselves; the jealousy of interference on the part of the more ignorant parents, who have no idea of the need of school discipline, and who, therefore, resent the punishment of their children, although they will often themselves half kill them when offended with them.

Rev. C. C. Southey, Kingsbury.—The people are indifferent to education; can hardly keep children at school after 8.

Rev. J. H. Evans, Merriott.—Many children are kept from school through the ignorance and poverty of their parents.

9, 10. *See* General Evidence.

EVIDENCE accompanying Mr. HENRY TREMENHEERE'S REPORT.

Cumberland.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

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APPENDIX A.—CUMBERLAND EVIDENCE.

CONTENTS.

Nos.
1. Mr. John Ross, agent and manager of the Muncaster Castle estates.
2. Mr. William Sykes, farmer, Millom.
3. Rev. Arthur Wilkin, rector of Bootle.
4. Mr. John Grice, farmer.
5. Rear Admiral Scott, Gosforth.
6. Rev. J. A. Cheese, rector of Gosforth.
7. Mr. J. Carter, farmer, St. Bees.
8. Mr. J. Shirwin, landowner.
9. Mr. J. Fox, farmer, St. Bees.
10. Mr. Robert Jefferson, deputy chairman of the Board of Guardians, Whitehaven.
11. Mr. William Dickinson, land agent, Workington.
12. Rev. Henry Curwen, rector of Workington.
13. Mr. W. Jenkinson, farmer.
14. Mr. Peter Crosthwaite, farmer.
15. Mr. Peter Harrison, schoolmaster, Crosthwaite.
16. Mr. John Rook, farmer.
17. Mr. Joshua Jenkinson, landed proprietor and occupier.
18. Mr. W. L. Alexander, landed proprietor and occupier.
19. Mr. Pearson Clark, farmer.
20. Mr. John Richardson, land steward.
21. Mr. J. Robinson, farmer.
22. Rev. J. S. Hodgson, rector of Aikton.
23. Robert Norman, Esq., solicitor and land agent.
24. Mr. McMechan, secretary to the Wigton farmers' club.
25. Mr. William Hodgson, schoolmaster.
26. Mr. John Grainger, landowner.
27. Rev. Thomas Ashworth, rector of Holm Cultram.
28. Mr. John Galloway, landed proprietor and occupier.
29. Joseph James, farm labourer.
30. Sir Robert Brisco, Bart.
31. Mr. Nicholas Wright, farmer.
32. Mr. W. Tinning, farmer.

Nos.
33. Mr. Matthew Brown, land steward to Sir Frederick Graham, Bart.
34. Isabella Deans, farm servant.
35. Mr. William Gibbons, farmer and deputy chairman of the Board of Guardians, Longtown.
36. Mr. J. Little, farmer.
37. Mr. W. Thompson, schoolmaster.
38. Mr. F. Graham, land steward to H. Howard, Esq.
39. Mr. W. Hugill, schoolmaster, Brampton.
40. Mr. J. Robinson, Brampton
41. John Ramshay, Esq., agent of the Earl of Carlisle.
42. John Coulthard, Esq., tenant occupier.
43. Edward Ridley, farm servant.
44. Mr. W. Forster, farmer and innkeeper.
45. Mr. William Heskett, land agent.
46. J. Hodgson, Esq., clerk of the peace for Cumberland.
47. William Hutchinson, school boy.
48. James Stevens, farm servant.
49. Mr. Andrew Wright, landowner.
50. Master of Hayton parish school.
51. Rev. W. C. P. Baylee, vicar of Alston.
52. Mr. Thomas Cooke, schoolmaster, Alston.
53. Mr. Chr. Gatenby, schoolmaster, Penrith.
54. E. W. Hasell, Esq., Chairman of Quarter Sessions for the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.
55. John Crosby, gangmaster.
56. James Burrell, gangmaster.
57. Mr. Thomas Bowstead, land steward to Sir George Musgrave, Bart.
58. Mr. John Barker, land steward to P. H. Howard, Esq., Greystoke Castle.
59. Mr. Joseph Relph, farmer.
60. Mr. J. H. Thompson, master of Penrith boys' National school.

1. *Mr. John Ross*, agent and manager of the Muncaster Castle estates.—The wages in this district are so high, varying from 15*s.* to 18*s.* per week, that labourers here will not permit their wives or, excepting for a short period in the year, even their children to work in the fields. In fact women are not to be hired, or we should be very glad to employ them. A little work in harvest time and potato gathering is all that we can obtain from them. The school at Muncaster, which is under Government inspection, is well attended, and the boys seldom leave before 14 or 15, when they are either hired as farm servants or apprenticed to trades. The system of hiring at the half-yearly fairs prevails here, and great evils result from them; but the practice of the farm servants in insisting upon what they call "terms," is the greatest evil of the country. For a week in every half-year there is a total suspension of all agricultural work. At a time when labour is of the greatest importance to the farmer his workpeople, one and all, give themselves up to idleness and dissipation, and no consideration will induce them to move a finger on behalf of their employers. The savings of the half-year are often dissipated in a week.

The agricultural labour market over the whole of West Cumberland is affected by the iron and coal mines, which abstract a considerable number of men, who are attracted by the higher wages, and but for machinery I do not know how the ordinary operations of farming could be carried on. The population is very sparse, and from the peculiar arrangement of boarding and lodging farm servants and the discouragement of marriage inseparable from such a system it does not increase, and boys who have obtained a tolerable education naturally seek to better themselves by seeking situations in towns.

2. *Mr. W. C. Sykes*, of Millom Castle farm.—I rent and farm an estate of 240 acres, chiefly arable land, under the Earl of Lonsdale. I pay as much as 3*s.* 4*d.* a day to labourers, and they are not always to be had even for that. I have four male farm servants and two females, the wages of whom, exclusive of their keep, are from 12*l.* to 24*l.* a year. I should be very glad to get the assistance of women in field

work, but it is not to be had. The "terms" at Whitsuntide and Martinmas interfere most seriously with farm work. Although the holidays are supposed to be only for a week they generally last ten days. There is here little demand for the labour of boys until they are old enough to take service, which is about the age of 14 or 15.

3. The *Rev. Arthur Wilkin*, rector of Bootle.—There is scarcely any female labour employed in this district. The population is very sparse, and the land is cultivated almost entirely on the farm servant system; a little extra labour is required in hay time and harvest and the turnip season, but it is difficult to obtain. Boys generally remain at school until 14, and then go into the farm-houses as servants, or are apprenticed. The condition of the cottages here is generally bad. No attention is paid to ventilation. There is only one convenience to several cottages, and some few are totally unprovided with any. The morality is not good, but this arises chiefly from the custom of midnight courtships. I have tried allotments for the use of agricultural labourers, but they are little sought for and several are now vacant.

[I visited these allotments; they were in 28 divisions of about a rood each; in only one was there any appearance of cultivation; the others did not seem to have been touched since the summer and autumn crops had been taken off, and they were a tangled mass of weeds.]

The high rate of wages here renders labourers indifferent to the little profit to be derived from allotment cultivation. Some few years ago the Fell above Bootle was enclosed, and from three to four acres were set apart for cottage gardens, but not being close to the village the people would not avail themselves of them. I suppose the greatest distance from the furthest cottage in the village might be half a mile. The rent of these gardens would have been merely nominal. The reason of the indifference manifested in this instance was doubtless the high rate of wages which prevails, viz., from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. I have myself had to give 1*l.* 1*s.* a week to a common labourer on my glebe, and I expect to have to pay more.

4. *Mr. John Grice*, landowner and general merchant.—I am of opinion that farm servants, who are an especially favoured class, are not so provident now as they were 20 years ago. Higher wages have led to habits of expense. Both men and women spend more upon dress than formerly, and the facilities for travelling have produced unsettled habits. There is less saving and more dissipation, particularly during the "terms." Married agricultural labourers are in receipt of good wages, but they are often indifferent to the education of their children however good the schools. I am decidedly in favour of a compulsory system of education, but the charge should be borne by the Consolidated Fund. Local rates would introduce an element of discord into every parish; and there would be no guarantee for the schools being efficiently conducted but a system of Government inspection twice a year.

Boys and girls are a good deal employed in this neighbourhood in the turnip season, but not many under 13 years of age. Turnips are thinned by hand, and generally by piecework at so much per 100 yards, the turnips being sown in drills. When properly taught three children will single an acre a day by hand quicker than the same number of women with the hoe; this work is done principally in June, so that it does not materially interfere with the children's schooling, the holidays here being in that month. There are three good schools here, partly endowed, but assisted by subscriptions; children generally leave at 12 years of age, but some remain till 14. From 80*l.* to 100*l.* a year ought to be the minimum income of a country schoolmaster. All endowments should be given up to the State to form a general fund. In too many cases endowments are grossly misapplied where they have outgrown the donors objects.

Cumberland and Westmorland are models in regard to labour; all are well employed, and good workmen get wages ranging from 15*s.* to 20*s.* a week. There is not that difference which exists in the south between employers and employed; you will find no labourer touch his hat to you in this county, and the last resource is to go to the workhouse. A spirit of independence prevails from their never having been pauperized, and being well and fairly paid for their labour, and the foremen and farmers look well after them.

5. *Rear Admiral Scott.*—The rate of wages in this district (Gosforth) is very high. A head farm servant gets 28*l.* a year, with board, lodging, and his washing done for him. Day labourers get 18*s.* a week, but the principal labour of the farms is done by servants hired half-yearly. I think the immorality for which this county has a bad repute is attributable chiefly to the half-yearly hiring fairs and to the frequent balls which are held throughout the year for the entertainment of the working classes. Girls who are taught nothing else are taught to dance, and the dancing master is as regular in his visits from house to house as the tax collector. The dress of servant girls and farmers' daughters is alike on these occasions, and resembles that of the higher classes as nearly as possible. The education of boys is better attended to on the whole than that of girls.

The "statesmen," of whom there are a considerable number in this parish, are diminishing gradually; many causes are tending to their gradual extinction. The high price of land tempts some to sell their paternal estates, which are generally heavily incumbered, and they either emigrate or seek some more profitable investment for their little capital in business. It is remarkable that a statesman who has emigrated, if successful, always returns to and settles again in his native district.

Farm labourers occasionally become tenant farmers with a very small capital to begin with, and that often borrowed. Sometimes they venture to take a small farm without any capital at all, and as they work very hard they succeed; there is a spirit of clanship among them which induces them to help one another.

Women will not labour in the fields here, except in harvest time; wages are so high that they do not need such help for the maintenance of their families; for the same reason allotments of land are not required for agricultural labourers.

6. *Rev. James Albert Cheese*, rector of Gosforth.—Children are employed at almost all ages at certain times of the year, especially in harvest and the potato season, but they are principally thus employed on farms held by their parents. Women servants are employed at most of the farm houses to feed pigs and do other outdoor work. Unmarried women are thrown too much among men.

7. *Mr. J. Carter*, St. Bees.—I rent and farm an estate of 300 acres under the Earl of Lonsdale. A great improvement has taken place in the diet of farm servants within my remembrance, and it is impossible to conceive a class of persons better off than they now are. Labour in this district is affected by the proximity of iron and coal mines, and is yearly becoming scarcer and dearer. I get all my extra labour from this parish, but some of my neighbours have to procure it from Whitehaven, a distance of four miles. Women in the turnip season have to walk that distance to work. Boys are employed on my farm and the neighbouring ones for two or three months in summer in hoeing and thinning turnips, gathering weeds, or going with horses and carts in carrying manure from the manure heap to the field when it is being spread. Some girls of the same ages, viz., between 10 and 13, are employed in the same occupation, except going with the horses and carts. Women are sometimes employed in haymaking, hoeing turnips, spreading manure, and similar light work. So far from thinking it expedient to place any restriction upon the employment of women in agriculture it would be doing them a great kindness if we could find

them more employment. I pay my day labourers 18*s.* a week, and in addition I give to the more deserving permission to plant on my land sufficient potatoes for a year's consumption, they finding manure, which they are able to do by keeping a pig. There is no poverty in this district, all being employed at good wages, and the labourers generally give their children the benefit of education. We have good schools, both infant, National, and an endowed grammar school.

8. *Mr. J. Shirwin*, Seascales, Gosforth.—I am a "statesman," and my property, about 100 acres, which I farm, has been in my family for generations. I added 40 acres to it a few years ago and borrowed the money for the purpose, which I am gradually paying off. Men of my class more frequently part with their estates than add to them, which I attribute to their being overweighted with portions for younger children. It was formerly the practice for the smaller landed proprietors to bring up all their sons to the business of farming; the family property thus becomes insufficient to support them and it had to be mortgaged or sold. Now they are wiser, and put their younger sons to business in towns or seek clerkships for them. There was a time within my remembrance when all the county between this place and Ravenglass (15 miles) was owned by statesmen; now not a quarter of it is so. My son assists me on my estate, and will succeed to it. For the six summer months I have two men farm servants and a girl; in the winter only a girl; but we depend very much upon our own exertions. Labour is very difficult to procure. A neighbour of mine last year lost the whole of his turnip crop from not having been able to get labour for singling it. The women of Gosforth (three miles off) used formerly to go out in the summer to field labour, but they will not do so now, their husbands are too well off. If it were not for machinery it would be impossible to carry on the business of my farm. I have thrashing, reaping, and mowing machines, and I use a good deal of artificial manure. I make a fair maintenance out of my property and am saving money. I had very little education, but I have got on very well notwithstanding. I keep my own accounts, and I don't see that farming requires much more.

The farm servants and labouring class generally are very improvident. So far from saving money the majority run into debt. I have been often applied to by the creditors of my farm servants to pay their debts out of their wages, and I am often obliged to make advances to them. They certainly might save a great deal of money if they pleased, for there is nothing that they need to spend their wages upon but clothes. They occasionally become small tenant farmers, but small estates of from 30 to 40 acres are now difficult to get, though they were once plentiful enough. I myself put a young farm servant (a "chance child") into a small farm of 40 acres, and lent him 50*l.* to start with. I had a good opinion of his character, and he has repaid me my loan, and will in time be able to take a larger farm.

9. *Mr. J. Fox*, of St. Bees.—I rent and farm an estate of 300 acres, partly arable and partly pasture, under the Earl of Lonsdale. I employ a great deal of female labour in the turnip season and in harvest; 20 women are employed regularly in singling turnips; they come from Whitehaven, a distance of four miles, are on the ground at 8 a.m., and leave off work at 8 p.m., being allowed an hour for their dinner, which they bring with them; they are a low class of women, to whom the wages earned at that season are of importance, and without which they would probably be obliged to go to the workhouse; they come out to my farm to offer themselves, knowing that I have occasion for their labour; they are overlooked by one of my own men; they receive 1*s.* a day. I employ women to spread manure and to pull turnips, but I have never employed them to load dung carts. I also employ from 20 to 30 girls to weed green crops. I get them chiefly from the village of St. Bees, which is close to my farm.

The morality of the women farm servants in this county is very bad. I do all that is possible by my arrangements in the house to counteract it. I should be glad if the system of taking farm servants into the house could be changed, but I do not see how it is to be brought about. There are but few cottages, except in the vicinity of towns and in villages, and we are obliged to lodge and feed our workpeople. I have some married labourers who reside in St. Bees, to whom I give 11*s.* a week with their meals; and I allow them to plant potatoes on my land, which enables them to keep a pig.

I have known several of my farm servants save money, but it is the exception. There is not one that might not realize a little capital in a few years if he chose. Although small farms are not so numerous as they were, an industrious man of good character would find no difficulty in renting a small farm of from 40 to 50 acres. To work this he ought to possess capital equivalent to 5*l.* or 6*l.* an acre, if he has children to assist him, but if he is compelled to hire labour he would require more.

The means of education at St. Bees are very superior. A free grammar school, to which children are not admitted until they are seven years of age; but the poorest man's son may there obtain as good an education as the son of a gentleman. There is also an infant school and a National school for children under seven years of age, when they are transferred to the grammar school.

10. *Mr. Robert Jefferson*, of Preston Hall, deputy chairman of the board of guardians, Whitehaven.— I rent and farm an estate of 600 acres under the Earl of Lonsdale. The regular labour of my farm is done by eight hired men and two women, whom I board and lodge. The wages of the men are from 20*l.* to 30*l.* a year. The extra labour required is supplied chiefly by women and young boys. I employ at times as many as 60 of the former, and in turnip singling and in weeding crops from 20 to 30 boys and girls, whom I hire at Whitehaven; they are from nine to 13 years of age, and the time that I require them is chiefly during the months of May, June, and July. Women come out from Whitehaven, one and a half mile, to look for work, and I hire them without the intervention of a middleman or ganger, and pay them myself; the same with the children, they are all superintended by one of my own men. I cannot think that the work done by them is in any way injurious to their health. They work only nine hours in summer. Farm servants in this county are very favourably circumstanced for saving money. One of mine, who has been with me for 20 years, is now worth between 700*l.* and 800*l.*, which he has invested in a building society. He is still a farm servant. Another, to whom I pay 33*l.* a year in wages with a cottage rent free, and liberty to plant potatoes on my land, is worth 300*l.* Men who are provident can rent small farms if they wish and may do well upon them if they have a family to assist in the cultivation, but they cannot afford to hire labour. The risk which men with small capital run in taking farms often deters them from doing so; a loss of stock from epidemics, or a bad season, tells severely upon them. Saving money among agricultural labourers is not so common as it was.

11. *Mr. William Dickinson*, land agent, Workington.—I have been engaged between 40 and 50 years in the practice of my profession in Cumberland and Westmorland. The practice of employing women in agriculture has much diminished in this county since my first connexion with it. Children are preferred for singling turnips as they do it quicker; they are employed for that purpose in this neighbourhood. It is an employment which they like, and they look upon the turnip season as a sort of holiday, like the harvest. Women who work in the fields are, as a rule, either poor widows or single women in bad circumstances. They are never, in this neighbourhood at least, put to any heavier work than harvesting and turnip pulling. Their labour is of great importance

to the farmers from the great demand for adult male labour in the coal mines and iron works.

I consider that no class of the community is so well off as the farm servants and agricultural labourers of this county; they have the means, with common prudence, of attaining an early independence; those who save are, however, the exception. Formerly it was very different, and not many years ago one half of the tenant farmers of the county had once been farm servants, although wages were then much lower than they are now.

The sleeping accommodation in the farm-houses is better than it was, although in some places it still needs improvement. Nothing so bad is to be found now as I formerly witnessed in a farm-house belonging to one of the largest landed proprietors of the county, namely a room in which the men slept at one end and the women at the other without any separation between them. The rooms are now generally distinct and have different stairs. Neither men nor women are much under the control of their masters and mistresses. The hiring fairs are a great cause of immorality.

12. *Rev. Henry Curwen*, rector of Workington.—A considerable number of children are employed in agriculture for a portion of the year from this town. The colliers and men employed in the iron works and foundries are too well paid to need the earnings of their wives in field labour, but they send their children to the injury of their education. There are men in this place earning from 10*s.* to 14*s.* a day in the iron works who entirely neglect the education of their children, consequently a great many in this town are growing up no better than savages and heathens, and until a compulsory system of education is established it will continue to be so.

I attribute the high rate of illegitimacy in Cumberland in a great degree to the hiring fairs, which it would be most desirable to put an end to if possible; at the same time it would be hard to deprive farm servants of their half-yearly holidays at Whitsuntide and Martinmas. It is an old-established custom; it keeps up the family ties; and considering the isolated life these people lead in the farm-houses, and the very little intercourse they have with their fellow creatures, I consider such relaxation beneficial and desirable. I look to improved education for the gradual correction of the low tone of morals which unhappily prevails among the female peasantry of this county. I do not think that agricultural labour has any necessary tendency to degrade the female character; it has no such effect in Prussia or Belgium, in both of which countries it prevails to a much greater extent than in England. I attribute the difference entirely to education.

13. *Mr. W. Jenkinson*, of Schoose, near Workington.—I farm 400 acres. I employ boys and girls in singling turnips, but none under 9 years of age, and chiefly from 10 to 14. Women are also a good deal employed by me at certain seasons; they work with the children under the superintendence of one of my men. I do not know that any evil consequences ensue either to their morals or health from such employment.

I should be glad if the system of public hiring of farm servants at the half-yearly fairs could be put an end to. I think the farmers have it in their power by combination to do so. The subject is being much discussed in the farmers' clubs, and something will probably be done in the matter before long.

14. *Mr. Peter Crosthwaite*, of Monkhouse, near Keswick.—I farm 350 acres, chiefly pastoral, and breed and fatten sheep and cattle for the markets of Lancashire. This is not an agricultural district, but some oats and turnips are grown. Women are employed in thinning turnips and in harvesting, but not to any considerable extent; boys also are in request at certain seasons, but the greatest number so employed are the children of small farmers working for their parents. I cannot say what effect it has upon their education, but they are learning, while employed in field work, lessons as important to them in after life as reading and writing, and they are acquiring habits of labour and obedience. Our labourers in Cumberland are, I think, not to be equalled by those of any other part of England. We do not hire them as ploughmen or hedgers or ditchers, but as general labourers, and they are consequently always ready to turn their hands to any work that may be set them. Habits of saving are not so general as they were, and I think that high wages have produced a tendency to extravagance, but farm servants now spend less during their half-yearly holidays and more at other times; they dress better than formerly. Many save money enough to rent small farms, which are chiefly to be had in the dales where there is a right of pasture on the fells. With this advantage an industrious man can make a living off 20 acres. He must work his children, and probably may do so when they are too young; but on a small farm there is not much labour required during a considerable portion of the year, and there ought to be plenty of time left for education if schools are accessible. I pay 16*l.* half yearly to my head man, and from 7*l.* to 9*l.* to my other farm servants, with board. The day labourers I employ have 9*s.* a week, a cottage rent free, coals led, and ground for planting potatoes.

15. *Mr. Peter Harrison*, certificated master of Crosthwaite Endowed Free Grammar School.—The attendance at this school is greatly affected by the demand for the children's labour during three months in the year. From the 1st of July until October one-fourth are withdrawn by their parents. The earnings of the children are not necessary for the parents, for those who keep their children at school are certainly not in better circumstances than those who withdraw them. This fluctuating attendance has a most injurious effect upon the progress of the children. I have had a good deal of experience in the manufacturing districts where the half-time system is in force, and I can confidently state that children educated on that system make far greater progress than those who in country schools are absent for three or more months together. I am disinterested in saying so, for this being an endowed school not under Government inspection the amount of my salary does not depend upon the attendance of the children. I think a compulsory system is the only remedy for the present defective attendance in the rural districts. There is often no excuse for parental neglect for there is no poverty.

16. *Mr. John Rook*, Kiln Hill, farmer, Bassenthwaite.—Children are employed in light work, such as cutting down weeds and thinning turnips, from 12 to 14 years of age. Very few girls are employed as farm labourers, as they prefer going into domestic service, which they do at the age of 15 or thereabouts. The same may be said of women, their husbands are so well off that they prefer staying at home.

17. *Mr. Joshua Jenkinson*, of Arefield.—I own and farm an estate of 300 acres within the township of Cockermouth, chiefly arable land. I employ very few boys, and none under 14 years of age, and those chiefly for thinning turnips, and then only for a few days in the year. I employ women for weeding fallows, gathering stones, and hoeing turnips. A woman generally contracts to do a certain piece of work and takes her own time about it, employing her children, if she has any, to assist her, if not, she procures the assistance of other women who share the job between them. There is nothing in this neighbourhood of the agricultural public gang system. Our people are too independent to work under a middleman, and the children find employment at an early age in factories. Although Cockermouth is well supplied with schools, there are scores of young boys and girls running wild about the streets who have never received the smallest amount of education. Many parents are grossly neglectful, although they can obtain a good education for their children by paying 2*d.* a week for each; they will not make that sacrifice although earning good wages. I prefer, on the whole, the system of boarding and

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lodging farm labourers to hiring and paying them by the day. I employ two or three of the latter, to whom I pay 9*s.* a week with their board and a cottage, worth perhaps 5*l.* a year, rent free. I cannot board my men under 7*s.* a week. Farm servants ought to save money; one of mine, who has been with me only two years, has already saved 40*l.*, but the practice of saving is the exception. In a few years a steady, thrifty man can easily accumulate sufficient capital to stock a farm of, say, from 40 or 50 acres, but it is essential that it should be in a district where he could have a right of pasture. In an arable country farming on so small a scale would be unprofitable.

18. *Mr. W. L. Alexander*, of Shatton Lodge, Embleton.—There is a great deal of women's labour employed in this neighbourhood. I have as many as 20 at a time in my employ, and twice that number of boys and girls from the age of 9 to 15; they come chiefly from Cockermouth, a distance of two and a half miles. The employment of women and boys and girls together is certainly objectionable, especially in turnip thinning, where the boys and girls go on their hands and knees, and I have no doubt that there is a great deal of improper conduct on these occasions. They are superintended by one of my labourers, but it is impossible that things should not occur which are very objectionable. The women are of a low class, and I certainly think it desirable that the sexes should be separated while at work, but nothing of the kind has been attempted in this district. This kind of work is sometimes paid for by the piece. I would place the age of boys to begin work at 14 years. One or two of my labourers to whom I spoke would fix 13 years, before which boys should not be permitted to work. They approve of restriction, but would find a difficulty in maintaining their families without the aid of their children's earnings. With regard to labourers, what we now want is skilled workmen. Machinery is gradually taking the place of manual labour, and we require intelligent men to direct it. I look forward to the time when almost every operation of the farm will be performed by steam; our grass and corn will be cut by steam machines; our lime and manure carted out by steam carriages. Horses will be very little needed, and the food formerly consumed by them will be available for cattle. Women do not load dung carts here, but in standing on the waggons at harvest time receiving and placing the sheaves, they are necessarily subject to some exposure. The hours of work for married women should be shortened. It would be better if no females were employed on the land; the occupation unsettles and unfits them for domestic life. If married, who is to prepare a comfortable meal for the husband against his return, and thus keeping him from the public-house? If a married woman is out working in the fields, who is to make clothes, and economise at home? Such women lose more by neglect of home duties than they earn in wages. The children are often injured in health and morals by being left in charge of neighbours, an elder brother or sister, or perhaps an aged and infirm relative; their labour also comes in competition with male labour. If females are permitted to work on the land it would be better if none were allowed to do so under 20 years of age, by which time they would probably have settled down in some feminine pursuit and feel neither the desire nor the necessity of out-door work. At the present time it is charity to employ many struggling creatures, widows for instance with families, or women whose husbands have forsaken them, also elderly single women who have worked the chief part of their life in the fields.

There is great inattention to the decencies of life, not only in many of the farm-houses but in the parish schools. I will mention an instance of the latter. In a place not far distant from this, when the schoolhouse was being rebuilt, it was proposed that there should be two conveniences, one for the boys another for the girls, but that proposition was rejected by a majority of the parishioners present. The matter was afterwards compromised by the majority yielding the point, but insisting that if there were to be two necessaries there should be but one approach to them.

19. *Mr. Pearson Clarke.*—I rent and farm two small estates of about 65 acres each, chiefly arable land. The chief part of agricultural labour in this neighbourhood is done by women and children; there is employment for them for nine months in the year. In February, if the weather is tolerably fine, stone-picking begins, then comes dibbling potatoes; in May and June the turnip thinning gives occupation to all the people that we can obtain; the hay harvest follows, then the corn harvest; after that time taking up potatoes and pulling turnips, which may last until the end of November or later. I have no doubt that the employment of women, boys, and girls in most of these occupations gives rise to immorality. They cannot be properly superintended, and after work, when they all return home together, they are necessarily free from all restraint. In turnip thinning, a woman, who is paid at the rate of 1*d.* for 100 yards, I have known earn 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. In other kinds of work we pay them then 1*s.* 3*d.* per day where they do not take piecework, which we prefer. Most of the women and children have to come long distances to work, from three, four, and five miles. They bring their dinners with them, which is seldom anything better than a piece of bread. Although not obliged to provide them with any food, I often send a supply of milk into the field for their use. Boys and girls can earn from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 8*d.* a day, and they are employed for six months in the year, certainly at the cost of their education. The reason that we have so much women and children labour here is that the manufactures of Cockermouth have declined of late years, and many families have been thrown out of employment.

There are great objections to the system which prevails in this county of hiring farm servants in the half-yearly markets or fairs. You never know until you have found out, perhaps to your cost, what sort of labourer you have agreed to hire for six months; he may be a ticket-of-leave man for anything you know to the contrary, or may be quite incapable of doing what he professes; but you have no remedy, you must either keep him for the term engaged and make the best of him, or discharge him and pay six months' wages. A change in this system would produce the best effect upon labourers, who now neither require nor care to obtain a character.

Cottages are our great want in this county. The system of boarding farm servants is, in my opinion, a bad one. I prefer married labourers; you then know your men, and have some guarantee for their character; but there are too many farmers, and those large ones too, who, so long as they get their work done, are indifferent who do it. Many farm-houses that I could mention, but would rather not, are still in a disgraceful state as to the separation of the sleeping rooms for men and women. We want cottages that labourers may marry and not multiply illegitimate children as they now do. The smallest farm any man ought to take is 100 acres, and he ought to have 300*l.* or 400*l.* capital and a year's rent, say, 150*l.*, in addition to begin with. Small statesmen may manage to live, but it is a poor living; they cannot save, and it is a struggle and a hard one. The public gang system was tried a few years since at Cockermouth, but owing to the death of the gangmaster it was abandoned. We have, however, something very like it, or perhaps worse.

Women, boys, and girls work together in the fields without any separation of the sexes, and with little supervision except to see that they do their work. Some of the women are of a low class. I think a regulation might enforce that the girls should leave work an hour earlier than the boys, the boys half an hour earlier than the women; they would thus return to their homes in separate parties.

20. *Mr. John Richardson*, land steward, Dovenby, Cockermouth.—There is a process going on in this

county which is tending gradually to increase the distance between the farmer and the labourer. Formerly they were on some degree of equality; the farm servant lived at the table of his employer, who exercised a sort of parental authority over him; now there is a tone of independence on the part of the labourers, who know that the farmers are dependent in a great degree on their services, and accordingly presume upon it. Wages are so high that both men and women servants are tempted to extravagance, and I think that saving is now the exception. I doubt whether it is desirable for farm labourers to become tenant farmers. In very rare instances only can they amass sufficient capital to enable them to take a farm exceeding 40 or 50 acres, and the tendency to the aggregation of farms is so decided that I am of opinion that the period is not far distant when such small holdings will be no longer available. The small statesmen are not and were never a thriving class; they manage to live and that is all, and no class leads a harder life; their diet is inferior to that of farm servants, and often to that of day labourers. Their extinction in this county is only a question of time.

Between Carlisle and Longtown, a district in which I was born, I can call to mind the names of thirty statesmen not one of whom now retains his land, the estates having passed into other hands. The decay of this class is partly owing to a deficiency in the means of keeping pace with modern improvements in agriculture, and partly to a wish to raise their families beyond their natural position. A statesman generally placed one son in the church; another would be established perhaps as a draper in some neighbouring town; a third as a clerk in a merchant's office; and the daughters were educated, not in the parish school, but in some third-class ladies' "establishment," and were taught the piano and ornamental needlework, and consequently became above the duties of the farm-house. To provide for children thus raised above their natural sphere capital was required, and the little property mortgaged, and the land which ought to have been cultivated by the united labour of the family fell into a bad state for want of proper attention and was eventually sold.

With respect to education I consider the small endowed schools, of which we have a great many in Cumberland, the worst description of schools that exist. The master is subject to very imperfect supervision by the trustees, and he feels that his salary, except for gross negligence, is secure.

Something has been done in my time to improve the arrangements in farm-houses for separating the male and female servants at night, and I have myself been instrumental in effecting a reform in this immediate locality, but there are still many farm-houses where the herding the servants together, which was once nearly universal, still prevails; but there must under any arrangement be great difficulty where a number of male and female servants are living under the same roof of guarding against the consequences.

The hiring fairs are a disgrace to a civilized country. In certain towns at Whitsuntide and Martinmas the streets are crowded with male and female servants packed together as closely as a flock of sheep and there is much difficulty in making way through the crowd.

21. *Mr. J. Robinson*, Low Houses, near Wigton.—I rent and farm about 1,400 acres, and employ many women and boys, but no boys under 14. They all come from Wigton, about a mile distant and are mostly uneducated. I pay boys from 6*d.* to 8*d.* a day; they are employed chiefly in the turnip season, hay and corn harvests, and in taking up potatoes. I employ about 14 women for eight or nine months in the year, and pay them 1*s.* 4*d.* a day. They are not particular as to the kind of work they do, and some of them are as strong as men. I employ no girls. The women and boys work together; one of my men sees that they do their work properly, but I don't think he troubles himself about aught else. I would rather have educated people on my farm than uneducated; and if two boys were to offer themselves for service, one of whom had been at school and the other not, I should prefer the former. I think it would be a very good thing if no boys were allowed by law to work until they had obtained a certificate from a Government inspector that they had been long enough at school to have learned to read and write. We shall not be able to get on long without a superior class of labourers who can work machinery properly. My farm servants (I have 11 in the house) have been only indifferently educated; two of them can write their names, but most can read a little. Wages are high, but labourers do not save as they ought. I pay my head man 32*l.* a year, and he ought not to spend more than 6*l.* or 8*l.* a year; but I doubt whether he saves a penny. We farmers have great difficulty in keeping our farm servants in order. They don't like being spoken to; they will snap their fingers at you and walk off and get another place immediately.

22. *Rev. J. S. Hodgson*, rector of Aikton.—Judging from the attendances of the school in my parish I think that there is now less employment for children in agriculture than formerly, and I do not think that in this immediate locality there are any abuses of that kind which call for legislation. In regard to women I hardly know how the evil is to be met except by gradually raising the female character by education. At the same time it must be admitted that from the high rate of wages now paid to farm servants and day labourers the farmer is strongly tempted to avail himself as much as possible of female labour. This however has become scarcer that it was from the disinclination of many women to go out to field work. In this particular district a considerable portion of the work of every farm is still done by women, who may be said to perform almost all the operations of husbandry but plough, and even that was formerly done by women occasionally. It is a regular part of their occupation to harrow, feed cattle, clean out byres, load dung carts, spread manure, gather stones, pull turnips, take up potatoes, and drive carts along the high road. Some of these occupations are certainly not so objectionable as others, but I have known a young woman die from a complaint which was produced by the hardships to which she was exposed while working in a farmyard.

The separation of the sexes in farm houses is not sufficiently attended to in this district, and I attribute the high rate of illegitimacy for which the county is notorious chiefly to this cause. Cottages also are generally in a bad state, often with earthen floors, and the accommodation is quite inadequate to the wants of a family. The village schools are generally mixed, and separate offices are rarely provided for the boys and girls.

23. *Mr. Robert Norman*, land agent and solicitor, and manager of the estates of Sir Wilfred Lawson, Bart., M. P.—A great portion of the farm work in this neighbourhood is done by women, I should say, including the occasional labour, quite one half. Women still harrow in the fields occasionally but not so much as they did; they also load dung carts, and assist in loading hay carts and stacking hay, both of which occupations I consider unsuitable to their sex.

Boys are not employed here for more than three months in the year, and generally at a season which includes their holidays; they are not employed before 13 years of age; I have certainly known them employed as young as 9, but that would be quite exceptional. I think it is very desirable that boys should not be permitted to work until they are 14 years of age unless they could produce a certificate of having attended school for a definite period or attained a certain amount of education.

I am opposed to the system of small farms, and therefore to encouraging labourers and farm servants to look to becoming tenant farmers. The money they can save must, except in very rare cases, necessarily be a very insufficient capital, except for farming on a very small scale. I can mention two instances in which

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attempts to farm with inadequate capital failed. A servant of Sir Wilfred Lawson who had some money married a female servant in the same establishment who had also saved money, and their combined capital may have amounted to 700*l*. They took a farm, but have been anything but successful. In the other case the tenant of a small farm at Isill, who could scarcely manage to pay his rent and make a bare living, was induced to give it up. I then took it in hand, and by a judicious outlay on manure the production was so increased that it let afterwards for double the former rent. Small farms, in the hands of poor men, cannot be made to yield what they are capable of under a proper system of cultivation, therefore, although a small farmer may manage to obtain a living, the aggregate production of the country is less and the nation is so much the poorer. Small farmers, even if they possess the capital which a farm requires, are very timid in employing it. Such is the result of my experience as a land agent in this county.

24. *Mr. Thomas McMechan*, Wigton.—I am secretary of the Wigton Farmers' Club. I am of opinion that, taking into consideration the occasional labour employed, about one-third of the lighter descriptions of out-door work in this neighbourhood is performed by women; indeed, I do not see how cultivation could be carried on without their aid, in consequence of the deficiency of male labour. For many purposes female labour is much cheaper, and the wages thus earned by the women, who are of a poor class and generally in necessitous circumstances, are of importance to them and their families. Many of them are the wives of labourers at brickworks, on railways, &c. Children are employed on farms to a very small extent in this district, and I do not think that their occasional and partial employment in the summer and autumn interferes much with their education. This district is well supplied with schools, and as a rule they are well attended by the children of the agricultural labourers in the villages. I am of opinion that if boys were prohibited from following field labour until they had attained the age of 14—unless they had obtained a certificate of having attended school for a certain number of weeks in one year, or of having attained a certain proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic—it would be a beneficial regulation. This would not inconvenience the farmer much, and the effect would be to produce a more intelligent class of agricultural labourers. It would also be an inducement for parents to send their children to school at an early age.

I think the disposition to save money is increasing in the district, if I may judge from the increase of deposits by men and women servants in the Post Office and local Savings Banks. There seems to be more care and less disposition to spend money foolishly at the half-yearly fairs, which used formerly to be scenes of drinking and idleness to a far greater extent than is now the case. Now-a-days, too, the railways take away great numbers at the end of the day, and consequently there are fewer temptations to debauchery. These hiring fairs are a singular institution, and the standing on the streets of men and women with straws in their mouths to be hired for the half year, bears no little resemblance to a foreign slave market. The registry offices in various parts are doing much to diminish this kind of thing, and a resolution was passed by the district farmers' club to engage servants only through these offices, so that the character of the servants could be enquired into; as in most agricultural communities a somewhat low state of morals prevails amongst the servants, although I do not think this district compares unfavourably with any in the two counties of Cumberland or Westmorland. The change in the custom of the farmer and his wife having their meals with the servants has, I think, had an effect in making servants more careless, and rougher in their manners.

I think there is a great need of a better class of cottages for the labouring classes, but efforts are being made to supply the want. Mr. George Moore, who has done so much to encourage a better education in this district, has done his best also in this direction. Small cottages with four rooms, with gardens attached, would be a very valuable assistance to the improvement of the labouring class. Prizes both for the best cottage gardens and best kept cottages have been offered by Mr. Moore, and keenly contested for, in many cases where the means were of a very meagre description.

Generally speaking education is much advanced as compared with 12 or 20 years ago. A scheme of competitive examinations, devised and organized by Mr. G. Moore, has much contributed to this, as no child was allowed to compete for the prizes he offered for efficiency unless he had attended school a certain number of days in the year.

Small farms are numerous in Cumberland, but they are generally too small for the farmer to make more than a bare subsistence.

25. *Mr. William Hodgson*, master of the National school, Aspatria.—Children in this parish are not so much employed in agriculture as in some others; but I lose quite one quarter of my boys for three month in the year, and I cannot but say that their earnings are of importance to their parents, who are generally very poor. The boys go back greatly in their learning during their absence from school. I should say it took two months to bring a boy who had been absent from school three months up to his former acquirements. I have heard of the agricultural gang system. There are men in this village who I suppose would be called gangmasters, for they contract to do piecework, such as thinning turnips, and they hire and pay a number of women, boys, and girls for the job. I have frequently measured land for contract work done in this way. The women, boys, and girls all work together.

26. *Mr. John Grainger*, of Holm Cultram, landowner.—The characteristic of this district is that of small proprietors, whom we call statesmen, owning and farming from 80 to 150 acres. There are but few tenant farmers, which I attribute to the division of the lands of the great Abbey of Holm Cultram at the time of its dissolution among the tenants of small holdings, who thus acquired proprietary rights. The work is chiefly done by the owners and their families, and the cultivation, considering the small capital employed, is on the whole good. The occasional labour of women and boys is employed, but not to any great extent. Boys from 13 to 14 are employed for about three months in summer thinning turnips, making bands in harvest, and gathering potatoes. Girls are also employed in the same manner, but not so many as boys; both are often accompanied by their parents in piecework. The employment of women in field labour is gradually diminishing, and in this district they are only employed in light work. I should quite approve of a prohibition of the employment of children before 14 without a certificate of education, and I think it would operate most beneficially, and that in a short time the farmers would feel no inconvenience from it.

I should prefer to hire my labourers by the week, instead of keeping farm servants in my house, but the paucity of cottages is the difficulty. You cannot get married men, but they are more steady than unmarried, and you have a greater hold on them, and you have some guarantee for character and good conduct, which cannot be the case under our farm servant system, but I do not see the way to get rid of it. There is no doubt that it is the chief cause of the immorality of our county. A great many farmhouses are sadly deficient in proper arrangement of the sleeping apartments.

No class of men is more favourably circumstanced than the farm servants of this county for saving money. I have a man in my service who has saved 300*l*., and is about to invest it in building cottages. I think it very undesirable that such men should become small farmers; their capital in general is quite inadequate for good farming, and I am certain that

they lead much harder life as small tenants than as farm servants.

27. *Rev. Thomas Ashworth*, rector of Holm Cultram.—The farms in this neighbourhood are small, averaging about 100 acres. Boys and girls are only employed to a small extent in farm work of a lighter kind, and that principally in the company of their parents or friends in contract work; making bands in harvest, gathering potatoes, and sometimes reaping, from 13 and upwards. Women are not employed to a great extent, and only in light work, with some few exceptions, *i.e.*, the wives of married labourers, and only in the summer months, and even this seems to be lessening gradually under the influence of a higher civilization. The growing influence of public opinion is certainly producing its effect in this neighbourhood.

We are amply provided with schools. Early labour does certainly affect the attendance to some extent, but my influence is directed against it. In some cases of course indifference and improvidence prevail. The physical characteristics of the people of this district are good, but in common with too many of the rural districts of this county the moral tone is somewhat low; some improvement, however, has taken place in this respect within the last few years.

28. *Mr. John Galloway*, Moorhouse Hall, Burgh on Sands, landowner and occupier.—Most kinds of agricultural labour are performed by women in this parish, and some of them I consider decidedly objectionable, such as leading carts on the highway and occasionally loading dung carts, tending cattle, and cleaning out byers, frequently before daylight in winter, all of which occupations it is desirable women should be exempt from; but I do not see how the evil is to be prevented by law. Any enactment would most probably be disregarded or evaded, and a system of inspection would be as odious as it would be impracticable. I would rather trust to the gradual influence of time and education for a remedy. Boys and girls are also a good deal employed here, but seldom under 13 years of age. I would fix the age at 14, in order to secure a longer attendance at school. The better class of labourers educate their families; the poorer too often neglect that duty through indifference. I may mention a fact corroborative of this. A labourer in this parish stated that he could not afford to send his two children, aged 10 and 12, to school. An offer was made to pay for their education if he would allow them to go to the school, but he would not take advantage of it, and the children to this day remain without education. A great deal of farm work at particular seasons, such as turnip thining, is done here and in some of the adjoining parishes by the piece. We send carts to Carlisle when we want extra labour, and numbers of men (chiefly Irishmen), women, and children are brought out. After ascertaining their working qualities we select such as we consider the best; they then come daily a distance of four miles and return at night until the work is finished. With these men we associate a good many of women and children from the neighbouring villages, a practice which I think would be better avoided. There is no separation of the sexes while they are at work, and the people from the towns being generally of a low class too often use language which young people should not hear.

The cottages in this district are generally overcrowded and deficient in proper sleeping accommodation. The bedrooms have frequently no ventilation, the windows not opening. The drainage too is very imperfect, as is that of the farm yards.

The wages of farm servants are high; some, but not the majority, save. I know an instance of a boy who, soon after he became a farm servant at 14, put 10*s.* into the savings bank; he continued his deposits until they now amount to 400*l.*; he is now renting a small farm, keeps two horses, and is making money. It would be better, however, in my opinion, for farm servants to invest their savings on some good security, such as loans on local rates, &c., than risk it by taking a small farm. The losses to which they are liable from bad seasons and epidemics among stock may be their ruin. Many small farmers in this county will never recover from the consequences of the cattle plague. I think they are much better off by remaining in their original vocation as husbandmen. A small farmer must invest the whole of his capital in implements and stock; as servant he may employ a portion of it for the benefit of his family by putting them out to trades, and thus give them a chance of rising in the world. On a small farm all the children are required to work, and cannot rise above the condition of labourers. The statesmen with small properties of 40 or 50 acres are rapidly becoming extinct; they cannot hold their own against increasing competition, although those with larger estates may.

29. *Joseph James* (his four children, two boys and two girls, were employed in gathering stones in a field which he had agreed to clear by the piece). My eldest boy is 13, the youngest 6 years of age. The eldest boy has received some little education in a neighbouring school and can write a little on a slate and read figures. The eldest girl is 12, she has never been at school and does not know her letters, but has been taught to say her prayers. My wages, when in employment, are 15*s.* a week, but it is irregular and I cannot pay the charges of schooling; but "scholarship" is the only chance for children getting on in the world, and the thought of not being able to give it to my children often makes me unhappy.

30. *Sir Robert Brisco, Bart.*, magistrate.—I am an advocate for not permitting boys to work until they have obtained a certificate of having attended school for a certain time, and attained a certain amount of education, in fact for applying the principle of the Factory Acts so far as circumstances will admit to agriculture. Farmers will then be the most strenuous promoters of education, their interests being directly affected by it, and they will put a pressure upon the parents of children, which will be more effectual than all the exhortations of the clergyman. The parents often spend in drink what ought to go to the education of their children. I know an instance of a man who declares his inability to pay the school pence who weekly spends in beer enough to pay them twice over.

31. *Mr. Nicholas Wright*, Harrowby, farmer.—I employ no boys under 13 years of age, but can give them regular employment for five or six months in the year in thinning turnips, in harvest time, and in potato gathering; they work with the women and girls, whom I employ under the superintendence of one of my own men. The boys here go to school for about six months in the year, but not longer after they are 13, but they attend pretty regularly before that age. I think the superintendence which the women and children have when at work on my farm is sufficient to prevent any misconduct. The land I rent is cultivated by day labourers to whom I pay 13*s.* a week with a cottage rent free, with some other advantages, such as getting potatoes and milk for less than the market price. The whole is considered equivalent to 18*s.* a week. The farms in this district are small, but my own is an exception. One of the advantages of a large over a small farm is, that employment can generally be found for labourers throughout the year, and there is no temporary loss of wages. My men are employed without intermission both in winter and summer, "wet or dry," and they know exactly what they have to depend upon. On small farms the labour is far from being continuous, and the men often suffer great privations from interruptions in their work. The small statesmen, of whom there are some in this district, can only get a living by working very hard, in fact it may be said that they get it out of themselves as much as out of the land.

32. *Mr. W. Tinning*, Oakbank, Longtown.—I rent and farm an estate of 400 acres under Sir Frederick Graham, Bart. We depend in this district almost entirely upon female labour. With the exception of a few who go out to domestic service almost every

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girl in this parish is brought up to husbandry. We could not possibly do without female labour. I do not think that the health of women suffers in any way from exposure in field work, on the contrary they are more robust, and when they marry they breed a hardy race. I do not say so much as to its effect upon their moral character, for they make bad housewives. Important as it is for us I doubt whether the labour of women benefits them much, taking the wear and tear of clothes, the neglect of children, and other circumstances into consideration. I believe it would be better for them if their services in agriculture could be dispensed with. The neglect of their homes and their children is most serious. I have even known a child lost in consequence of the long absence of its mother from home. We put them to every kind of work, but only on rare occasions to filling dung carts and cleaning out byres. I only employ four boys in the turnip season, who work with the women, and are superintended by one of my men and sometimes by myself. I am not aware of any evil results to morality. The immorality which prevails is, in my opinion, due to the farm servants being lodged together in farm-houses. I cultivate my farm by day labourers and their wives and families who live in cottages. When I hire a man I stipulate that if married his wife shall also work. Women lead carts here, but the farmers on the other side of the Border employ their women in ways that I should not think right. I pay my head man 8*s.* a week with his food and a cottage rent free; his wife earns 6*s.* a week, and the whole money wages earned by the family amounts to 100*l.* a year, yet they are always in debt, scarcely paying for any thing which they can get credit for, and if they were unemployed for a week they would be thrown upon the parish. I should entirely approve of a law which enforced school attendance up to a certain age, and that no child should work in husbandry until the age of 14, unless he had obtained a certificate of a certain proficiency in education. The period between 12 and 14 is the most important of a boy's life, and every effort should be made to keep him at school as long as possible.

33. *Mr. Matthew Brown*, land steward to Sir Frederick Graham, Bart., Netherby.—We depend very much here upon the labour of women, and farming could not be carried on without it; it is the principle occupation of the district, and without it many women would have to be supported by the parish; they are quite as serviceable in many kinds of labour as men, and there is employment for them almost throughout the year. Wages of women are 1*s.* per day. The scarcity of male adult labour is the cause of their being so largely employed. The farms in this district being large the labourers generally live in cottages, and farm servants are exceptional. Few boys are employed in this neighbourhood, and not many under 14 years of age, as they are found to be more idle than useful under that age. This part of Cumberland was in a very backward state as to education until about 12 years ago, when by local efforts, aided by Government assistance, a school was established, which has now nearly 200 on its books. I wish the attendance was more regular than it is; and I should quite approve of a system of indirect compulsory education so far that no child should be permitted to work in agriculture under 14 years of age unless he had obtained a certificate. The women can take care of themselves, but the State should take care that the children of the rising generation are properly brought up.

Farm servants have great opportunities of improving their position in this county. I know an instance of a man who at the age of 22, having 80*l.* or 100*l.*, rented a small farm, for which he paid 35*l.* a year; he now rents one at 350*l.* a year, and is making money; but small farms are every year becoming scarcer. There is a considerable number of the smaller statesmen remaining in the eastern part of Cumberland, but their farming is very bad owing to their want of capital and to their adherence to the system of their forefathers. What they extract from the soil is by dint of sheer hard labour, and by "racking;" they cannot treat the land fairly.

34. *Isabella Deans*, farm servant.—I am 27 years of age, and entered service at 17. I do all kinds of farm work, feed the pigs, milk the cows, and sometimes load dung carts; I have harrowed. The work of a female farm servant is very hard, up at 5 o'clock to feed the cattle and milk, and often not to bed before 11. I get 6*l.* for a half year; a good deal of it goes in clothes, which wear out fast in outdoor work. I do not clean out the byres; Scotch girls do it, but no girl hereabouts would. I had a child before I went to service.

35. *Mr. T. Gibbons*, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Longtown.—I farm two estates, amounting in the whole to 1,300 acres, chiefly arable land. I board but do not lodge my labourers. I pay to my head man 20*l.* a year; with this he has a cottage rent free, half a ton of potatoes, 10 stone of flour instead of a Sunday dinner to save the trouble of preparing one. To my other men I pay 12*s.* a week, with a cottage free, half a ton of potatoes, 11 stone of flour, and 1*l.* extra at harvest time. All my men board in the house. The wives of all my labourers do farm work, although I do not stipulate for it, as is the custom with most of my neighbours; I pay them 1*s.* per day. The labour of women is most important, and could not be dispensed with here, but I avoid as much as possible putting them to work unsuitable to their sex. It is not the custom here to employ boys and girls, except at harvest time for making bands. I believe there is scarcely a woman in the neighbouring town (Longtown) who does not go out to field labour, and unless they did so they must necessarily be thrown upon the parish. The depression of hand-loom weaving has left the place in a very impoverished condition. This is one of the principal reasons why I do not use a reaping machine, I find that I can command an unlimited supply of female labour. There is no gang system here. My extra labourers are paid by the day. Boys are useful in harvest time to make bands, but I can state with confidence as the result of a long experience that no boy will ever make an efficient farm servant or agricultural labourer who does not begin to work at 14.

This parish was in a very low state as to education until 12 years ago, when a movement was made, of which the late Sir James Graham was at the head, for establishing a National shool, but there being a great many Presbyterians in the parish, considerable difficulty was experienced in settling the plan. It resulted in the school being a "United School," open to all denominations, and in which no definite doctrine is inculcated. This school is very successful, and is well attended; I may say that there is scarcely a child in the place who does not go to it. If a man applies for relief the guardians insist, if he has children, that a part of the allowance shall be applied to their schooling, and if he fails to comply with the condition the allowance is stopped. The immorality of this part of Cumberland is great. The union workhouse here is to a great extent merely a lying-in hospital. The evil is certainly not decreasing, and I am at a loss to know how it is to be combatted.

36. *Mr. J. Little*, The Gales, Gretna.—I rent and farm an estate of 400 acres, consisting almost entirely of arable land. I have 12 men farm servants, three boys between the ages of 10 and 18, and four female farm servants; in short I employ a great many women for eight months in the year, but I employ no boys under 13 years of age; I should not consider them worth their wages; all the extra work on my farm is better done by women, of whom there is an abundant supply in this neighbourhood. I pay my best men from 20*l.* to 24*l.* a year, and in addition to this they have their meals and cottages of three or four rooms with gardens rent free, and they can have the use of additional land for potatoes if they require it without paying rent for it. Some of the day labourers whom I employ receive 10*s.* a week and their food, but they

pay rent for their cottages; others receive 15*s.* a week without their food, but pay rent. There is nothing objectionable, I think, in the employment of women in agriculture as practised in this locality; I put them to no work that is above their strength, and they are willing to do almost anything. They may occasionally lead and load dung carts, but not often, and they help to pitch the sheaves of corn upon the stacks; they are fond of leading horses in carts, but I do not allow them to drive. The hardest work they are employed in is taking up potatoes. As a proof of the importance of the labour of women to their families I may mention that I last year paid one who worked for 20 weeks with her three daughters, aged 16, 17, and 18, 30*l.*; and had it not been for the money thus earned the whole family must have gone into the union workhouse, the husband having been disabled from working by illness, and was not a member of a benefit society.

I am of opinion that education is now the great desideratum. I infinitely prefer an educated to an uneducated labourer; he is more easily managed, and is more accessible to reason. There is a great deal to reform in our Cumberland system of farm servants; if the masters must have them in the house they ought to mix with them more freely, and they would find many opportunities of influencing them for good; they are now left a great deal too much to themselves. I endeavour to interest my labourers by lending them newspapers and books, and entering into conversation with them.

37. *Mr. William Thompson*, certificated schoolmaster, Corby.—Mine is a mixed school, supported by the Government grant and the children's school pence. From the beginning of March until the end of October the school is reduced by one-half; the elder children all leave for "barking," and the employment for them is continuous for six months. They leave in March; I never see their faces in the school again until the beginning of November or later. The parents of some of the children are poor, and possibly require the earnings of their children, but such is certainly not the case with the majority. Nothing but a compulsory system of education will abate this wrong. The education of children who are absent for so long as six months at a time is stationary; they make no progress after that, and might almost as well be taken from school altogether. It is very disheartening work.

38. *Mr. F. Graham*, land steward to H. Howard, Esq., Corby Castle.—This is a district of small properties and farms. The small statesmen are behindhand in everything, and deficient in capital for the proper cultivation of their land, and it is doubtful whether they would apply their money to it if they had any. I look upon this class of men as an obstacle to the progress of good farming, and they habitually employ their children in work when they ought to be at school. We have a good deal of employment for children hereabouts, and I have no doubt it interferes much with their education. I think no child ought to be permitted to work unless some security is given for its education. A law that no boy should be permitted to work in agriculture before 13 years of age would in my opinion be a beneficial one, and I would carry the principle so far that a certificate of having obtained a certain amount of elementary education should be the indispensable condition of employment. Cottages are our great want in this county, and until they are provided we cannot get rid of the objectionable practice of boarding and lodging the agricultural labourers in farm-houses; this is the cause of our high rate of illegitimacy, aggravated very frequently by the defective sleeping arrangements. The smaller class of statesmen are great offenders in this respect. In a great many places more cottages are required, and it would be a benefit to the farmers to have them built on their farms; at present they are chiefly in th villages, and often inconveniently placed.

39. *Mr. W. Hugill*, Brampton National boys' school, under Government inspection.—The number on my books is 167; the attendance reaches its minimum in September, when it is only 84. The boys are employed in April and May in picking stones and weeding, in June in thinning turnips, in July and August for the hay and corn harvest, in September in gathering bramble berries (blackberries), for which a market has within the last four years been opened at Newcastle. A boy can make from 3*s.* to 4*s.* a day, the berries being very plentiful in this locality. Five hundred pounds worth was sent off to Newcastle last year. One of the uses to which they are said to be applied is the manufacture of port wine. Some of my boys go out to thin turnips as young as 8 and 9. To some of the parents the earnings of their children is necessary, but to the majority I should say not. There are some hand-loom weavers here, who are very poor, and to whom a few shillings earned by their chilldren is of importance. They are not the children of necessitous parents who are the most irregular in their attendance. A benevolent gentleman in this neighbourhood, Mr. Head, of Rickerby, undertakes to pay the school pence for such children whose parents profess themselves unable from poverty to do so, but the attendance of these very children so paid for is far more irregular than that of other boys. I give as an instance that of a boy 10½ years of age, whose schooling is paid for; the attendance of this boy for seven weeks only amounted to five days. In another case where the school pence was also paid for the parents the attendance of a child in three months was 13 days. I find, generally speaking, that the attendance of the children of mechanics is the most regular.

40. *Mr. J. Robinson*, Brampton.—The women employed in agriculture in this district are not put to any work unsuitable to their sex; harvest work is the heaviest, potato-gathering perhaps the next. The potatoes are turned up by the plough, and the women detach them from the ridges with forks, they are then picked up by children. Women's wages here have risen from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* a day, and female labour is getting scarce. Reckoning the labour of two women as equal to that of one man, the money wages of two women would be about the same, but men are not to be got. I think no child ought to be allowed to work in the fields before 10 years of age, and not then without having been at school; and I hope some measure will be passed by the Legislature to that effect. I attribute much of the immorality among the labouring classes of this county to the practice of night courting, and the custom of men leaving the farm-houses on Saturday evening and not returning home until Sunday morning. Farm servants are rather particular as to their dress when not employed; a smockfrock is not to be seen in all Cumberland; every man on Sundays and holidays wears broad cloth, and the girls go to balls in low dresses. They spend the greater part of their wages on dress, and it would be difficult to distinguish at church a farm servant girl from the daughter of her employer.

41. *Mr. John Ramshay*, Naworth, agent to the Earl of Carlisle.—Children are scarcely ever employed in this district under the age of 13, when they are found very useful in thinning turnips and other light work. I consider some out-door employment for a part of the year an important part of their education, and I do not think that here any restriction is necessary. It would be impossible to carry on the operations of husbandry without women, but their labour is becoming dearer every year; they are now receiving in this neighbourhood 1*s.* 6*d.* a day, while very recently they were paid only 1*s.*

The system of boarding and lodging the agricultural labourers in farm-houses is open to great objections, and is, I have no doubt, the cause of the high per-centage of illegitimacy; but there is not anything like a sufficient number of cottages for the agricultural population. In this parish there were none until the Earl of Carlisle built some; they have four rooms and cost 150*l.* each, but the labourers pay only 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, therefore it is not a remunera-

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tive investment; but they were built from considerations of duty and propriety. There is a strong feeling growing up that the number of cottages should be increased, as the farm-servant system cannot endure much longer. The superior class of farmers would be glad of a change. Farmers who pay less than 200*l.* a year rent dine with their servants. The servants certainly are, if they are careful, well able to save money and to rise to the position of small farmers, and many do so, but I doubt whether it be for their interest. Small tenant farmers, however, do often succeed better than small proprietors who, although they work hard, cannot make up for want of capital. The advocates of small farms should visit this county and see their theories in practice.

42. *John Coulthard, Esq.*, Lanercost Abbey Farm.—I farm two considerable estates in this part of Cumberland, and get my turnips thinned chiefly by boys who are employed for that purpose for about three weeks in June. I prefer them to women, and they are cheaper, and do their work quicker and better by hand than women do by the hoe. I can get an acre of turnips thinned and weeded by boys for 4*s.* 6*d.* an acre, whereas the same done by women would cost 6*s.* 6*d.*

Cottages are our great want in this district and indeed throughout the county, but a large proportion of the land belongs to small proprietors who have not the means of building them. A great many of the existing cottages, particularly in the northern part of the county, are of the most wretched description, and will never be replaced by better until they tumble down from age.

43. *Eward Ridley* Lanercost, aged 20.—I am a farm servant. I first entered service when I was 10 years old, and did little odd jobs on the farm. I am now receiving 22*l.* a year with my food and lodging. It is a grand thing to be hired; if I had to live in a cottage I should spend all my wages in victuals and rent; now I can lay up, and I have only my clothes to pay for, and can afford a glass of ale when I wish it. I put 9*l.* into the savings bank every half year, and I have done so for some time, and have a good bit of money there. I do not spend the interest; I hope to take a small farm some day. Although I have not been to school since I was 10, I can read a newspaper and write a letter. There are three other men farm servants where I live and two lasses; they can all read and write a bit. I don't belong to a benefit society; I prefer putting my money in the savings bank.

44. *Mr. H. Forster*, Wetheral.—I farm an estate of 120 acres, all arable land. I get my turnips thinned by a man who contracts to do it by the acre, and who comes from Carlisle and brings people with him, men chiefly, and they lodge about the neighbourhood until the work is done. I get some of my harvest work done in the same way. I employ several women at 1*s.* 3*d.* a day. Our women in Cumberland are of a robuster race than the southern women, and they are more fitted for out-door labour. I think women ought not to load dung carts nor stand upon the ricks in harvest; it is not a proper position for them. Children are employed here at an earlier age than 10, some as young as 8 and 9. I should be glad if it could be prevented. No child ought to be allowed to labour until it had received some education. If a boy goes to school for six months in the year he would get as much education as is needed for his position in life, and there would be plenty of time left for work. It is not work that keeps children from school but neglect of parents.

45. *Mr. William Heskett*, land agent, Plumpton Hall, Penrith.—Women are not so much employed in this as in some other districts of Cumberland. I employ four for about nine months in the year, and pay them 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. They do most of the light and some of the heavy work on my farm; they attend the thrashing machine. A good deal of my work is done by contract. Boys are not so much employed here as women, but I should quite approve of a compulsory system of education to the extent that no child should be allowed to work under 10, and not until 14 unless he had acquired some education. I think nothing short of that will cure the indifference of parents, and that such a law would be well received by the farmers in general.

Cottages are much wanted, but if labourers were provided with cottages some farmers would still board their men to secure their efficiency as labourers. It is often found that those who live in cottages and provide for themselves are less able-bodied than farm servants.

46. *J. Hodgson, Esq.*, clerk of the peace for Cumberland.—There is no serious crime in this county, but the per-centage of illegitimacy is very high. The system of lodging the labourers in farm-houses is the root of the evil; the hiring fairs aggravate the mischief, and they are abominable nuisances. The employment of women in agriculture is diminishing, and it can scarcely, I think, be made the subject of legislative interference.

47. *William Hutchinson*, aged 13.—I live at Cumwhinton with my mother. I went to school when I was 9, and has been on and off ever since. I go when I likes and I stays away when I likes. I have not been to school for a month, and I have not been doing anything in particular. I can read a little but I cannot write, and I don't know no figures.

[This boy was idling about the village of Cumwhinton in a very dirty state, and I was told that his mother lives in a cottage of her own and keeps a cow and a pony.]

48. *James Stevens*, farm servant, Cumwhinton, aged 21.—I went to service at 14, and I now get 24*l.* a year with my board. Farm servants may save money if they are careful. From all that I have heard I think that we are better off than any other labourers. Hereabouts the farms are small and the farmers do the chief work by themselves and their families. There are few day labourers employed. Some men get work in the quarries of the neighbourhood. Women do the greatest part of the extra work on farms. They struck for higher wages last year in consequence of reading in the newspapers that they ought to do so, and by holding out they got an advance of 3*d.* a day; they are now paid 1*s.* 3*d.* I am saving money, but I do not think when I have enough I should like to risk it on a small farm. Small farmers here have to work very hard, and can barely make a living and pay their rent. I have seen enough of this not to care to be a farmer. Many of the farmers here can't keep a pair of horses.

49. *Mr. Andrew Wright*, High Crosby.—I am a statesman owning and farming 70 acres, and in addition I rent 70 acres. I cultivate the land chiefly by farm servants, with the occasional aid of women. Boys are very little employed until they go out to service at the age of 13 or 14, and girls less, and only during the turnip season. We are feeling the inconvenience of insufficient labour; the men go off to the mines and railways, and the boys get situations in shops or are apprenticed to trades. If it were not for women it would be impossible to carry on farming in this county. Wages are high and are likely to be higher. This is a district of small farms, few being more than 200 acres, and the greater number about 70 or 80. The small statesmen who have not land enough of their own to make a living generally rent some in addition; that is my case, and it is the reason of the competition which exists for small farms in this county. We have no private gangs hereabouts; each farm provides its own labour, and on a pinch the farmers assist one another.

50. Master of the Hayton parish school.—This is a mixed school under diocesan inspection, and is supported chiefly by H. Graham, Esq., of Edmond Castle. The numbers on the books are 130, and the attendance to-day, 8th March, is 100. Next month I shall lose a great many scholars, and by the 1st of May the whole of the two first classes will have gone and will not return before the end of October. This is very

disheartening to a master. The charges are very light, viz., 1*s.* a quarter for the children of agricultural labourers, 1*s.* 6*d.* for those of tradesmen and mechanics, 2*s.* 6*d.* for the children of tenant farmers, and 3*s.* 6*d.* for the children of statesmen. Boys and girls generally remain until they are 13 or 14, but in consequence of the irregularity of their attendance their education is not as advanced as it might be.

51. *Rev. W. C. P. Baylee*, vicar of Alston.—There is no outdoor employment for women in this part of Cumberland, which is entirely a pastoral and mining district. I doubt whether a plough is to be found in this parish. The boys find employment at the mines, but the managers will not take them before they are 13 years of age, when they are found useful in washing and preparing the lead ores; they are or ought to be at school without any intermission but the holidays, and would be so but for the indifference of their parents. The attendance is very fluctuating. There are but few statesmen in this part of Cumberland. The farms are chiefly held under Greenwich Hospital.

52. *Thomas Cooke*, master of the undenominational charity school of Alston.—Supported by voluntary contributions. The mining proprietors give 25*l.* a year and Greenwich Hospital 20*l.* The school fees are 1½ a week for all classes. There are 160 on the books, and the attendance is not affected by any demand for the labour of the children but purely by the parents not sending them to school. The children remain until they are 13 or 14, and if they attended regularly they would get a good education.

53. *Mr. Christopher Gatenby*, master of the Penrith Wesleyan school.—Mixed. Numbers on the books 256; boys 186, girls 70. The Wesleyan doctrine and catechism are taught, but very few of the parents of the children are Wesleyans. The school contains children of Roman Catholics. This school is very little affected by the employment of children in agriculture, about 30 only being absent for a short period for field labour. The school fees are 3*d.*, 4*d.*, or 6*d.* a week, not depending upon the age and the position of children in the school but upon the ability of the parents to pay. An annual subscription of 30*l.* is devoted to the payment for the children of the poorer classes, who are admitted at a reduced rate.

54. *E. W. Hasell, Esq.*, Dalemain, chairman of quarter sessions for Cumberland and Westmorland.—Crime in these counties is very slight, and such serious offences as burglary are chiefly committed by tramps. It would be very difficult to interfere by legislation with the labour of women in agriculture. In my immediate district there are no abuses calling for it. I do not think that children are put to work at too early an age or are, in this county, overworked. I have been in the habit of employing a gang from Penrith in the turnip season, composed of women, boys, and girls, who are brought out in carts. The Act for the regulation of agrigultural gangs having been brought to my notice I shall see that its requirements are enforced. I have had ample opportunities of comparing the agricultural labourers of Cumberland with those of most other counties, and in intelligence and efficiency they surpass them all. In the south the labourer is a mere unreasoning machine. In work such as draining I have often been benefitted by the advice of my labourers. Their superiority does not arise so much from education as from natural ability and habits of observation. The system of lodging farm labourers in the farm-houses is undoubtedly the cause of much immorality, and as long as the system exists there will be no diminution in the high rate of illigetimacy in Cumberland and Westmorland.

Cottages for the agricultural class are greatly needed. Men could then marry, which, owing to the difficulty in obtaining suitable accommodation, they are now reluctant to do.

I do not think that labourers in this part of the county care much for gardens, although many have small ones attached to their cottages. The allotment system is not applicable to this county, so large a proportion of agricultural work being done by farm servants. The wages of day labourers are so high that they do not feel the necessity of cultivating a piece of ground for themselves. They prefer taking their ease and rest after their day's work. I am convinced that if I were to offer a piece of land for allotments, which I should be perfectly willing to do if I thought there was any probability of its being accepted, there would not be a single applicant.

55. *John Crosby.*—I reside at Penrith and am a gangmaster. I have followed this employment for 20 years, and get my living by it. There are many men and several women in this town who follow the same business. Most of the work of the large farms within 9 or 10 miles from this place is done by gangs. We begin to take them out about the middle or end of March, and there is pretty regular employment for them until the end of November. There are quite 300 women who get their living here by working in gangs. The work which I take by contract is spreading manure, setting potatoes, hoeing turnips, clearing land of weeds, getting in hay and corn, gathering potatoes, pulling turnips, &c. The gangs vary from 20 to 60. About as many boys and girls are employed in them as women. The largest gangs are those used in turnip thinning, which may last for three weeks. I pay women 1*s.* 6*d.* a day and boys and girls 9*d.* I never take any under 9 years of age. I contract to thin turnips for from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* an acre, spreading manure for 2*s.* 6*d.* an acre, and taking up potatoes 1*l.* an acre. Some of the farms where I work are so distant that we cannot get on the ground before 9 a.m., although the farmers send carts to convey the gang part of the distance; they meet us on the road, perhaps, about half way. I have never thought of separating the men and women workers from the children. There is a good deal of bad conduct among them, and I have turned off some of my best workers, men as well as women, for swearing and using foul language before the children. I never heard till now that gangs were put under any regulations by law. I shall in future conform to the Act. The gangs are increasing in numbers here. There are a great many women who can get no other employment. I have known 50 cart loads of young men, women, and children leave Penrith of a morning, but that was before the reaping machine came into use.

56. *James Burrell*, Penrith.—I have been a gangmaster for 11 years. The largest gang I have had is 30, composed chiefly of women, but with some boys and girls, but none, I think, under 10 years of age. The greatest distance I have ever gone with my gang is 10 miles, but the farmers sent their carts within a mile or two of Penrith to meet us. I keep good order in my gang, but the women are most difficult to manage. I dismissed one woman for bad conduct, and she has now a gang of her own. The boys in my gang are from 13 up to 17 and 18 years of age. I could easier manage a gang of 30 boys than five women.

57. *Mr. Thomas Bowstead*, land steward to Sir George Musgrave, Bart., Edenhall.—Women are a good deal employed on the farms belonging to Sir George Musgrave, but not in any degrading work, such as loading dung carts. I think it very objectionable that women should stand upon the hay and corn ricks to tread down the hay and arrange sheaves. Women in the parts of Cumberland with which I am best acquainted have little to complain of, and their labour is equally beneficial to themselves and their employers. As you approach the Scottish border it is different, where women are required to do many things that we should consider objectionable.

58. *Mr. John Barker*, land steward to H. P. Howard, Esq., Greystoke Castle.—Women are less employed in this part of Cumberland than they were within my recollection. Although I have seen women harrowing and filling dung carts such practices have been discontinued. With respect to juvenile labour I do not think it desirable to place any legislative restriction on the age at which boys should be permitted to work. The sooner they are habituated to

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handle their tools the more expert and valuable workmen they become in after life. Children are not overworked in this part of the country; they have plenty of time for education; and what can be more conducive to their health than being much in the air in fine weather? It expands their bodies, gives muscularity, and initiates them into the processes by which they ultimately have to gain their living. Their earnings are also of importance to their parents. In this uncertain climate it requires all the hands that can be made available for securing the crops. If restrictions were imposed they would be injurious both to the employers and employed, and would be very distasteful to both. There is no analogy between the employment of women and children in husbandry and in factories.

I think that a law requiring a certificate of a certain amount of school attendance and proficiency in education would be very much objected to by employers. The rural population is diminishing, and we are in need of all the labour that we can obtain. Education will be carried too far if it deprives us of our agricultural labourers. Every lad who has obtained a little more education than his fellows naturally looks to better his position in life. A reading room was opened at Greystoke a year or two ago for agricultural labourers, but it was not supported.

Our farms are generally small, and Mr. Howard does not approve of converting them into larger holdings; he is desirous of affording as many facilities as possible to farm servants for becoming tenant farmers. Large farms are more scientifically cultivated, but small farmers apply all their energies to the work.

59. *Mr. Joseph Relf*, Kirkoswald.—I rent and farm an estate of 419 acres. The whole of my work is done by my farm servants with the exception of turnip hoeing and harvesting, when I require extra labour, which I obtain from Kirkoswald. Two or three women with their families are always ready to assist, and I hire them separately and pay them myself. There is not one-half the number of women employed in agricultural labour here that there was 20 years ago. I never employ children under 10 years of age. I approve of education. All my farm servants (six) can read and write, though not all, perhaps, very well. There will be a deal of difference in the next generation. The more intelligent labourers are the more valuable they are. If education was general the lads would stay in their parishes, because there would be no particular demand for them in the towns, for all would be on an equality.

Most of the cottages here have small gardens, and many people who have not gardens attached to their houses rent them. Some are let by public auction every year. Gardening is very much delighted in on account of the flower and vegetable shows which are held at Kirkoswald.

60. *Mr. J. H. Thompson*, master of the Penrith boys' National school.—On an average about one-third of this school are absent from April to September, employed in field work; the parents being generally poor the earnings of the children are important. Most of the children remain till 13, and sometimes until 15 and 16. There are a great many children in this town who do not go to any school, and who have not the excuse of work; they are idling about the streets all day. Much has been done in bringing children to this school by moral influence. I make a practice of visiting the parents and trying to induce them to send their children regularly, in many cases with the best effect. We have a rule which is found to work very well. "If any child makes a practice of coming late or be absent without permission for several days, a form of inquiry will be sent requiring a reason from the parents. If this form is not returned the child will not be allowed again to attend the school until the paper has been filled up and returned." In cases of habitual non-attendance expulsion has been resorted to as an example. The employment of a child in field labour or other work is considered a sufficient excuse.

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APPENDIX B.—CORRESPONDENCE AND PAPERS.

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1. LETTER from Dr. TIFFEN of Wigton.

DEAR SIR, Wigton, 9th February 1869.

CHILDREN are usually employed in agricutural labour in this neighbourhood as soon as they are able to do anything, say from 9 or 10 years upwards. Women and girls are regularly employed in farm work, such as gathering stones, thinning turnips, hoeing potatoes, weeding corn, and occasionally in driving horses, harrowing ploughed land, carrying manure and corn. The distance they have to travel to and from their work may average about a mile, except in harvest time when it may be two or three miles. They are supposed to leave home for their work places about 7 a.m., commence work on their arrival, and continue till 12; recommence at 1, and continue work until 6 in summer, and then walk home. The health of the women and children is upon the whole good. Women do frequently suffer directly in consequence of exposure whilst engaged in their outdoor labour, but the children are in general ruddy and healthy. Their

education is poor and not generally in accordance with their opportunities, the children being too often, indeed, usually taken from school as soon as they are able to earn a few pence. Schools are sufficiently numerous, and with good teachers to enable agricultural labourers' children to acquire a fair amount of knowledge, if only they have time to devote to learning or were not removed so early to assist in earning a little money.

I am, &c.
ROBERT TIFFEN, M.D.

To J. Henry Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

P.S. — The cottages occupied by the labouring classes in the country here are generally confined, damp, unhealthy dwellings, and very frequently overcrowded, father and mother, brothers and sisters often occupying the same apartment, with the usual result of such association, a low state of morality. There are, of course, exceptions as regards the dwellings, but not very many.

NOTE.—Illegitimate births in this district average about 16 per 100. R. T.

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2. LETTER from Dr. TIFFEN of Wigton.

DEAR SIR, Wigton, 9th March 1869.

IN compliance with the request contained in your letter, dated 19th February, I beg to give you a few particulars of the *direct* effects of outdoor labour upon women, as observed by me. These are, first, ailments affecting menstruation; and, second, the pregnant state. Of the first I may mention amenorrhœa (stoppage of menstruation) and dysmenorrhœa (painful menstruation) as being produced by exposure to the hardships of weather during autumn and winter whilst menstruating; also menorrhagia (excessive menstruation), and as a consequence of this, in women who have borne children, we have prolapsus uteri (falling of the womb), where the woman is subjected to unusual exertion, as would arise in filling manure carts, loading corn or hay, &c. Each of these affections has its attendant diseases as consequences of the primary disturbance of the system. Of those ailments directly produced upon the pregnant state by outdoor labour, *abortion* in the early stages of the process and *premature labour* at a later period, with their consequent dangers, are the most prominent. I have seen each of these caused by a few hours' exertion in loading corn, or rather, perhaps, by the effort (repeated) made to reach the ground after the loading of a cart has been completed.

The foregoing instances of direct injury to the health of women engaged in outdoor labour are those I had in view at the time I made the remarks in my former communication which you refer to; but it is easy to understand how many other affections may be produced, though more indirectly, perhaps, in women by exposure and exertion of a kind not consonant with the peculiarities of the female constitution, which render women more susceptible of injury from these causes than men.

I am disposed to think the Legislature should prohibit the employment of women in any outdoor occupation requiring great physical exertion, or which is accompanied by long exposure to inclemency of weather. No woman should be allowed to load a cart of corn, hay, or other material which must be packed high above the ground, or to drive horses in harrowing, or in a thrashing machine. The employment of women in tending cattle, cleaning out byres, forking manure, &c. should be discountenanced, though these occupations may not be so injurious to the health of women as they are demoralizing to them, by exposing them to a too familiar association in such occupations with men.

I have no experience of the "gang system." It is not known in this part of the country.

I am, &c.
ROBERT TIFFEN.

To J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.

P.S.—It is perhaps foreign to your inquiry, but it may not be taken amiss if I direct your attention to two things which have impressed themselves upon my mind, viz., the employment of boys of tender years in brick and tile works, which is a common practice, and for long hours; the other matter is in connection with thrashing machines, viz., the practice of not protecting or enclosing the iron cog wheels which drive the thrashing part of a machine, and to which are attached the arms to which horses are harnessed as to an ordinary whirrey. I have seen several severe and preventible accidents arise through the want of such protection. R. T.

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3. LETTER from the Rev. J. S. HODGSON, Rector of Aikton.

Rectory, Aikton,

MY DEAR SIR, 9th April 1869.

As in this county the plough is universally drawn by two horses abreast, ploughboys are not required, and there is no bird-tenting, consequently the only agricultural operations in which children are liable to be employed are picking up stones from the fields, weeding, and thinning turnips, and taking up potatoes. A labourer sometimes undertakes the performance of one of these operations in a particular field, and when he does so he employs all his family. In this way children of 8 or 9 years of age are sometimes at work, but the labour is only slight and not likely to injure the constitution; the operations themselves also last only a short time, and at other seasons of the year children in general attend school. In this way most of them are tolerably educated, and I cannot remember that during my incumbency here, which has extended over a period of more than 10 years, I have married any one who could not sign his or her name.

The school in this parish, in which are no children under 6 years of age, contained yesterday 139 children, and the following table shows their respective ages:—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Between 6 and 7	4	4	8
„ 7 „ 8	10	10	20
„ 8 „ 9	9	10	19
„ 9 „ 10	8	5	13
„ 10 „ 11	18	10	28
„ 11 „ 12	10	7	17
„ 12 „ 13	9	3	12
„ 13 „ 14	10	6	16
Over 14	8	6	14
	78	61	139

I do not therefore think that in this neighbourhood there is any reason to complain that the children are injured by being made to perform hard work at too early an age.

With respect to women the case is different, and in this county they undoubtedly often perform work which is more appropriate to men. There is here no gleaning, but the women work with the men in reaping corn, and you can see them, as farm servants, loading dung carts, driving carts along the highways, harrowing, clearing cowhouses, and preparing food for cattle and pigs, which last operation involves wetting their clothes, and thus tends to the injury of their health. I am told, however, that at present women do not perform this sort of work so frequently as they used to do, and it may be hoped that the progress of education and general improvement will in time lead to women being only employed in that sort of work which properly belongs to them.

It is to be noticed that women who, as farm servants, have been employed in these laborious occupations, dislike indoor work, and in general refuse to engage themselves in gentlemen's families. They say that to work in a house makes their head ache, but no

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doubt the true reason why they prefer the work of a farm servant is that in the latter occupation they have more liberty, and, when their work is done in the evening, are not required to give an account of the way in which they spend their time; and this circumstance is one of the worst evils attending the system. Delicacy of character is destroyed by the work they perform and the things they see in a farmyard, and having their evenings to themselves often leads to the birth of illegitimate children. The prevalence of this vice is also increased by the faulty construction of farmhouses and the insufficient accommodation which they afford. The rooms for the men and women are often imperfectly divided, and sometimes access to the one is through the other. I hope, however, that in this important particular the character of the country is improving, and the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate births gradually diminishing. In comparing the condition of the agricultural population in this district with that of the southern counties many remarkable differences strike the observer. Here there are no very large landed proprietors, and the clergy in general are poor; the consequence is that the people have to depend on themselves or their neighbours when they are sick or in distress, and are more ready to assist each other than southern labourers. I have asked a sick woman in the south if her neighbours did not help her, and have been told, no, because she could not afford to pay them. Such an answer can never be given in the north, for the people are always ready to assist each other in sickness, and never think of receiving pay for offices of kindness.

The labourers in the north are more independent in their character, and more open and self-asserting in their manner than those in the south. The southern labourer is very reserved and afraid of expressing an opinion, while he is deferential and submissive in his manner to those who are in better worldly circumstances than himself. The northern labourer, on the other hand, is independent and even rough in his manner, while he is ready to express his opinions as if he were rich. I have often known strangers express surprise at the northern labourers' freedom and independence of manner; but, on my own part, I am far from saying that his southern brother might not profitably take a leaf from him.

The mixture and interchange of classes which are perpetually taking place in this county have also a great influence on the character of the people. The farms are small, and it is a constant object of ambition with the farm servant to become a farmer. To that end he saves as much as he can, and when he has attained his object lives very poorly and works very hard to maintain his position. And as this labourer rises to the rank of a farmer so the younger sons of the small yeomen often sink into the condition of labourers by misfortune or misconduct, and in their fallen condition are not forgotten or neglected by their relations.

Thus the labourer altogether occupies a higher position here than in the south. He is actuated by ambition, and sometimes lives to attain the position of a farmer, while his ranks are recruited by accessions from the class of yeomen. It is also to be observed that the children of yeomen, farmers, and labourers frequent the same school and associate freely and equally with each other. I do not think this mixture a subject for regret; it raises the low and depresses the high, and perhaps makes the whole mass more accessible to the influences of civilization.

Yours, &c.

J. S. Hodgson.

J. Henry Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

4. Extract from Rev. J. S. Hodgson's Address to the Farmers' Club, Wigton, on the Employment of Women.

"No man can deny that the soil is better cultivated now than it was in the time of our ancestors, and it must be evident to every one that we are much superior to them in all the material appliances of civilization; and I do not think that we need fear a comparison with them in questions of morality. In this last case the advantage is not so decided a one as in the subject of material progress, but still in my opinion the country on the whole has improved in this respect also. When, however, we direct our attention to particular classes we are driven to confess that in some departments we are worse and not better than our ancestors. Among the classes which have not improved, but have, on the whole, grown worse I fear we must include that of farm servants From all the inquiries I can make I am driven to the conclusion that at present farm servants are as a class worse than they were at the beginning of this century. If we acknowledge this to be the case, we may very properly inquire into the cause or causes of the deterioration, and try if we cannot discover a remedy for such a melancholy state of things. The wages of farm servants depend neither upon the price of corn nor the ability of the employer to pay them, but upon supply and demand. When there are many servants wanting to be hired and few people who require their services wages are low; when there are comparatively few servants seeking for places and many people wanting to engage them wages are high. Within the last quarter of a century two causes have been in operation tending to raise the price of labour; one has been increased employment in draining, making railways, and other works tending to material prosperity; the other cause is the immensely increased facility for emigration. So cheap and easy is now the passage across the Atlantic that the unoccupied lands in Canada may be almost said to form part of England, and to be a field in which the enterprising labourer may at all times find profitable employment. These two forces acting jointly upon the condition of the labourer have produced two effects; they have, as every farmer knows, raised wages, and also improved his position; he, then, is of more importance than he was, and in any dispute with his master does not care about being turned off, because he is tolerably certain of meeting with another engagement. Here, then, is a double reason which powerfully tends to diminish the influence of a farmer over his servant. At the last meeting of the society it was stated, by more than one speaker, that a change is now taking place in this country in the terms on which a farmer's family lives with his farm servants. Formerly, both in the north and south of England, the farmer's family and his servants lived on terms of perfect equality; they had their meals together, sat in the same rooms in the evening, and had the same pursuits and amusements. In the south, within the memory of men now living, an entire change has taken place, and the farmer's family neither eats nor sits with his farm servants. Often the sitting-room of the family is contrived with a window looking into the farm yard, so that the master can see what is going on without stirring from his seat. In this country the change has not been completed, but is now going on. The farmer's family does not live on terms of perfect familiarity with his farm servants; they have no longer the same pursuits and amusements, but they still have many things in common. Now I do not pronounce any opinion as to the superiority of perfect equality or perfect separation. Much may be said on both sides, but during the transition from one state to the other a peculiar difficulty exists. While it is going on the farmer has neither the authority which isolation produces, nor the obedience which arises from affection. The captain of a ship of war maintains his authority by living apart from his crew; the leader of free companions gains the obedience of his men by partaking of all their sports and pastimes, and being the first in every danger. In this country the farmer, from circumstances in which he is placed, can completely follow neither one plan nor the other, but often has to contend with the difficulties of both positions without the advantage of either. There is a third circumstance which has, I think, a very detrimental effect

upon the character of the farm servants of this country. We all know that in every country the character of man depends upon that of woman; and Arthur Young (a very high authority) tells us that it is always a mark of low civilization in a country where the agricultural work, which properly belongs to men, is performed by women. If the civilization of this country be measured by this test I fear it must be pronounced to be in a very low condition. We see women driving carts along the roads, harrowing in the fields, loading dung carts in farm yards, and performing other offices which must have a tendency to root out of their mind all purity, delicacy, and modesty. I have heard that women who have been thus employed on a farm cannot bear the confinement of household work, and prefer to the proper occupation of women those employments which in other counties, and even in the neighbouring county of Westmorland, are almost universally confined to men. If this be the case, a more positive condemnation of the system cannot be pronounced. It unfits women for their proper avocations, and disables them from exercising over men those softening influences which tend so much to improve and civilize us all. I cannot but think that every one of us ought to do his utmost to free Cumberland from the reproach of being remarkable among the counties of England for its barbarous treatment of women. You may say that barbarous is a strong word to use for this practice, but you are to remember that savage nations think war and the chase the appropriate employments of men, and throw the entire burden of their usual life upon the women, while the men during their stay at home pass their time in lazy indolence. As they become civilized men relieve women of part of the work of their establishments. But while women perform among us the laborious drudgery of our farms we have no right to claim a high state of civilization. Here I may mention the custom of engaging a married man to live as servant in a farmhouse, while his wife and family are living by themselves at a distance it may be of several miles. I have lived in several parts of England, and have never known this custom to prevail in any other county than this; and it is scarcely necessary to say, that in almost every point of view it is an exceedingly bad one. The man is totally prevented from looking after the education of his children, and is himself deprived of the ameliorating influence of intercourse with his wife and family. The children are brought up without the guidance of a father, and we cannot be surprised if they take to evil courses. The wife is deprived of the protection of her husband, and has often to throw herself upon the kindness of neighbours for those offices which she has the best right to expect from the man who has promised to love and cherish her. The custom, therefore, I think, ought to be abolished, and on every farm cottages provided in which the married men who are employed upon it may live with their families; and these cottages ought to have three bedrooms each, with proper convenience for cooking and cleaning; they ought also to be well lighted, and to be free from those clay floors which the poor women cannot keep free from defilements by washing. If male and female servants are boarded in the house it is essentially necessary that provision be made for the effective separation of the sexes; that this is not done in every farmhouse is a scandal to our common Christianity and civilization. Surely we have no right to place our fellow Christians in circumstances of positive temptation, and that is done if the sleeping apartments of the male servants are not effectively separated from those of the females. The frequency of illegitimate births may make some of us look upon the matter with comparative indifference; but this ought not to be the case. The evil itself is a very great one, and when we regard the enormous crimes of which it is too often the cause, every one of us may well do his best to diminish it."

WIGTON FARMERS' CLUB.

Cumberland.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

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The Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture.

The members of the Wigton Farmers' Club met on Tuesday May 11, 1869, at the King's Arms Hotel, Mr. William Norman, High Close, in the chair. There were present Mr. John Jennings, Thornby Villa; Mr. G. Carr, Silloth Farm; Mr. John Brockbank, Heathfield; Mr. John Grainger, Southerfield; Mr. John Brown, Wiggonby; Dr. Tiffen, Mr. S. Cartmell, Wigton; Mr. John Todd, Mireside; Mr. Hetherington, Brayton; Mr. Joseph Tordiff, Lessonhall; Mr. Fothergill, Uldale Hall; Mr. John Pearson, Langrigg; Mr. C. W. Wright, Drumleaning; Mr. John Carson, Roundhill; Mr. T. Messenger, Wheyrigg; Mr. T. Horne, Baggrow, &c. &c.

The business of the meeting was to hear a paper read on "The Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture," by Mr. McMechan, who, on being introduced by the chairman, read as follows:—

"The question of the employment of women and children in agriculture is one which is just now attracting much attention, both of the legislature and of the farming community, who may be supposed to feel a deep interest in it. All who take an interest in the health, morality, and education of the agricultural labouring class too must view the subject with close interest. It is a subject which has been very generally discussed in Farmers' Clubs and Chambers of Agriculture, and very properly so, both as a question affecting farmers in view of a Bill which will I believe be shortly introduced into Parliament, and as being likely to elicit opinions which might be useful to the Commission now collecting information to prepare the Bill, the Commissioners being always glad to hear the opinions of bodies like Farmers' Clubs on the subject. At a recent meeting this club passed a resolution to discuss the subject, and a gentleman well qualified for the duty was asked to read a paper upon it. To the request of the committee he however declined, so at their solicitation I appear before you in his place. I may here mention that the reading through of the mass of evidence and papers I have had through my hands has shown me that the subject is one of an extensive, and I may add difficult series of questions, of which the mere "Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture" is but a very small part. In discussing this question it is impossible to avoid entering into the questions of the fitness of women for outdoor agricultural labour; of the propriety of employing them in a moral point of view, and also in a social and domestic point of view; of the fitness of children, of either sex, below a certain age, for being employed in outdoor agricultural work, in a sanitary point of view, but more particularly as regards their education, and this latter point is one to which the Commission I alluded to are directing great attention. I had the honour of being desired to give evidence before Mr. J. Henry Tremenheere, one of the Assistant Commissioners, and I may here take the opportunity of expressing my obligations to him for the information he gave me in preparing this paper, and for the papers he placed at my disposal.

"It would be impossible to treat of the question as regards the whole of the country, and it would be also undesirable; what we have to do at this club is to discuss it as it affects our own district and the county of Cumberland. I may however dismiss the gang question, as it is not a matter which concerns us in this district. I can hear of no cases of it being regularly carried out. In prosecuting their inquiries regarding the employment of women and children in gangs, the Commissioners found that a much larger number of children, young persons, and women are employed in what are known as "private gangs," and that there was as much need of legislation for private as for public gangs. It therefore became obvious that if legislation should be shown to be required for private gangs it would be impossible to leave out of view the women and children employed throughout the king-

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dom in agricultural labour. A Commission was accordingly appointed in May 1867, to "inquire into and report on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent and with what modifications the principles of the Factory Acts can be adopted for the regulation of such employment, and especially with a view to the better education of such children." The principles of the Acts which are applicable to this inquiry are the protection of the young and of females from excessive labour, and the requirement of a certain amount of school attendance for children between the ages of 8 and 13, earning wages; no one under 8 years of age being allowed to be employed.

"The Employment of Women.

"Objections have been raised by many to the employment of women in agricultural labour. It is true that many objectionable circumstances exist with regard to the employment of women in outdoor agricultural labour in many parts of the country, but on the whole in Cumberland, so far as I can ascertain, there is not much to complain of. 'On the whole,' I say, because in all cases of large employment of labour, whether male or female, indoor or outdoor, there will always occur instances of abuses. In this question I am strongly of opinion that any objections which can be urged against the employment of women and children in agriculture are not stronger than can be urged against any employment which takes women out of their houses for the day, except it be as regards their being employed indiscriminately amongst men. As regards their fitness for the work, all the inquiries I have made leads me to think that the women, in this part of Cumberland at least, are very rarely set to tasks which are improper for them. They are employed in spreading manure, in the potato and turnip fields, in picking stones, and at hay and reaping seasons. Their occupation is a healthy one, and will compare very favourably with that of the women in the factories, either as regards morality or healthiness. I speak now of the married and adult women; all the evidence I have come across tends to show that it is very undesirable for young women of less than 16 to 18 years of age to be employed, unless it be in the hay or corn field, when they are generally in company with other women. There can be no doubt but that they would be better at home attending to their domestic duties where married, but I do not think there are very many of the class who leave young children in the house, and it would at any rate be of little use staying at home, as one of them remarked, if they had nothing to feed their families with. The greater number of them are widows and middle-aged single women, to whom the wages are a livelihood, and who would find it next to impossible to find other employment. They make about 1*s.* 2*d.* per day, and have pretty regular employment in general. Their labour, too, is of importance to farmers, and I scarcely see how cultivation could be carried on without them. I find it is the case that women will not take unsuitable work, and will not work in wet weather. I do not think it is much the custom for women to be engaged in attending to horses, boys of 14 to 16 years of age being employed to look after them. As a class they are hardy, and I am sure any medical gentleman will bear testimony to their healthiness. They live very poorly and frugally, and I think as a class they are careful and steady in their habits. Women labourers have on the whole easier labour than female servants on those farms where they have to work out, as frequently the girls have to do outdoor work in the season during the day, and to perform their household work in the evenings and mornings after they have finished, or before they commence their outdoor labour. Gradually, however, there is a growing indisposition on the part of women servants to do this, and where women can be engaged by day, farmers seem to prefer engaging them. In many cases where there is cottage accommodation, farmers prefer to have their men servants out of the house, and the wife is generally provided with outdoor work in the season if she prefers it. This leads me to one very important matter which arises out of my subject, that is, the great deficiency there is in many places of proper cottage accommodation. Perhaps there are those present who can set me right if I am wrong, but it seems to me, from all I can learn, that this labourers' cottage question is a most vital part of the subject we are now discussing. I doubt that Cumberland is no exception to many other counties as regards cottage accommodation for the agricultural class, and I believe that a great reform is needed. In far too many instances the cottages are what are called 'clay daubies,' with clay walls, clay floors, and straw roofs. With no provision for ventilation, and with very little for decency. Not such places in fact as many here present would keep their favourite stock, horses or dogs, in. I have seen much of the cottage accommodation in this district at least, having been one of the judges to make the awards for Mr. Moore's prizes for some years. These prizes, I may mention, were given by Mr. George Moore, of Whitehall, every year in connexion with the Agricultural Society, in order to encourage a better state of things both internally and externally as regards the dwellings of the labouring classes. These prizes were I think conducive to the end the philanthropic giver had in view, but I fear the Agricultural Society showed some little apathy regarding them. Prizes were offered for the best-kept cottage, and for the best-kept cottager's garden. Mr. Moore paid every expense, judges, travelling expenses, &c., connected with them. Some disappointment was felt that the entries were so small, but I think this was a good deal on account of the feeling many of the cottagers had that their inconvenient cottages were of no use to enter for prizes. I think there is a growing disposition on the part of landlords to provide a better class of cottages on their farms, and I know of several instances where dwellings with proper accommodation have been provided with best results, both to the tenant and the landlord. A neat healthy cottage must tend to encourage a feeling of self-respect in the labourer, who will be all the better servant because himself and wife must value their advantages. Mr. Tremenheere told me that wherever inducements were held out to cottagers to pay more attention to their dwellings and gardens, by means of better buildings being provided, or prizes being offered for keeping them, it was attended with the best results. The style of living has very much changed within the last 50 or 60 years. The small holders have by slow degrees been obliged to leave their buildings; and labourers, who took their places in some respects, have changed their style of living without the proper means and appliances to do so. In the time of Queen Elizabeth an Act was passed which required that every cottage should have allotted to it four acres of land, and this Act was not repealed until the year 1775. From that time the condition of the agricultural labouring class has occupied much attention. The prices of the necessaries of life, the loss of privileges through the enclosure of commons, and to the loss of small portions of land which contributed to the labourer's resources have all told against him, and since the latter half of the eighteenth century it may be said that the condition of the labourer has been worse, even while wages have been advanced. I would not take a 'sentimental' view of the question, but in the face of pauperism increasing at the rate of 50 per cent., I think it behoves agriculturists, who pay the largest proportion of the rates, to look into the cause and try to remedy it.

"The Employment and Education of Children.

"I think I am not wrong in saying that in this district at any rate we have none or very few indeed of the abuses which the Commissioners have found to exist in many other places. I do not think it is the case here that children are put to tasks which are beyond their strength. The largest employer of this kind of labour tells me he would not allow a boy of

less than 14 years of age to work on his farm, and any employment of children there is to any extent will be in the harvest time, when it is a sort of holiday, and I am inclined to think a benefit to the children so employed. Now, as to schools accessible to the children, to the efficiency of the schools, and to the poverty of the parents. I will speak of the country schools first, as bearing most on the subject, and in this I do not fear contradiction when I say that we are very well supplied with schools, and think we may compare most favourably with almost any part of the two northern counties. In speaking of this part of my subject I have again to mention the exertions of Mr. George Moore, and at the risk of appearing somewhat complimentary to him, I must say that much of this state of things is owing to him. In Wigton and the neighbourhood are very good and well attended schools, but of the schools which are best known as 'Mr. Moore's group,' and those which he has largely benefited are those which must nearly concern our subject of to-day, it is of these I shall speak. It is now, I believe about 13 years since Mr. Moore conceived the idea of trying to improve the state of education of his native district, and commenced the system of competitive examinations which is now so well known. This system continued to be practised under Mr. Moore's auspices until the year 1867, when he thought it ought to be self-supporting, which in great part it now is. The schools which competed were 15 in number, which were attended by an average of 62 scholars, the largest number (Wigton) being 134, and the smallest Great Orton, 18. The total number of scholars attending these schools on the average was 934, and no pupil was allowed to compete who had not attended school 100 days, or 200 times. Of the 934 no fewer than 249 competed, or more than one quarter of the whole number. Prizes were offered for children of various ages, from 13 to 16, from 11 to 13, and under 11, so that the effect was to induce parents to send their children to school regularly, and also to send them to shool a longer time than they used to do; these are both very important points; they are indeed the very points to which the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners are told in their instructions to direct their attention. Education in a town like Wigton would no doubt have been carefully attended to under any circumstances, but it is at least due to Mr. Moore to say that to his exertions it is in great part owing that education in the country districts in this neighbourhood is in so advanced a state. He has contributed towards the building or improvement of many of the schools, and in all of them his competitive scheme has tended to encourage the spirit of emulation which has made a very great change in the education of this district at any rate. A good school within a reasonable distance of farmers and labourers is one of the greatest advantages parents can have, and in Cumberland in general, and in this neighbourhood in particular, opportunities are not wanting through which what are termed 'the three R's' may be learned. Education has become a necessity among all classes. Every one now-a-days reads the newspaper, and as the boys and girls of the present day will be the men and women of the future it behoves everyone to see that their education is attended to. The 'Diocesan Prize Scheme' is taking the place of Mr. Moore's competitive examinations, but that the results are so beneficial cannot as yet be known.

"In concluding my paper I feel almost as if my conclusion was a 'conclusion in which nothing was concluded,' but I would respectfully submit to the club whether we might not express an opinion that so far as any abuses of the employment of women and children in this district are concerned no legislation is needed, but a better system of cottage accommodation is required for the labourer. That the education of the district is better than the average, but that some encouragement, stimulant in fact, is required both by parents and teachers. The Bill I spoke of contemplates I know the compulsory attendance at school so many days in the year of children of a certain age, but as I think this attendance is pretty generally kept up, such a Bill could not affect us. Any Bill which should much restrict or entirely prohibit the employment of women on the farm would be felt as a hardship. In leaving the subject in your hands, I can only say that it is one of much importance, at least as much as most of those we have considered. It is of importance to the community at large to have a healthy, moral, and contented set of labourers, and it is of importance to the farmer and the country that the land should be tilled by that labour which pays best. It always pays to pay well, and always pays to make it worth the while of a servant to remain with an employer. This in the case of an agricultural labourer will be best arrived at by providing him with a comfortable dwelling near to his work, and encouraging a good system of education for his children."

Mr. Grainger, of Southerfield, deprecated legislative interference with regard to the employment of women and children in agriculture. In Cumberland he did not think they could be charged with any impropriety in that respect. There was no employment more healthy, morally and physically, than light out-door work. As to children they might be put to work earlier than 14 years of age. He would advocate education if they could induce it, but not compulsory education. He admitted they were far back in regard to cottages, although not lower than other counties, but the cottages were in some degree improving. Why should not a woman join her wages to her husband's?

Dr. Tiffen objected to the employment of women in agriculture on account of the mixing of women with men in that labour, which put an end to modesty and delicacy of feeling. (Hear, hear.) He believed there was no district in the kingdom, including the manufacturing districts, where illegitimacy existed to the same or a greater extent than in that district. Every sixth child born in the Wigton district was illegitimate, and how many were born within the legitimate term he would not like to say. The mixing of men and women in outdoor labour was one cause of that, and the improper arrangement of the sleeping apartments in farmhouses was another. He believed a great improvement might be made in the moral and physical condition of the people by a more extended use of cottages. (Hear, hear.) He saw no objection in the way women were employed in that locality, but mentioned as an unseemly thing that he had seen a girl dragging a roller. As to education, if parents would not educate their children or could not pay for their education, the locality or district ought to contribute to their education. He thought the Factories Act might be very well applied to the employment of children in agriculture, so far as regards their education.

Mr. Fothergill differed from Dr. Tiffen as to the mixing of women with men in outdoor employment demoralising them. It struck him from what he had seen that indoor servants were more immoral. Dressmakers, who worked together by themselves, were the most immoral of women. He thought schools should be schools of industry. He agreed with Dr. Tiffen as to the difficulty of getting children to school, and said it was no charity paying for their education when a man was earning 3*s.* a day. The Act that was going to be passed certainly did not apply to the northern counties.

Mr. McMechan moved that that club was of opinion that so far as this county was concerned no legislative interference was required as to the employment of women and children in agriculture, but that in the case of children they thought the employment should be restricted to those above 12 or 13 years.

Dr. Tiffen did not agree with the resolution altogether. Women were employed in a way they would not think very hard, but which was objectionable as regarded their physical health. He referred more especially to the employment of women

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in the loading of corn and hay. He disagreed with Mr. Fothergill as to the immorality of the sempstresses.

Mr. Carr thought legislation in not allowing children to work was not required. He would be glad if some legislation could be had whereby they could be kept at their work. Perhaps legislation as regards education might be beneficial, but to prevent children from working and helping their parents and being useful to farmers would be a step in the wrong direction.

Mr. Brockbank, referring to Dr. Tiffen's remark about the girl drawing a roller, said he heard Mr. Messenger say he had seen a woman yoked in a plough.

Mr. Messenger: It is a fact, in Bedfordshire—a man and a woman. (Laughter.)

Mr. Horne said it was scarcely fair to bring forward those exceptionable cases. He thought there was no necessity for legislative interference in this county. (Hear, hear.) If they could make young children from 12 to 14 years of age useful without hurting them bodily it would be wrong to pass a law to hinder them from working. As far as education was concerned he saw no need for legislation in that part of the country.

After a few observations from Mr. Grainger in support of giving young children light outdoor labour and as to the salutary effect of female labour in preventing women from "clashing" with their neighbours, Mr. McMechan proposed his resolution in an amended form :—

"That so far as this county is concerned this Club is of opinion that no legislative interference is required as to the employment of women and children in agriculture, and as to their education."

Mr. Horne seconded the resolution.

The Chairman, referring to Dr. Tiffen's remarks, denied that illegitimacy was the test of immorality. One would almost imagine from what Dr. Tiffen had said that immorality was greater in the country than in towns. He thought that under 12 years of age children were of very little use except at certain seasons. The Commissioners would fix some age, probably the same as in the Factory Act, and they would be obliged to stick to it, but it did not affect this county, and therefore he had great pleasure in supporting the motion.

The resolution was then agreed to unanimously.

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6. Extract from a Lecture on Compulsory Education, by Thomas Ainsworth, Esq., read in the lecture room, Cleator Mills, Cumberland, on Wednesday, 14th February 1868.

"I have engaged to say something to-night on the subject of education, and not only of education, but of compulsory education. Now this word "compulsory" is a word disagreeable to every one, and to none more than to a free-born Briton, whether he be an Englishman, an Irishman, or a Scotchman. None of us like to be compelled to do anything ; but all of us are compelled, daily and hourly, to do something which, if we did not do, we must cease to live, or move, or have our being. If any man says "I won't eat," we all know he must very soon die. If he says "I won't "clothe myself," he will soon perish from cold. If a man says "I will have the loaf of bread which belongs "to my neighbour," the law says "You shall not ;" or if you do take it by force, the law, by force, will take you, and compel you either to restore the loaf of bread or put you under punishment for your transgression. If a man says "I won't support my children," the law says "You shall do so or go to prison." Now, you see, we are all compelled, daily and hourly, to do something for ourselves which either our physical or social constitution says is for the benefit of ourselves or society.

The clothing and feeding of his children is compulsory on every father; and I really doubt whether clothing and feeding the body or clothing and feeding the mind is most worthy of attention. Both are necessary and both are desirable ; and, since both are necessary and both are desirable, a parent should be compelled to provide both for his child. If the parent provides clothes and food for his child's body, the law does not interfere and clothe and feed the child ; and if the parent educates his child, neither should the law, even if a Compulsory Act were passed, interfere with him and instruct his child for him. But very ignorant and selfish parents will not educate their children ; sometimes, being ignorant themselves, they don't wish their children to know more than they do ; or, if lazy or selfish, they force the child to help to keep the family, or they appropriate what should be the school fee to buy, perhaps, an extra glass of grog in the week. In either of these cases the children grow up, in general, a trouble and annoyance to the very parents themselves, and also to their neighbours, and, as our calendars of criminals show, an expense to the community. If each man could keep his ignorant and dirty children entirely to himself, perhaps he might be allowed to take his own way : but if his children are to walk and talk with other people's children, then I say he is bound to make them something like other people's children; or, if he won't do so, then society, as I think, should step in and say, "You shall do so, or you "and your children must walk off," just as we said to the man who would take our loaf of bread without our consent. You will then clearly understand what I mean to express by compulsory education : it is, that, if a father will not do his duty in an educational point of view to his child, the law shall step in and make and compel him to do it, or do it for him and make him pay for it. Is it not better for a community to live on good and equal terms with one another ? If so, it is desirable that we should all be made to approach an equality, so as to live on good terms with each other ; and it is just when this higher social life commences that *good* education becomes of more consequence than *good* dress, which caused me to say, a short time ago, that I doubted whether clothing the body or clothing the mind was most worthy of attention. But this I do know, that if you take a youth at 18 with a well-clothed mind, he will soon be able to clothe his body by the powers of his mind ; and if you take an uninstructed youth of 18, clothed in purple and fine linen, he cannot clothe his mind with all his finery. Money cannot buy knowledge in a moment as money can buy clothes. Intelligence, the capital of the first boy, has been increased by the use of it to clothe himself ; mere dress, or money, the capital of the second boy, when spent is gone for ever.

I probably should not have been so great an advocate of compulsory education had I not been compelled myself to be a compulsory educator; but you all know that, from flax mills being under the Factory Act, I could not give employment to young children, from 8 to 13 years of age, unless those children were attending some school and receiving regular instruction. My doctrine is, that if a thing is worth doing at all it is worth doing well; and I therefore endeavoured to get a good teacher, who would be perfectly honest, teach well, and do his duty faithfully ; and I gave the best pledge of my good faith by putting a master to teach others whom I thought good enough to teach my own children. Well, what has been the result of this compulsory education ? The children, first of all, educate themselves, or, I should rather say, pay for their own education, and after doing so take home something to their parents, varying from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 8*d.* weekly. These children have been kept from much mischief, have acquired habits of industry and of good manners, and have learnt as much in their young days as will enable them to keep any books and accounts which they may be asked to keep should they obtain any situation as overlooker or manager in my works, or in any office or bank in the kingdom. Well, but the good did not end here nor with ourselves. Having a certain number of scholars that we could depend upon for regular attendance, it enabled us to show to the country round about what could be done by an industrious child if it attended school re-

gularly ; and as soon as the statesmen or farmers in this neighbourhood saw what these little children could do, they began to think it would never do for their children to be behind; and their boys and girls—yes, little boys and girls—would walk three or four miles to this school, would pay an amount of fee that never was heard of in this country before, and not for the sake of obtaining prizes—(for we give none)—nor an exhibition at some other school, but for the sake of knowledge itself.

I was once sitting at dinner next a Cambridge professor, and on this being told, he said to me, "How "did you bring about so desirable a state of things ?" "Merely," said I, "by being honest and truthful— "giving a good education, and *making people pay for "it*, and *calling things* by their *right names*. I know "that people never value anything they get for nothing, "and when they pay they will take care they get "something for their money. No father would let his "child walk four miles to school and four miles back— "eight miles—and pay 6*d*., 8*d*., or 10*d*. a week, as "the case may be, without getting something for his "money." * * * * *

These half-time children are taught that correctness, truthfulness, exactness, must be at the root of everything. This brings about a correctness in work and an order in discipline which return to them again in the shape of wages. Just look at the position we have been in, in this parish, during the last year. In Belgium, France, Ireland, Scotland, England, you all know the various flax mills have either been closed or working short time, while here we have been able to employ such extra hands as we could get in the neighbourhood, provided they could do the work as correctly, cleanly, faithfully, as our own workers. How happens this? I have no particular protection. As I told a friend at our meeting last winter, when I read my paper on co-operation, union, and combination, I have been repeatedly asked to join an association for fixing the prices of thread, and keeping up those prices. I told him then that I declined joining this union, and that I relied upon myself, not upon others. Well, three months ago I was asked by this same association, which was to have kept up prices, to *reduce prices*. My reply was, "I cannot do that ; I have "more to do than I can do, and why should I reduce "prices ?" If I reduce prices I must reduce wages, or sacrifice my profit ; I don't wish to have less profit, and I am sure you don't wish to have less wages. Well, now, talk this matter over among yourselves, and you will see that the true way to get good prices is to make good work. You cannot make good work with careless, ignorant, dishonest workmen. No ; you must have intelligence, truthfulness, discipline. Then you may obtain good and faithful work—no "scamp- "ing," as the navvy says ; and you will then be sure to obtain the highest prices going, and be most likely to have constant work, for, when bad trade comes, it is the bad work, the slop work, and the bad workmen who are the first to suffer.

About five years ago I was in Hamburg, and a friend, wishing to show me some civility, obtained permission for me to visit a celebrated coach works in that city. They made railway carriages for every continental railway, and had a great reputation. The principal showed me over the works himself, and when he came to the end he said, "Well, what do you "think of our work?" I replied, "You deserve your "reputation, but I suppose you use Swedish iron ?" "Oh, no," he replied, "it is English iron from Low "Moor, in Yorkshire." "Oh, then you use Liege "coal ?" "No," said he, "it is Newcastle coal." "Well," I said, "all your tools are from Leeds makers, "for I noticed their names upon them." "Yes," said he. "Then," said I, "where is the secret ?" "It is "our workmen," said he. "The English workman is "not what he was. We have not a man in our em- "ployment who will pass a bad piece of work ; and if "a flaw in the iron should show itself as the work "advances, he does not hide it, but shows it, and we "take care that he never suffers in his wages for his "honest conduct." Now, you clearly see in this what intelligence and good, sound, honest work can effect. An honest man needs no protection. His honesty protects him ; and if he relies on anything else he becomes a pauper in spirit, if not in purse.

Before I close I must say one word on a question which I know will be raised on this subject, and that is the religious teaching in schools. My own opinion is, that the introduction of this question has delayed the education of the country for the last thirty years. You all know there are two distinct and separate points in this word "religion." It embraces your duty towards God and your duty towards man. Now, the first of these is called theology, which to my mind is a question of age, experience, reflection, rather than of erudition ; and if so, children cannot comprehend it, and had better therefore not be troubled with a subject they cannot comprehend. The second—the duty to yourself and towards your fellow man—is the same in the English church, the Catholic church, the Methodist church, and all churches. Now, no school can be conducted satisfactorily to master, parents, or children, unless this latter branch be the foundation ; but then what does it comprise ? Nothing but inculcating those notions of truth, justice, kindness, &c. which the laws of our common country enforce. Therefore you must see that a master or mistress of a school is bound, in self-defence, to make these the very base of instruction. No one objects to this. But that does not reach the object some of these people have in view. The school is to be made to do the particular church's work. Now, this is not honest instruction, and it is the perversion of language to call such a place a *school*. This trick was tried upon us. Our master being a Scotchman, the Presbyterian minister from another parish rudely entered the school without permission, and came up to the master and said, "You have an excellent opportunity here of "teaching Scotch Presbyterianism." The reply was prompt and decisive : "This is a British school. I am "here to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, and "there is the door." On the Saturday and Sunday let each clergyman take the children belonging to his own communion and indoctrinate them as he pleases ; but let the school be common ground — English ground—on which we can all meet on equal terms, and on this ground, and this ground only, no clergyman as such is permitted to enter our school-room. And this is not from any dislike of the subject of theology, for individually it is a subject to which I am very partial ; but then I feel I have no right to press my opinions upon another person, and further, think it a subject too sacred and too great to be tossed about in a child's school-room. This drawback to a general system of education would be done away with if the Prime Minister of this country would, from his place in Parliament, at once declare that no money should be granted for sectarian schools, and that he threw on the clergy of the various churches the responsibility of thwarting this solution of the religious question.

Now all these things which I have stated have not been done in a corner or in secret. They are open to the world ; and you know whether I have stated one single thing which is not a fact. When then the cry of education—compulsory education—got up through the country, I looked round with the hope that some startling fact would be shown us—some finely-devised scheme laid down. But no, not so. These Members of Parliament seem afraid of offending their constituents, and therefore they handle the question gingerly. They will not let the thing rest altogether, but they will go on saying some little thing about it, but are not honest enough and bold enough to say all they think. Last year they passed a Reform Bill, giving votes to a large number of uneducated people. Then they became frightened, and now say all must be educated, and we must have compulsory education. Well, so say I, but be honest about it—say out at once what you mean. But the English people don't like to be compelled. Give it up then. Oh, no, some-

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thing must be done. Now I know my countrymen as well as any man, and I beg to tell the legislators this: treat them honestly and justly and they will go with you heartily; but try to play double with them and they will not credit you. Many years ago I was asked to become a candidate for the representation of Leeds, the education question then being the great matter under consideration. I declined the proposal, for I really had no pretensions to such an honour, but also because their views and mine on the subject were quite at variance—I holding to the system we have here, while they were for the voluntary scheme, small fees, and persuasion. I believe they have lived to see their plan will not answer. Men like to be treated as men and not as half-paupers. If a man is not as rich as his neighbour it does not follow that he is therefore mean. A poor man, if he is a man, likes to pay his way as well as a rich man, and sometimes even more freely. Then why tempt him to lose his position? Treat him fairly and honestly. Don't try to make money out of him. Don't bribe him to send his children to your school that you may convert them to your church. Give him a good teacher, and let him pay for his child's education as he would pay for his child's clothes or his food. I know that poor men are as sensitive on this point, and more so, than some who call themselves gentlemen. I wish there was more honesty and less charity in the world. But I will show you what the poor man has done. I remember some years ago travelling through Wales, and I came to Tan-y-Bwlch, where a Mrs. Oakley resided, who had done a great deal in the way of building schools, paying the teacher, and only charging a small school fee. I don't know that the teacher was a particularly bad one, but the Welsh have minds of their own, and they did not like this half-charity work, for there was the religious question in it. So the workmen in the slate quarries at Festiniog began to subscribe their money, built a school of their own, engaged a teacher, sent their children to him, and when I was there this independent and self-supporting school was full, and the half-charity school of Mrs. Oakley was comparatively empty. Men, real men, don't like this sort of half-charity thing; and I think it approaches to an insult to offer it, and, if accepted, the man is degraded, not raised in his own esteem. The other day a Member of Parliament said to me, "Oh, I suppose "you stop the school fee out of the worker's wages;" to which I replied, "I should not think of degrading "my people in that way. If the parent sends the "child to school he should then send the school pence "with the child, and not let the poor child appear to "its schoolfellows to be so inferior a person that it "cannot take its school pence as well as the others. "I know we have power, under the Factory Act, to "stop this fee out of the child's wages, but then why "resort to this compulsory mode when the parent will "do what is right if you will let him? I think such "conduct is low, vulgar, and degrading, and is just "one of those things which throw an establishment "into confusion and degrade all the men in it. I "don't wonder that there are quarrels and strikes be-"tween masters and men." Could a ruder and more vulgar thing be done than my stopping the school wage of a child out of the earnings of that child, just as if I doubted the child's or the father's honesty? If I did so I should expect to have a sulky, suspicious person in my employment. Do justly and you will receive justice; do unjustly or harshly and you will receive injustice and a harsh judgment in return.

From what has yet appeared it would seem that the tendency of feeling on this subject is in favour of taxing the community for the benefit of a few—of making the frugal, the honest, and industrious pay for the spending, the dishonest, or the idle; in fact, of pauperising those who are willing to be made paupers. Now I protest against this degradation of my country. There needs no great legislation on the subject. We have the machinery ready to our hand, and, to my mind, far better machinery than any I have as yet seen offered. If we are all honest on this subject, and merely want rudimentary instruction for the people, and are at the same time wishful to remove all difficulties, why not pass a law to this effect:—

1. No person shall receive any benefit, pecuniary or otherwise, from a child's labour under 13 years of age, unless such child is being educated as under the Factory Act.

2. When parents or guardians plead poverty then the school fees of such child shall be paid by the Board of Guardians as parochial relief.

3. The inspectors of the workhouse schools shall visit every school where these children are instructed, and, if the school is up to the required mark, allow the capitation grant.

4. If not, then withhold the grant for the first year; and if in the second year the teaching is still below the mark, then remove the children.

5. In this last extremity let Government assist in building a school, and let the ratepayers appoint a teacher, Government retaining the power to dismiss such teacher if not competent as shown in 4.

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, the only paper which to my mind has spoken out on this subject, has three objections to this scheme, to which I think I have most satisfactory replies:—

1st. There may be no suitable school within a proper distance.

Now, if a law were passed that no parent should receive any benefit from the labour of his child, as under the Factory Act, from 8 to 13 years of age, the child must attend some school for half the day if it is to labour at all. There would then be an increased number of children to educate, and the common rule of demand and supply would come into operation. There would be a demand for schoolmasters, and the masters would come when wanted. The quality might not at first be very good; but again, if the office of master were remunerative, which it ought to be, competition would soon put that matter right. In Scotland—and I wish our legislators would not forget that there is such a portion of Great Britain when they are legislating on this subject—it is no unusual thing for a young man to open, on his own account, what they there call a side school, in opposition to a bad teacher in a parish school; and, as you are aware, in each parish in Scotland there is an endowed school where the teacher has a schoolroom, a house and garden, and a small stipend; and if he be a bad teacher the children will pass his door, go to the side school, and pay a higher school fee—the side school teacher looking for his reward as sure to come, if he is a good teacher, in his appointment to some parish school. Within the last month I have received the following letters from a side school teacher, applying for a situation in my establishment:—

"I understand from Mr. McGregor that I am to write to you respecting the situation. I am in my 20th year, and have been always at school. I have had no experience in any office, or anything of that description except bookkeeping at school. I have an engagement just now at ——, and have to teach Latin, algebra, geometry, &c. My engagement expires at Whitsunday first, but I could get away before that time if necessary. It is only a side school kept up by a few farmers during the winter season. I can get a character, &c."

Not wishing to bring a youth so far south without being certain his circumstances would be improved, I wrote to ask what his school was doing for him. This is his reply:—

"I should prefer giving up the school, as, if it do succeed, it will only be carried on during the winter months, like other side schools hereabouts. As to my salary it would amount, say, from 1*l.* 15*s.* to 2*l.* per month."

The second objection is, that the child's wages make up a certain portion of the family income.

Now, no child between the ages of 8 and 13 can earn much wages by physical strength. If in an agricultural district, its labour will be most valuable in the summer and autumn months. Now, how do they

manage this in Scotland? In the summer months, in the Highlands, the schools are closed, and the masters and mistresses often take household or other duties, while the children work in the fields; but in the winter they meet again and go on with their education. In manufacturing districts the children can work half-time in some manufactory each day, and go to school the other half-day; and our schoolmaster tells me that he thinks the half-timers progress nearly as rapidly as the full-timers, for that he finds them fresher at their work, more vigorous, and frequently sharper than those who have no occupation. In this case the children would contribute something to the housekeeping and pay their own school wage. And here I must say a word or two—for what I have to say applies as much to Scotland as it does to England, if not more. It is not in country parishes that children are worse educated for want of schools, where labour is difficult to procure as well as schooling, but it is in *towns* where there are good workshops and plenty of schools. Let any Scotchman now present compare Glasgow with any country parish he knows in Scotland. He will admit it is the high price given for children's labour in towns which interferes with their schooling. It is the cupidity of parents—the money-grubbing of the parent who sends his child to work rather than educate him. Work is easy to be had, and money is easily spent in a town. The other day, in Manchester, I went into a telegraphic office to send a message. The child who was to transmit the message must, I think, have been lifted on to his stool. When I said to the clerk, "What is the age of that "boy?" "Oh," he replied, "he is very clever; he "can send the message quite well." "That," I said, "is not the reason for asking his age. I don't doubt "his cleverness." For the poor child was all intelligence and no body—all mind and no matter. The clerk then said, "He is about 9 years old." "The "shame is," I said, "that his father will allow him to "work. That boy should not leave school for five "years to come. Let the poor child play. This sale "of human flesh and blood by a parent at such early "years should be stopped by Act of Parliament."

The third objection is, that by taking care of the house the child enables the mother to earn wages.

You have heard the old proverb, "Better marry a "wife that saves a fortune than one who brings one." So in the poor man's house. A thrifty, managing wife is a fortune; and many families within my experience do I know where the wife's home-management nearly doubles the man's income. We discourage the employment of married women for that reason. A wife and mother's duty is at home; and she must be a poor wife, indeed, whose place can be supplied by a child of from 8 to 13 years of age.

I have now told you all I have to tell on this subject; but I do sincerely wish there may be found some wise legislator who will meet this question fairly, honestly, faithfully; that he will insist it shall be considered on its own merits, not on that of churches or creeds, with which it really has nothing to do; that he will protect the honest tradesman and the Christian father from being taxed to pay for the education of the idle, the profligate, or the selfish; and, lastly, that he will prevent pauperism eating into the very vitals of our common country."

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7. Letter from Horace Wyndham, Esq., Cockermouth.

Dear Sir, Cockermouth, 7th Feb. 1869.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, which I received on my return from town.

As you remark the first questions upon the list have very little application to the neighbourhood of Cockermouth, where but a small proportion of the children, young persons, and women are employed in agriculture. When so employed I believe they are fairly paid, and well treated and probably find it the most healthful occupation they can engage in. In the course of a few days I shall fill up the paper you have sent me and forward it to the address on the back. The great evils from which the agricultural labouring classes, and the lower classes generally, suffer from are improperly constructed and ventilated dwellings, overcrowding, and want of education. The adoption of the Local Government Act in the township has done much to improve the condition of their dwellings, but further powers are required to buy up at a fair price the *sites and materials* of over-crowded and ill-constructed dwellings in order to build new ones upon a better system, and a better definition of the term "lodging-house," so as to bring all houses containing more than the members of one family under the provisions of the Lodging Houses' Act. The greatest evil of all, however, want of education, can only I believe be met by a system of compulsory education. My experience you will see is chiefly directed to the condition of the labouring classes in the town. There are, however, a few cottages occupied by agricultural labourers outside the township and in the small villages around us. As a rule they are in a very bad condition, with a few bright exceptions. The education of the children is better attended to by the labouring classes dwelling in the country districts than in the town.

Any further information you may require I shall be glad to give.

I am, &c.
Horace B. Wyndham.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.

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8. Letter from Matthew Brown, Esq., Land Steward to Sir Frederick Graham, Bart.

Dear Sir, Scarbank, 5th April 1869.

In reply to yours of the 3rd inst. I may state that the effect of the enlargement of farms upon this estate has been to get rid of an excessive agricultural population occupying small parcels of land with very little capital, the produce of which was barely sufficient to keep and rear their families, the rents (small as they were) being badly paid, arrears having accumulated to upwards of 6,000*l.* The consolidation of farms has led to the introduction of a more intelligent class of tenantry with largely increased means, who are able and willing to do full justice to the land they occupy. I must observe, however, that many of the present tenants or their fathers were selected as the best and most improving of the original occupiers, and have had small farms added to them from time to time, as their means and other circumstances would permit. The effect of this aggregation has been to increase the rental of the estate upwards of 30 per cent., but this has been attended by a very large outlay on buildings, draining, and other improvements on the part of the landlord.

After 27 years' experience I have come to the conclusion that where you can command eligible tenants possessed of the requisite capital and skill, that good land is best and most economically managed in large farms of from 500*l.* to 1,000*l.* a year. On inferior soils, where labour and industry constitute a great portion of the capital employed, small farms of from 80 to 100 acres are admissible, and sometimes found to be advantageous and desirable, and I generally find such farms to be carefully and fairly managed; they are also the means of rearing an industrious body of tenantry who often become occupiers of larger and better farms. This system of enlargement has been steadily pursued up to the present time; the number of tenants is now rduced to 115, and hardly any of them occupy less than 80 acres, or 50*l.* a year. In an economical point of view the system has been attended with most beneficial results. There is no waste of labour or horse power and no excess of occupying population, whilst the tenants have been raised from poverty to comparative comfort and prosperity, and the productive powers of the soil has been greatly increased by improved cultivation.

Cumberland.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

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I consider that a man and his family occupying from 20 to 50 acres of poor land, even at a small rent, is far worse off than an agricultural labourer or husbandman employed on a good sized farm.

The population of Longtown is about 2,300, and I should think that one half of the working females are employed in agriculture.

Yours faithfully,

MATTHEW BROWN.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

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9. LETTER from Rev. R. C. PATTENSON, Rector of MELMERBY.

Melmerby Rectory, Penrith,

DEAR SIR, April 27, 1869.

IN order fairly to answer the question contained in your letter of the 19th instant I have been making inquiries of various classes of people and I find that the general opinion, which coincides with my own, is this, that the number of small farms is sensibly diminishing, and that farm servants are not so disposed to lay by money for stocking a farm. In many cases they marry too early and settle down as labourers. It is very rare now to find a farm servant living two years together under the same master. This constant changing of service and their extravagance produce bad habits. Drinking amongst the men and fine dressing among the women keep great numbers, in spite of high wages, poor; wages are so good that it is not an unfrequent occurrence for men to refuse to hire for a term, *i.e.*, six months, preferring to live upon the wages of the previous term with the help of earnings from occasional work. A first-class labourer might compete as to fortune with a farm servant, but as a general rule he is not so well off (though often better than the small farmer), and if he has a family his prospect of saving money is very low. I think that the disposition to help himself by belonging to benefit clubs is extending amongst the agricultural labouring classes.

Farm servants were never so well off as they are now, but high wages and the love of change has, I fear, only produced extravagant and careless habits. A great deal of money, however, does find its way into the savings bank, but beyond this naked fact I can give no information. I generally on a Sunday have some of my people to dinner. On Sunday last I had two tenants on this estate, both were originally farm servants. A is 70 years old, and now occupies a farm at the rent of 370*l.*; B is 50, and holds a farm of 150*l.* per annum. A., the elder, lived 25 years under three masters, and B., the younger, 20 years under two masters. I read your questions to them and they considered that they could not *now* have taken farms upon their savings. Far more capital is now required to stock a farm than when they began, as labour is much more expensive. To state an instance:—A few weeks since a farmer wanted some barley thrashed, and though he offered 2*s.* a bushel, he could not obtain a man at the price. 30 years ago 6*d.* was the rate, but then thrashing machines were rare. I can remember when only five were in this whole district, and now we have six in this small parish alone. But not only is more capital required to stock a farm, but small farms are let at extravagant rents, and in the end (and I have seen many failures) become simply nests for poverty or sinks of the capital laid out upon them. The condition of a day labourer is far better than that of a small farmer with little capital. The day of small farms is over. They will die a lingering death, but their day is over. Even in the "Dales," where they are only "grass" farms, they are, I am told, decreasing, and, old tory as I am, I think their death is for the benefit of the nation. Free trade, and above all railroads, are their executioners, to say nothing of the increase of population and wealth and the non-increase of acreage in Great Britain. I do not know whether this letter will satisfy you, but if it is only bad enough to be worth making better I shall be ready to try and respond with a clearer voice.

I am, &c.,

ROBERT SAM. PATTENSON.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner, &c. &c.

P.S.—I do not think the number of petty landowners is decreasing, but as the purchase value of land increases they must die out. It is astonishing what sums these men will give or borrow for land and what a price they will give for rent; it is almost their only idea of investing their money. No wonder that so many small statesmen are poor; poorer than small farmers; far more pinched than labourers.

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10. LETTER from the CHIEF CONSTABLE of CUMBERLAND and WESTMORLAND.

Chief Constable's Office, Carlisle,

DEAR SIR, March 10, 1869.

REFERRING to your communication, dated the 12th ultimo, I enclose for your information copies of the reports I have received from four of the Cumberland divisions. Two others have yet to come in, and when they do they will be forwarded to you. Some little delay has necessarily elapsed since I received your letter, for it takes some time to have a careful inquiry made in all parts of a county.

As to the evils arising from the beer-house system nothing could be worse, and all the facts connected therewith have been fully laid before the Home Secretary, but I see he is reported to have stated that the Government don't intend to move in the matter this year. I think it would be therefore only mere loss of time to trouble you with any details in connection with so large a question.

I have no doubt that the great bulk of the crimes committed in these counties are traceable to vagrants, beer houses, and public houses; and if something could be done to place them under some stringent system, coupled with efficient supervision, great good would be conferred upon all classes of the community.

I send you papers on the vagrant subject. They will fully inform you how tramping mendicants are dealt with in these counties.

Believe me, &c.,

J. DUNNE,
Chief Constable of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner, &c. &c.

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11. LETTER from GEORGE MOORE, Esq.

15, Kensington Palace Gardens,

SIR, March 5, 1869.

I HAVE had the favour of your letter this morning, and I beg to assure you I entirely sympathise with all the objects with which your Commission has to do. I should be glad of a personal interview with you, either any time when you are in London or during the autumn, when I hope to be in Cumberland. As for the employment of women in the fields, I think that in another generation this will gradually be discontinued, as I observe amongst the girls educated in the schools around my part of Cumberland that they show a decided aversion to field work, and it would only be by those whose character was lost or who had not been regularly to school that rough farm work would be chosen. In past years there was nothing done to civilise or indeed *humanise* the labouring classes of Cumberland, and besides, there were so few resident gentry that they saw nothing of a more refined life; there was no opening for servants in indoor places in their own immediate homes, and the greater hardships of out of door life, had greater wages and entire *freedom* to tempt them to follow the way of life of their own mothers.

As for my first special prize scheme, it was principally successful as a stimulus to the masters, and as giving them a direct personal interest in the prosperity

of their own schools. As for the *attendance* of the children, this must always be a thorn in the side of every one interested in the welfare of a school. I must say in my own neighbourhood I exerted all the *personal* influence I could to induce parents to send their children regularly, and as they knew I should inquire into any irregularity the result was pretty good, and as when a few years had passed they found that the boys who got my best prizes were immediately in demand for situations in Carlisle or that I got them good situations in London, the parents became much more willing to insure their regular attendance.

I have ordered a Carlisle journal to be sent to you which will give you an account of the prizes so given on the last distribution day.

For many reasons I have now given up my old prize scheme, and am now interested in one which we hope will reach the poorer, uninspected, and small endowed schools, which are, many of them, in a most deplorable state. We get six schools made into a group, and persuade them to be visited by the ambulatory master, and afterwards have inspection and prizes given besides the Government grant (Miss Coutts' scheme). How this will work I can, as yet, hardly tell you. It has required a deal of coaxing to persuade the old fashioned masters to allow themselves to be in the group, but we have got on an average 13 schools in each rural deanery.

In addition to this we have established competitive examinations for uninspected schools in every rural deanery in the diocese. Of the expense the rural deans give or collect one-third, the Diocesan Education Society give one-third, and I give the other.

Last year we had nine examinations, and considered it a great success, and this year we expect to have every deanery.

I am, &c.
GEORGE MOORE.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.

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12. LETTERS from SUPERINTENDENTS of POLICE to the CHIEF CONSTABLE of CUMBERLAND and WESTMORLAND.

1.

Constabulary Office, Penrith,
SIR, February 25, 1869.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 24th instant, No. 13,331, and in reply thereto respectfully report that Douglas and Crosby have both acted in contravention of the Act 30th and 31st Vict., cap. 130, by employing men, women, and sometimes children in harvesting, hoeing turnips, and gathering potatoes ; they state that they were not aware they were doing wrong, and have not employed anyone for the last four months.

Of the other persons mentioned Brown and Slooms are not known to infringe the Act, and Hewitt states that he has not followed it during the past year through bad health.

I beg also to state that I was not aware of the Act being in force, or I should have proceeded against them. I am, &c.
WM. CARSON, Supt.

J. Dunne, Esq., County Chief Constable, Carlisle.

2.

Constabulary Station, Wigton,
SIR, February 27, 1869.

IN reply to your letter No. 13,327, dated the 24th instant, I have the honour to report for your information that for a number of years down to 1867 Cornelious Laughlin and Arthur Underwood, of Aspatria, have been in the habit of taking turnips to clean or thin from farmers in the neighbourhood where they reside at so much "per acre," and then hiring young persons at so much "per day" to do the cleaning or thinning. Mr. Hodgson, the schoolmaster at Aspatria, has upon several occasions been engaged to measure the land taken previous to the farmer paying for the work done ; he says, "I have seen "them when being engaged upon this duty at work."

I don't know of any other person who acts in contravention of the Act 30th and 31st Vict., cap. 130. I have, &c.
THOS. SPENCER, Supt.

J. Dunne, Esq., County Chief Constable, Carlisle.

3.

Constabulary Office, Whitehaven,
SIR, March 5, 1869.

I BEG most respectfully to acknowledge your communication dated the 24th ultimo, No. 13,330, and to inform you that there are not any persons in this division who act in contravention of the Act 30th and 31st Vict., cap. 130. The farms in general are small, and the farmers employ their own servants, and do their own work. I am, &c.
JOHN LITTLE, Supt.

To J. Dunne, Esq., County Chief Constable, Carlisle.

4.

Constabulary Office, Cockermouth,
SIR, February 26, 1869.

IN reply to your communication, No. 13,329, dated 24th instant, relative to the Act 30th and 31st Vict., cap. 130, I beg most respectfully to inform you that there are no persons in this division who act in contravention of the above-mentioned Act.

I am, &c.
JOHN ROBINSON, Supt.

To J. Dunne, Esq., County Chief Constable, Carlisle.

5.

Constabulary Office, Carlisle.
SIR, March 20, 1869.

IN reply to your letter, No. 13,353, dated the 10th instant, I beg most respectfully to inform you that I find from inquiries that the persons hereinnamed contract with farmers in this division for the purpose of agricultural labour, and employ males, females, and young persons to labour together in one gang, who are mainly composed of their own families.

I have, &c.
A. TAYLOR, Supt.

To J. Dunne, Esq., County Chief Constable, Carlisle.

Thomas Potts, Burgh-by-Sands.
Andrew Todhunter „ „
John Armstrong „ „
William Huggan „ „
Robert Linton, Dyesfield.
William Storey, Thrustonfield.
Joseph Clemison, Wigton.

6.

Constabulary Office, Brampton,
SIR, March 10, 1869.

I BEG leave to report that in accordance with instructions contained in your letter, No. 13,328, dated the 24th ultimo, I have caused inquiries to be made if there were any persons in this Division who acted in contravention of the Act 30th and 31st Vict., cap. 130, and I find that it is not the custom here to employ gangmasters for agricultural work.

Two years ago Mr. Bell, of Nook, Irthington, let some turnip hoeing to Peter Lapping, of Brampton, and he employed several children to do the work, which however they did not complete, and last year two men in Kirklinton took the cutting and sheafing of several fields of corn, and were assisted by their wives and another young woman.

The plan adopted by the farmers in this division when they have a quantity of field work to do, such

Cumberland.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

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as turnip hoeing or harvesting, is to go to the nearest town or village and employ as many hands as they require, men, women, and children, without the assistance of a gangmaster, the farmer or his head man superintending their labours.

I have, &c.
JOHN T. TOWLES, Supt.

To J. Dunne, Esq., County
Chief Constable, Carlisle.

13. Extract from the REPORT of the CHIEF CONSTABLE of the COUNTIES of CUMBERLAND and WESTMORLAND to the Michaelmas QUARTER SESSIONS, 1868.

THE daily average number of vagrants and tramps was in Cumberland 122; last year 134; decrease 12. In Westmorland 28; last year 35; decrease 7. These figures therefore show that during the year, as compared with last year, there was in Cumberland a decrease of 4,380; in Westmorland a decrease of 2,555, making in the two counties a total decrease of 6,935. It will no doubt be remembered that the Police Committee brought the subject of tramps and vagrants before the last Michaelmas and Epiphany Sessions, and that after the question was discussed it was unanimously recommended that the law in regard to such persons should be strictly carried out. The police have been energetic and vigilant in enforcing the decision come to by the Court, and during the year the number of vagrants and tramps apprehended for offences against the Vagrant Act was in Cumberland 325, of whom 219 were committed to prison, and 106 discharged. In Westmorland 199 were apprehended; 155 were committed to prison, and 44 discharged. Total apprehended 524; committed to prison 374; discharged 150. Increase of 312 apprehended. Increase of 211 committed to prison. With this remarkable decrease of vagrancy there has been a corresponding decrease of offences against the law, and judging from the various reports made to me by the police and the inhabitants generally I am enabled to state that the course adopted by the magistrates has been attended with the most beneficial results in checking professional mendicancy and preventing crime.

Westmorland.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

C.
1.

APPENDIX C.—WESTMORLAND EVIDENCE.

CONTENTS.

Nos.
1. Mr. Levi Hodgson, Grasmere, farmer.
2. Rev. Edward Jefferies, rector of Grasmere.
3. Mr. James Fleming, landowner.
4. Mr. William Fuller, schoolmaster.
5. George Borrick, day labourer.
6. James Bousfield, Esq., Langdale.
7. Mr. Thomas Stables, landowner.
8. Mary Raven, wife of day labourer.
9. Mr. William Mouncey, Troutbeck.
10. Frank Jones, Esq.
11. Mr. Crayston Webster, land agent.
12. Mr. Alexander Milne, land steward.
13. Mr. W. Holmes, land steward.
14. Mr. Alexander Webster, farmer.
15. Mr. Isaac Nutter, land steward.
16. Vice-Admiral Russell Eliott, Appleby Castle.
17. Mr. William Williams, schoolmaster, Appleby.
18. Mrs. Elizabeth Graham, widow farmer.
19. Mr. John Hutchinson, farmer.

Nos.
20. Jane Stevenson, farm labourer.
21. Mr. J. Smith, farm bailiff.
22. Rev. J. Whiteside, vicar of Shap.
23. Mr. Thos. Snaith, Schoolmaster, Temple Sowerby.
24. William Graham, schoolboy.
25. Ann Scull, labourer's wife.
26. William Crackanthorpe, Esq., magistrate.
27. Rev. J. Cookson, rector of Kirkby Thore.
28. Mr. Thomas Littlewood, schoolmaster, Kirkby Thore.
29. Mr. W. Robinson, British School, Kirkby Thore.
30. Mr. J. Nicholson, farmer.
31. Mr. Thomas Punchard, land steward.
32. Rev. J. H. Abbott. Perpetual Curate of Middleton.
33. Francis Pearson, Esq., land agent and solicitor.
34. Mr. William Key, land steward.
35. Matthew Thompson, Esq., magistrate.
36. Meeting of the Board of Guardians, Kirkby Stephen.

1. *Mr. Levi Hodgson*, Grasmere, farmer. I drove a cart before I was nine years of age, but boys here are seldom employed before 12 or 13. I never had any education until I was grown up, when I learned to read and write by an itinerant schoolmaster. I am now an employer of labour partly as a farmer and partly as a builder, and possess some little property of my own. If I had been educated when young I might with my opportunities have been now worth thousands. I feel the disadvantages of a deficient education every day of my life. I employ from 20 to 30 labourers, but I confess I prefer those that are uneducated to those who are educated; they are humbler and more quiet and think more about their work. Common labourers here are paid 18*s.* a week, and farm servants hired by the half year from 10*l.* to 16*l.* with their board and lodging. Wages have risen, mowing which used to be done for from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* a day cannot now be got done under 5*s.* 6*d.* with beer without limit; some will drink two gallons a day, but two quarts ought to be enough for them.

In 1820 there was only one labourer in this township, and he filled the office of parish clerk, there are now 100. I give my children as good an education as possible because I think it the only way to raise their condition.

Grazing is the only profitable farming here, and all the milk and butter is consumed in the parish. I know of only one woman employed regularly in field out-door labour. All the children in this parish go to school for a part of the year.

2. *Rev. Edward Jefferies*, rector of Grasmere. The national school is fully sufficient for the requirements of the parish, but feels the hardship of the rules imposed by the revised code of only paying for results. School resources are much crippled. It has a small endowment which is now more injurious than otherwise. I believe that there is not a child in this parish but attends either the infant or national school. In the summer the school attendance falls off considerably in consequence of the parents taking their children away for casual employment, Grasmere being at that period a place of much resort, and children of almost all ages are able to earn something in jobs of all kinds, and by being taken into the lodging houses as temporary servants, but the parents cannot resist the temptation of making a little money out of their children's labour, and sacrificing for it the benefit of a continuous education.

Wages are good, averaging 18*s.* per week, but in comparing them with previous rates allowance must be made for the increased cost of living, and a labourer

earning 2*s.* a day 20 years ago was probably as well off as one who now receives 3*s.* The men are vigorous and athletic, and are first-rate labourers.

3. *Mr. James Fleming*, statesman.—I own a small property in Grasmere. Sheep and cows are most profitable. I employ four farm servants, and pay them from 20*l.* to 25*l.* a year with their meat, lodging, and washing. Beer or milk is also given. I consider the labourers thus paid very well off, but many prefer the independence of day labourers, although they are paid nothing on days when heavy rain prevents working, and they are liable to privations when employment is scarce. There is a fair supply of cottages, most of which have two sleeping rooms. Some labourers pay as much as 5*l.* or 6*l.* rent. Most have small gardens attached to their cottages, but they do not grow any vegetables but potatoes. They never cultivate flowers, and care for nothing but what is eatable.

4. *Mr. William Fuller*, Master of National School, Grasmere.—The attendance is very irregular; for four months quite half the school are absent. Many children are kept at home by their parents, doing what the parents ought to do themselves. The boys get a very good education, and I do not confine it to Standard VI., but go far beyond it, and they leave school, if they remain long enough, well advanced in the higher rules of arithmetic, with some knowledge of mensuration. Very few of the boys become agricultural labourers, but a few are apprenticed as shepherds at 14; the others seek higher employment in towns and generally succeed well. I consider that although many of the boys lose a great deal by being withdrawn from school in the summer months, the age at which they leave school in a great degree makes up for it. Parents pay 4*s.* per quarter. The resources of the school are inadequate to its support; but the expenses could not be met unless the Rector contributed to the funds. He paid 10*l.* out of his pocket towards my salary this year.

5. *George Borrick*, day labourer.—I have lived in the township of Grasmere upwards of 20 years. Wages when I first came were 2*s.* a day in fair weather. A labourer who is paid 18*s.* a week gets on an average not more than 13*s.* a week throughout the year. 1*l.* a week is as little as a man can live on with two or three children. I pay 5*l.* a year for my cottage with two bedrooms, a kitchen, and scullery; three bedrooms are requisite for comfort and decency. A good cottage cannot be got for less than 6*l.* or 6*l.* 10*s.* A garden is a great benefit to a labouring man, but it ought not to be less than a quarter of an acre, which is sufficient to grow from 45 to 50 stone of potatoes, which would be a great assistance. Cottages have no ground, or not enough to whip a cat in. I could almost make a living from half an acre, provided it was near a town. A pig six weeks old costs in Kendal Market 25*s.*; in eight months it would be worth 7*l.*, and would supply meat during the winter. I could not keep a pig without a garden. I have stood many a time in the street at Kendal Martinmas hiring fair with a straw in my mouth to show that I was to be hired.

6. *James Bousfield, Esq.*, manager of the Ellerwater Gunpowder Works.—I consider the wages of a labouring man in this district are very good. Ordinary farm labourers receive 20*l.* a year, with board, lodging, and washing, and head men from 28*l.* to 30*l.* Their meals consist of milk porridge for breakfast, bread, cheese, and beer (called a bait) at 10 o'clock, meat and vegetables and puddings for dinner, and porridge again for supper. The hiring is for six months when the men live in the farmer's house. Labourers by the day receive 3*s.*, but the work is not continuous. There is little or no tillage in Langdale; sheep farming and employment in the powder works being the chief occupations. Cottages are on the whole good, many new ones having been built, and the accommodation generally consists of a room and scullery on the ground floor with two bedrooms above. Very few of the cottages have gardens. The people do not care to cultivate anything but potatoes, for which some of them have small allotments. The statesmen, of whom there are 10 or 12, owning from 15 to 50 acres, with a right of pasturage on the fells, are a respectable class of men, and most of them are fairly educated, but the education they received in their youth is inferior to that now given to the children of the humblest labourer. They assist each other on their farms, or in sheep shearing, in which no hired labour is employed, but they go with their servants to each other's homesteads to help to shear the flock until the work is done.

7. *Mr Thomas Stables*, Langdale.—I am a statesman, I own about 50 acres, which I farm myself. I consider labourers very well off, being comfortably lodged and fed with the best of everything, and with plenty of money in their pockets, more perhaps than is good for them. A farm servant living in the house has money wages to the amount of 20*l.* a year, out of which he ought to be able to put by 15*l.*, but that is not often the practice, the men too often spending their money in drink. There is too much of that in this country. The young people are now educated far better than when I was a boy.

8. *Mary Raven*, wife of day labourer.—My boy 11 years of age is a "half timer" at the gunpowder works, and earns 10*s.* a month. I think it good for the lad and for us that he should earn something, however little. We always have fresh meat or bacon for dinner, and milk porridge for breakfast and supper, besides tea and bread and butter, or cakes and tea between dinner and supper; one quart of blue (skimmed) milk, which costs 1*d.*, does for porridge.

9. *Mr. William Mouncey*, Troutbeck, overseer of the poor.—This parish consists almost entirely of statesmen, owning from 20 to 200 acres, including fell pasturage. These properties have been in the families for generations. Their education is not great, but nearly all can write, read, and keep accounts. One can neither read nor write, and can only tell a country from a Bank of England note by the device on it. All the children in the parish get some education, but far less than they ought considering the means of their parents. It is too much the custom to employ the children at an early age in the small farms instead of sending them to school, although they certainly acquire habits of labour which fit them for the work of after life. This is almost entirely a sheep and grazing district; the fells are enclosed, and each proprietor pastures his own sheep on his own allotment. Cattle and milch cows are pastured in great numbers. This is a great "meat country," no labourer but gets one meal a day of animal food besides porridge night and morning. There is no poverty.

10. *F. Jones, Esq.*, agent to General Le Fleming of Rydal Hall.—I consider the labouring men better off in this district than in any other part of England. Wages average 18*s.* per week, or 15*s.* throughout the year, the farmer providing work in wet weather where there is in the larger farms always something to be done under cover. The hiring of farm servants by the half year and at the fairs is prejudicial in many ways to the employer of labour. I attribute the custom to the want of sufficient cottage accommodation. The farmer pays higher for labour by boarding and lodging his men and paying them money wages besides, than if they came to work as daily labourers. It is also a cause of overcrowding in the farmhouses and of immorality. From the nature of the farming there is little demand for female labour, women as a rule not milking the cows, which is chiefly done by men. Some boys are employed in driving cows and carrying milk, but they get a fair amount of education. The children of the small statesman are in too many instances withdrawn from school for months together to assist in farm work, which is chiefly done by the family, the restricted means of many of these small freeholders not enabling them to hire labour. Many of them lead a hard life and have difficulty in keeping their heads

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above water. The tendency is to their gradual extinction. Such cottages as have been built of late years are decided improvements upon the old ones, but they are not sufficient for the wants of the country. This prevents immigration from other districts which the high rate of wages might otherwise encourage. Nothing can be better than the labourers' diet in Westmorland.

11. *Mr. Crayston Webster*, land agent, Kendal.—I have been engaged for many years in my profession, and I know the social and economical condition of Westmorland well. Women are very little employed in field labour, and in many parts of the country not at all, owing to the great preponderance of pastoral over agricultural land. Public gangs are entirely unknown. The condition of the farm servants is one of great comfort. They are well fed and receive high wages. The labour of one Westmorland labourer I consider equal to that of a man and a half of the southern counties. The practice of boarding and lodging the farm servants certainly has its disadvantages in a moral point of view ; the women having frequently to pass through the men's room in going to bed, or vice versâ. No doubt the practice arose from the scarcity of cottage accommodation, but it is continued from habit although it can scarcely be said to be the best arrangement for the farmer. Farm labourers are a very independent class, and think little of breaking their engagements. The statesmen are gradually declining in numbers ; most of their estates are encumbered, being burthened with portions for younger children besides debts. They are not what can be strictly called an educated class, but are very shrewd. When the property is small there is a great inducement to employ all the members of the family in farm work, the education of the children suffers in consequence. The high rate of illegitimacy which distinguishes both Westmorland and Cumberland is in a great degree owing to the want of a sufficient check by public opinion. The low moral tone among the labouring classes is traditionary, and perhaps sufficient time has not yet elapsed to allow the influence of increased intercourse to tell upon the prevailing vice. Girls think it no disgrace to be the mother of one illegitimate child, nor do their friends regard it as such, but it must be allowed that marriage not unfrequently follows.

12. *Mr. Alexander Milne*, agent and land steward to the Hon. Mrs. Howard of Levens Hall. I have been for 15 years manager of Mrs. Howard's estates. Some of the farms are almost wholly arable. I employ about eight women, principally the wives of labourers, in singling turnips, weeding, &c. When the women have infants they find it answer to pay a young girl to take care of them during their absence at work. A woman can earn 1*s.* 8*d.* a day in hoeing and weeding by piece. Their occupation in the field for a part of the year is conducive to health, and does not as far as my experience is concerned produce any evil consequences morally or physically. Women work under a man superintendent. Day labourers earn good wages in this district, viz., 15*s.* a day with a cottage rent free and coals led. Of the two systems of hiring labour I consider that of hiring by the half year and boarding and lodging the labourer is the most disadvantageous to the employer ; he pays more for his labour and loses the privacy of his home. Many of the farm houses are overcrowded, and herding the sexes together too often results in immorality. The only remedy is increased cottage accommodation, to which the chief proprietors are now becoming alive. A labourer should not reside more than half a mile from his work. How can a man who has a greater distance to walk attend properly to the horses and cattle at evening ? Our labourers are well worth their wages ; they are very intelligent, but some are too fond of the public house and the beer shop. They are generally fairly educated, there are now not many who are unable to read and write. Children are withdrawn from school for months together to add to the earnings of a family, and considering the high wages of a labouring man and the occasional earnings of his wife I do not believe that there is any real necessity for such an interference with the education of the children ; nothing will prevent this but state interference. This district is very well provided with schools, and at Levens there is a night school which is successful in keeping young men from the public house ; those who attend it make the steadiest workmen. The statesmen are not a prosperous class, and cultivate their small properties chiefly by the labour of their families ; they are obstinately wedded to the customs of their ancestors, and are averse, from want of capital, to all modern improvements.

13. *Mr. W. Holmes*, land steward to G. Wilson, Esq., Dalham Tower, Milnthorpe. I employ no women except in the hay season and harvest ; it is not the custom of this district. Boys are used for bird tenting, and are in the fields after the corn is sown from seven in the morning until dark. When the corn is ripening similar precautions are used. Boys earn about 6*d.* a day. The labour question is the great one for this county, and I believe that but for the extensive use of machinery the cultivation of the land would be impossible. The men are becoming our masters. The want of cottages has led to the necessity of boarding and lodging them in the farmhouses, and on the smallest offence being given they will throw down their tools and seek another master. Until more cottages are built farmers must be under great disadvantages with respect to labour. This makes it virtually a landlords' question, for if a tenant could get his labour cheaper he could afford to pay a higher rent. The possession of a cottage would have the effect of attaching a labourer to the locality, and checking that propensity to change which the system of farm servants has encouraged. This system is not only economically false but morally injurious. The crowding in the farmhouses of a number of youths and girls without control is to be condemned. I know an instance, and that on the glebe of a clergyman, in which the sleeping rooms of the men and women are only separated by a sheet. There are a few statesmen in this neighbourhood, but they are gradually diminishing in number. As a class they have little general knowledge, and are possessed of so little capital that artificial manures are generally out of their reach. Their children are more employed in farm work than is compatible with their education.

The diet of agricultural labourers in this district is excellent ; if it were not so they could not do the work. In this cold and wet climate they would starve upon the meagre subsistence of a southern peasant. The system of farm servants, besides its other disadvantages, tends to foster habits of extravagance on the part of the labourers. Dissipation of some kind or other is certain to be the result of high wages when a number of men are congregated together. The earnings of the half year are generally expended in self indulgence. Saving is the exception.

14. *Mr. Alexander Webster*, farmer, Beetham. There is no mode of carrying on farming business in this district except by farm servants. I have 30. Daily labourers are bad to get owing to the scarcity of cottages. Farm servants cost more than day labourers, and make a difference in the cost of labour not far short of 25 per cent. I do not see any prospect of the system being improved. I lodge and feed all my labourers in my house, and I have had as many as 12 sleeping in one room, but it was airy and well ventilated. Farm servants have a good deal of money to spare after paying for their clothes. The savings bank would be a grand thing for them if they would take advantage of it, but the men tempt each other to spend money. Generally they are an improvident class, and after having enjoyed high wages for years, often end by going into the union workhouse, and we farmers are burthened by their maintenance. I do not complain of their not being under control, but they are rather independent. The parish is well off for education, but many of the boys are taken from school in the summer for three or four months, and there is plenty of employment for them. In all my experience

I do not know of more than three farm servants who have saved money, although they might easily put by 15*l.* or 20*l.* a year out of their wages. The best men get 30*l.* a year with food, lodging, and washing. I employ no women except as domestic servants.

15. *Mr. Isaac Nutter*, land steward, Burton.—There are no women employed in agriculture on the property which I manage or in this parish, of which four-fifths are in pasture. Wages are 15*s.* a week all the year round for day labourers and 30*l.* a year to head farm servants. The instances of saving money are very rare among this class as it consists chiefly of young men. Intemperance and illegitimacy are our great evils. There is not a child in this parish that is not under instruction for nearly the whole year round.

16. *Vice-Admiral Russell Eliott*, Appleby Castle, manager of the estates of Sir Richard Tufton, Bart.—I rent and farm an estate of 1,220 acres, chiefly in the neighbourhood of Appleby. Boys and women are employed regularly on my farm; of the former some are as young as 11 years. Those employed elsewhere and by the half-year take service and live with the farmers on their farms. On the Langton Field Farm the young persons I employ are chiefly the families of the hinds. A considerable number of women are also employed, and with the children they do almost all the light work. They thin and hoe turnips, weed and clean the land, plant potatoes, and spread dung, but they do not load dungcarts, a species of labour which I consider improper as a rule for females. They drive or lead carts. They also attend to the thrashing machine. There is a great deal of field labour which women do even better than men, such as hoeing turnips, in which they are very expert, and I know of no instance in which such employment, as conducted on my own farm, has been followed by evil consequences to morality. The women employed are chiefly wives and families of agricultural labourers, although there are some single women. Nothing resembling the gang system of the eastern counties exists in this *immediate* neighbourhood. The women, young persons, and children work together, but they require little or no superintendence, and they are paid directly by my manager, and not through the agency of a middle man. Women earn 1*s.* a day, and boys from 6*d.* to 9*d.*

The work which children do in the fields is not, in my opinion, injurious to their health, but the contrary. The effect of the too early withdrawal of children from school, however, cannot but act injuriously upon their education. It would be a good arrangement, in my opinion, if no young persons under 15 years of age were permitted to work unless they could read, write, and cypher to some extent. This would be introducing, if I may so speak, the competition principle into the juvenile labour market, and might act as a stimulus to parents to push forward the education of their children. Any such offering themselves from poverty should be obliged to take half-work divided into three days at school and three at work in the week, and on one of these (Saturday, the usual school half-holiday) always to be at work. The farmer having a double set, however, might find workers for every day.

There are good schools in this neighbourhood, and at reasonable rates, but they are not well attended, and it is not from the poverty but from the apathy of parents that this arises.

The great want in this district is a sufficiency of cottage accommodation for agricultural labourers. Few are attached to the farms, as in Scotland, where every estate has its complement of well-placed ordinary cottages for the labourers employed on it. Such cottages as are occupied by agricultural labourers in this district are chiefly in towns, and the necessary attention to the separation of the sexes is only beginning to be thought of, and is not yet popular or prevalent. The worst results to morality arise in Westmorland from the crowding together of young men and young women in what I may call farmhouse barracks. There is also a great want of control over the servants on the part of the masters. The worst results to morality also arise from the pernicious hiring fairs.

The diet of agricultural labourers in this part of the county is ample and good. In the farmhouses they live exceedingly well on milk porridge, with meat always once and sometimes twice a day. The result is that the farm servant is in the highest physical condition, and, as a rule, can do more work than a day labourer providing his own meals. They might with their wages, varying from 15*l.* to 25*l.* a year, save money. My labourers reside in cottages rent-free, and provide for themselves. Some are saving money, but as a rule neither the savings banks nor the provident societies are taken advantage of to the extent they ought to be.

The wages of my labourers living in cottages with gardens rent free, and a cow kept for them are 12*s.* a week throughout the year, they have also about two sack loads of potatoes grown for them, seed, coals led from the railway, and some additional allowance in the hay and corn harvests. Their mode of living is perhaps somewhat inferior to that of farm servants, as they do not consume so much meat. Eggs are a good deal used, and a kind of scone with jam or preserves is a common article of food. Nothing, however, conduces more to the well-being of a cottage labourer than the possession of a cow. I keep one for each of my married labourers on my farm, and deduct 2*s.* a week from their wages, but the labourer gets, with butter at 1*s.* 6*d.* a pound, a clear profit of at least 4*l.* 16*s.* a year, estimating the produce of a cow as worth 10*l.* yearly. The labourer moreover has always a supply of milk for his children, a consideration of great importance in rearing a healthy offspring.

17. *Mr. William Williams*, master of the British school, Appleby.—Boys remain at school up to 12 and 13. About one-fifth are withdrawn from school for five or six months in the year and are employed by the farmers. They earn 1*s.* a day at harvest and 9*d.* at other times. The education of a boy who only spends six months of the year at school is practically at an end. Nothing but the necessity of obtaining a certificate of a certain amount of elementary instruction before he commences labour will be an effectual protection against this. I have been a master of several schools in the midland and other counties, but never found so much natural ability as in the scholars I now have. I wish the parents appreciated the advantages of education as highly as their children. The imperfectly educated parents seem to value it least; the wholly uneducated and the best educated have a higher sense of its value. I conduct a night school; the attendance averages about 35, and consists of lads of from 16 to 19 who desire to keep up their education. It is attended also by several adults. The boys prepare themselves for situations as clerks or shopmen. Mensuration and the elements of algebra are taught.

18. *Mrs. Elizabeth Graham*, widow.—I farm the estate called the Hospital Farm near Penrith, part of the endowment of 13 almshouses at Appleby. I employ five farm servants, three men and two women. I pay my head man 30 guineas a year; the others have 21*l.* and 16*l.*, with their board. I employ for turnip singling and at harvest young boys ranging from 9 to 13 years of age. The female farm servants get 12*l.* and 5*l.* 10*s.* a year, with board. They work in the fields and make themselves generally useful, and prefer the out-door to the indoor work. They also attend to the thrashing machine.

19. *Mr. John Hutchinson.*—I rent and farm an estate consisting of 700 acres at Brougham Castle. I cultivate it partly by farm servants and partly by day labourers, and get the occasional assistance of a gang of women and children from Penarth. I have six men farm servants living in my house, and two girls for cooking and attendance. My head man has 28*l.* a year and the others from 20*l.* to 15*l.*, with their board. They live as well as I do. Breakfast,—milk porridge with bread and cheese or butter; dinner, always meat and puddings; supper, porridge with bread and cheese

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and often meat. There are three cottages on my farm; two of them have only two rooms, although the men occupying them are married and have children. These labourers are paid 14*s.* a week all the year round, "wet or dry." They have their cottages rent-free, and in addition 1½ quarts of milk per day and potatoes without paying for them. I consider the wages with the allowances equivalent to 18*s.* a week the year round. These men are saving money. Three out of the six of my farm servants can neither read nor write. I prefer educated to uneducated men, they are more domestic in their habits, and amuse themselves in the evenings with the newspaper or a book instead of seeking excitement in the town or at the public houses. From the general scarcity of labour in this district I am obliged to employ parties of women and children in singling turnips and in harvesting. I obtain them from Penrith, paying a man 5*s.* a day for hiring and superintending them. Good order is kept. I send for the party in carts, but they return home on foot. The hours of labour are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an hour for dinner. The boys are quite uneducated, often half-grown men, and very badly brought up.

20. *Jane Stevenson*, aged 50 (pulling turnips in a field one mile from Penrith).—I have worked on this farm for 30 years and have no other occupation. I earn 1*s.* 3*d.* a day in winter and 1*s.* 6*d.* during the rest of the year. I get no wages when the weather will not allow me to work. I support a sick husband. I like out-door work, and I find myself quite unwell if I stay at home for a day. My hands are often blistered from pulling turnips. I do other work as well. Scaling muck (spreading manure) is much harder work on grass than on ploughed land, the dung requires to be broken so small. I cannot read or write.

21. *Mr. James Smith*, farm bailff of the Lowther Castle Farm.—I manage a farm of from 800 to 1,000 acres, chiefly pasture land. I employ a good deal of female labour in harvesting, but not at other seasons. I consider a Westmorland labourer especially valuable, because he is a willing servant. He is well paid and well fed, and in general intelligence is greatly superior to the average of agricultural labourers in other parts of England. Education is not so general, however, as it ought to be, but there is a marked improvement in the generation now growing up. Irregularity of attendance at school is unavoidable in consequence of the demand for the children's labour at certain seasons, but I think that within certain limits work is an important part of a child's education.

Girls are only occasionally employed in this neighbourhood in out-door work in hay time and harvest time, but girls from the age of 10 to 13 are not useful except in the lightest work. I would not place any restriction on the ages at which boys should be permitted to work on the land. I think it is better that they should learn to work as early as possible, provided they are not prevented from attending school, nor do I think it desirable to place any restriction on the employment of young females in agriculture, a general knowledge of outdoor as well as indoor work is necessary to make them useful farm servants.

22. *Rev. S. Whiteside*, Vicar of Shap. The education of the children of the labouring classes may be carried too far if it makes them discontented with their position, and induces them to look for employment in towns or on railways to the diminution of the rural population. Every advantage is taken of the opportunities for education presented in this parish. As a rule boys are not employed in agriculture before their 13th or 14th year, they then make half-yearly engagements, boarding and lodging with their employers. Occasionally younger boys are put to work during the hay harvest, which for the most part generally coincides with the month's school holiday. There is a peculiarity in our schools in this parish or at least in one of them. In the mixed school 25 pupils are admitted free who are for the most part the children of labourers. This boon seems to be much appreciated. We have more applications from this class than can be granted.

23. *Mr. Thomas Snaith*, certificated master of the National School, Temple Sowerby, I have 53 boys and girls on the books, but the attendance in the summer and autumn months is between 25 and 30. I lose all my boys above nine years of age from the beginning of April until the end of September; they are hired by farmers for potato planting, preparing the ground for turnip seed, singling turnips, and in the hay and corn harvests. Boys withdrawn from school for six months of continuous field work make no further progress in their education, they might as well leave school altogether. The earnings of the children are necessary for some of the parents, but for many of them they are not. A certificate of a certain amount of proficiency in elementary education before a boy should be hired to labour, would be an effectual check on parental neglect, as they would have a pecuniary interest in pushing forward their children's education.

24. *William Graham.* I am just turned 13. I have gone out to work ever since I was nine years of age. I leave school in April and return at the end of September. I earn 1*s.* a day. At the end of last harvest I and my younger brother had made between us 5*l.*, which we gave to father (a coachman in a lady's service). The work in the fields is hard, but I am never the worse for it. I and five other boys generally work together on one farm. Gaffer (the superintendent) often swears at us and knocks us about. I breakfast at 6, then go to work and take my dinner with me, I have an hour to eat it in and rest, then to work again till 6. The farm is less than a mile from home. I have a good supper, and on summer evenings I sometimes play cricket on the green if not too tired. I find that on going back to school in the winter I have lost my writing but not much else; but perhaps master thinks differently.

25. *Ann Scull*, aged 32, wife of Robert Scull, farm servant. My husband gets 26*l.* a year with his meals, and returns home to sleep. He pays 4*l.* a year for a very small cottage with only two rooms, viz., a kitchen and bed room. I have four children, the eldest a girl eight years old who goes to school. I am Scotch, but left school far too soon, but I improved myself afterwards. I can write well and read to improve and amuse myself. The Scotch would deprive themselves of the necessaries of life to give their children education.

26. *William Crackanthorpe, Esq.*, Newbiggin Hall, Temple Sowerby, Magistrate and Chairman of the Kirkby Thore Board of Guardians. The want of cottages is the cause of prevailing immorality in Westmorland. I have three on my estate, each containing three bed rooms which I let for 2*l.* a year each. Each has a small garden attached. I think cottages should not be regarded in the light of an investment, but as indispensable appendages to property. I pay my labourers 15*s.* a week all the year round "wet and "dry," and I have no doubt that what I get for these wages is worth that of two southern labourers. My men are as willing as they are able. The custom of boarding and lodging labourers in the farmhouses is a necessary consequence of the want of cottages. The farmers do not exercise that moral superintendence over their servants that they ought. The master and his family formerly took their meals with the farm servants and were a check upon them; now they and their family dine in the "parlour." Farmers are now so dependent upon their men that they are absolutely afraid of them, and the consequence is that they have more liberty than is right.

The schools in this neighbourhood are well attended, but in summer and autumn there is a great falling off. How a sufficient amount of school attendance is to be obtained is a problem which has often perplexed my mind. A system of compulsory education will not do, and a plan requiring a certificate of a certain amount of school instruction before a child is permitted to work would I fear bear hard upon those parts of England

where wages are so low that the parents are unable to spare even a few pence weekly for the school fees. In such cases the only course would be to pay for the schooling of the children of the poorer classes out of the rates, but how would the farmers stand that?

27. *Rev. J. Cookson*, Rector of Kirkby Thore. I have no reason to complain of the want of attendance at the school of this parish in the winter months, but in the summer and autumn progress is seriously interfered with. Parents will not deprive themselves of the little earnings of their children, no matter what their circumstances are; one of the characteristics of the Westmoreland people is their love of money, and for money many parents do not hesitate to sacrifice the prospects of their children. The National school is almost deserted for four months in the year, only the youngest children remaining. Most of the labourers in this parish are members of Benefit Societies, but they spend a great deal more money than they ought. This remark applies particularly to farm servants. The system of lodging labourers in farmhouses is one great cause of the bastardy which disgraces this county. I preach and lecture against the prevailing vice, but to no effect. The moral sense on this subject is dead, and no girl feels that by having an illegitimate child she has disgraced herself. A man hired into a farmhouse if he marries loses his situation, and this acts as encouragement to bastardy, as he would rather pay 1*s.* 8*d.* a week to maintain an illegimate child than lose a situation worth perhaps 30*l.* a year by marrying. The arrangements in the farmhouses are in many instances most improper, the men's and the girls' rooms opening into each other.

28. *Mr. Thomas Littlewood*, Master of the Kirkby Thore National School. From June to the end of September the attendance of my school is reduced to half. Boys are hired for field labour at nine.

29. *Mr. William Robinson*, Master of the British School, Kirkby Thore. About the end of May all the elder boys are withdrawn from school, and are absent the greater part of them for three months, but some longer. One boy of 13 has just returned to school after absence of six months. Few remain at school longer than 12 years of age, the greater number leave at 11.

30. *Mr. J. Nicholson*, of Kirkby Thore. I farm two estates of 300 acres each, chiefly arable land. I employ 20 farm servants who live in my house. I will not hire any man who refuses to pledge himself to attend church. I employ boys and women to some extent as well as day labourers who live in cottages. These have 2*s.* 6*d.* a day. I consider good living good economy in the end. My farm servants are young and able bodied, and it is striking to notice the manner in which their superior diet tells upon their work. A day labourer will break down, or have recourse to the stimulus of beer, at a task which a farm labourer would execute with ease. The mode of hiring at fairs is a nuisance which I hope to see abated by a system of registration, but it will take time.

The prizes for flowers and fruits at the shows for cottagers' gardens, now periodically held at Appleby, Temple Sowerby, Kirkby Stephen, and Penrith, have created a taste for garden cultivation among the labourers.

31. *Mr. Thomas Punchard*, land steward to Lord Kenlis, Underley Hall.—Lord Kenlis is the proprietor of 17,000 acres in this neighbourhood, divided into 150 farms. There are few women or children employed in this district, the county being nearly all pastoral, a very small proportion only of the land is arable. Very few boys under 13 years of age are employed here in agriculture, above that age they are generally taken into the farmhouses, and provided with their board and lodging, working the usual number of hours per day. The farmers generally keep their own sons at work on their farms until they are grown up to man's estate. No girls are regularly employed in agriculture, but a bad system prevails of occasionally sending young women who have been hired into the farmhouses for domestic purposes to assist the labourers in their out-door employment, such as loading and unloading dung carts, stacking hay, corn, &c., and as I have even known them sent with a horse and cart to the market towns for manure.

No boy under 15 should in my opinion be allowed to work on the land for more than three days a week; the remainder of the time he should be at school. Some arrangement should be made to enable lads of from 13 to 18 years of age to go to school in the evenings. The means of education are generally speaking ample for the labouring population of this neighbourhood, and the labourers themselves are on the whole fairly educated. Out of 60 labourers employed on the estates which I manage, only six cannot read and write.

Owing to the system of hiring farm servants into the farmhouses there are very few cottages in Westmorland, and of these some are empty, though that probably is owing to their bad state of repair. Taken as a whole those in the rural districts are in decent order. The majority of the cottages are in small towns and villages, and the condition of many of them reflects no credit on their owners, who generally are well able to pay the cost of maintaining them. The supply is not equal to the demand, and the time must come when landholders will find it incumbent upon them to erect new ones. In many districts they are few and far between, while the outcry of the farmers is that labourers are getting scarce and cannot be had when they are most wanted. Overcrowding is one consequence of this scarcity of cottages, though it can hardly be avoided in the present state of things. Cottages here, like the farmhouses, are very badly ventilated, in numerous cases the only part of the window that opens is one small pane, seldom measuring six inches square. Nor is any greater attention paid to water supply, though in towns the compulsory measures of recent legislation promise to have a good effect in this respect.

The cause of the immorality of Westmorland is difficult to trace, and can hardly be laid to any one cause, but rather to a combination of causes of long standing. I do not think the bad cottage accommodation has so much to do with it as is supposed. I rather attribute it to the system of hiring young men and young women into the farmhouses without a sufficient restriction as to their intercourse with each other. The proportion of farm servants to day labourers is that of 3 to 2.

32. *Rev. J. H. Abbott*, Perpetual Curate of Middleton.—Field labour does not interfere with the education of children in my township. I ascribe the high rate of bastardy which prevails in Westmorland to the intermixture of the sexes in the farmhouses, few farmers exercising any vigilance over their servants' conduct. They are so dependent on their labourers that they fear to offend them, and many things are connived at which would not be tolerated elsewhere. Night courtships, for example, are what no man who cared for the morals of his people would permit. The servant girls hired for farmhouses are the chief contributors to the number of illegitimate children, as is shown by the parish registers. Some little amendment in the state of things has taken place within the last few years owing to the influence of the clergy.

33. *Francis Pearson, Esq.*, solicitor and land agent.—The farmhouses generally in Westmorland are old, many of them even built at least two centuries ago, and their arrangement is not suited to our notions of propriety. There is often no separation between the sleeping apartments of the men and women; a door which does not lock often divides them, and the results are notorious. Farm servants in this county have greater advantages than any other description of rural population that I am acquainted with. The farmers are satisfied with the arrangement, and will continue it until the men become so independent and overbearing that it will be impossible to endure it any longer. In the mean time increased cottage accommodation, although desirable, would not materially alter the relations between the farmer and his

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labourer. The farmer finds his advantage in having his men always at hand, which could not be the case with day labourers living in cottages. Farm servants are not now a saving class whatever they may have been formerly.

The competition for farms of from 80 to 150 acres is much greater than for larger ones. There are 10 applications for a farm of moderate size to four for a larger one, and they bring higher rents. The tendency is to form very large farms, but it is economically a mistake. The farming is invariably of a higher character when a tenant is able to overlook personally the whole of his farm and is not above contributing his personal labour. Farms of course may be too small; and a sufficiency of capital is indispensable. The education of the daughters of small farmers is often a mistake. They are kept up to the age of 14 or 15 at the parish school, and then sent for a year or two to a "finish-" ing school" of some neighbouring town, where they only learn to play a little on the piano and to do crochet work. They are not sufficiently educated to be ladies, they are consequently discontented and unhappy, and if they marry it is probably to some young farmer whom they look down upon.

34. *Mr. William Key*, land steward, Casterton.—This is an exceptional district. Education is perhaps nowhere so well provided for; boys never leave school before 12 years of age, and often not until 14. Wages are higher than anywhere that I know, 18*s.* in summer and 16*s.* in winter. In hay harvest I am obliged to give 5*l.* 5*s.* a month to men with their meals. The farms in this district rarely exceed 100 acres, and the average rent is 2*l.* per acre. In no part of England is labour so well paid. Farm servants have five meals a day, besides good wages. The cottage accommodation in my particular locality leaves nothing to be desired; but it is not so generally. We do not however want cottages as a rule with more than two or three rooms. Children get their education over so early that the parents are generally able to put them out to service by 12 years of age, or sooner. I wish the morals in farmhouses could be improved. The great difficulty is the independence of the servants, who will not bear to be interfered with.

35. *Matthew Thompson, Esq.*, Magistrate, Kirkby Stephen.—I employ no female labour on my estates, I disapprove of it, and I avoid as much as possible employing young boys. Two of my farm servants who have been with me for many years have each saved nearly 400*l.* I invest their money for them and keep their books. As a rule allotments are not appreciated or required in this district by the agricultural classes. Their wages are too good to need them.

36. At a meeting of the *Board of Guardians of the Kirkby Stephen Union*, January 4, 1869, in reply to several questions put on the subject of the inquiry, the following answers were returned:—

1. It is neither customary nor desirable in this district to employ boys in agriculture before the age of 13.

2. Women are scarcely, if at all, employed in agriculture. Farmers would be glad to avail themselves of such labour if it could be obtained, but only in very rare cases will the wives of labourers consent to take out-door work.

3. Although the farmhouses are in many instances deficient in proper accommodation, the cases in which there is a free communication between the bedrooms of the male and female farm servants are now quite exceptional, at least in this district.

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APPENDIX D.—WESTMORLAND.

LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, TABLES, AND RETURNS.

Contents.

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2. Letter from Mr. George Browne, of Troutbeck, on the condition of Westmorland "statesmen."
3. Letter from Mr. Thomas Nicholson, schoolmaster of Dufton, on education.
4. Letter from Mr. Crayston Webster, of Kendal, land agent.
5. Letter from Lt.-Col. Rigg, on the wages of agricultural labourers.
6. Farm bailiff's schedule of wages paid at the Langton Field Farm near Appleby.
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1. Letter from Rev. James Simpson, vicar of Kirkby Stephen.

Vicarage, Kirkby Stephen,
March 9th 1869.

My dear Sir,

I have not forgotten your request and my promise that I should give you some particulars in writing of the condition of agricultural labourers in Westmorland and more especially in this part of the county.

You have doubtless learnt from your own inquiries and observation that the employment of women or children in field labour is the exception, not the rule. There may be two or three farms in the neighbourhood of Penrith upon which some of the work is done by contract, and done by persons of various ages and different sexes coming out of Penrith for the day; and there are two or three large holdings about Appleby, Long Marton, and Kirkby Thore upon which much of the work is done by day tale men receiving about 2*s.* 6*d.* per day, and whose wives are employed at certain seasons in hoeing and pulling turnips, gathering weeds, or at harvest work; but upon the great majority of farms the work is done by men and boys hired for the half year, who are boarded and lodged in the farm house, and for the time being form part of the farmer's household.

These half yearly servants are generally unmarried, but not always, and in such exceptional cases, should the wife live anywhere near at hand, the man sleeps at his own house, but if at some distance, he goes home once a week, or more seldom, according to distance.

In a farm house where several men are kept there is necessarily a great deal of work in the house, and unless there be grown up daughters of the family, girls have to be hired.

It sometimes happens that a servant girl is sent out to work in the fields at a busy season, but this is becoming less and less the custom, indeed, as you heard a guardian of this Union say, "if he wanted a girl to "work out he should have to go to Carlisle to hire "her."

Upon some farms the servant girls have to milk the cows and "serve" the calves, as well as attend to the dairy generally, but special mention would be made of "milking" at the hiring, and there are very few girls in this part of the county who would engage themselves to a place where they would have to work in the fields.

The situation of a servant girl at a large farmhouse is no sinecure. She has to rise early to prepare breakfast for the men before they go out to work, and she is often the last of the household to bed, because she

has to "wash up" and "side away" the supper things; and her only holidays are a few days at each of the terms. Many of the girls who begin service in a farmhouse, if clean and active, become domestic servants, and tempted by the offer of higher wages very often find situations in the neighbouring counties; and I am fully justified in saying that they are highly valued for their truthfulness and their honesty. The majority of them are steady, and do well, eventually marrying some tradesman or artizan, some return to their homes damaged in reputation, and while the county gets full blame for the misconduct of the few, it gets no credit for the good conduct of the many, in those tables of statistics from which those who know not the county are wont to judge of the morality of its people.

The wages of men hired into the farmhouse are about 12*l.* for the summer and 10*l.* for the winter half-year; those of boys according to their age, strength, and qualifications. I have known instances of men receiving 15*l.* for the half-year, but they are exceptional cases, in which either the man is well known as skilful and trustworthy or the place is notorious for a "cross master" or as a bad meat place.

I have given the wages for half a year because it is well nigh the universal custom to hire for the half-year and not for the year. As you are well aware, when "the statutes" or hirings were first established it was the custom to hire for a year, and Martinmas was the term. After the passing of the statute, 8 and 9 Wm. 3. c. 30., by which a yearly hiring was made one of the conditions of gaining a settlement, the occupiers would naturally begin to hire for half a year in order to save their parish, and Whitsuntide seems to have been chosen as the other term, not because it was a convenient season for changing servants, but because it fell about six months after Martinmas. I dare say farmers would be glad to have some other term than Whitsuntide, but they cannot find one more convenient than Martinmas, and now that there is no question of settlement involved it seems to me that they would do well to return to the old custom of yearly hirings, and let the term be Martinmas.

The mode of hiring does not greatly differ from that in fashion two hundred years since. On the hiring day the masters and servants meet at some neighbouring town, the men and boys holding a straw between their lips, or having a sprig or leaf in their hatband as a sign that they are to hire, and the women standing together in some accustomed place, described and spoken of as "the cross," having reference to the old custom of standing at the market cross or in the churchyard. The master in want of a servant having singled out one likely to suit his purpose inquires his name, birthplace, where he has lived, what he can do, why he left his place, &c., and what wages he wants. If satisfied with his answers he asks him to step aside or go with him to a public-house and have a glass, and they try to bargain. Should they agree about wages and nothing be said about the amount of "arles," the master gives the man a shilling, and they fix the day when he shall enter upon his service, which is generally on the Thursday or Saturday following the hiring, rarely, if ever, on the Friday. It was commonly thought that the "arles" served to bind the bargain, and if a servant should afterwards refuse to enter upon the service, he almost invariably returns the shilling by way of intimation that he has changed his mind. It is hardly necessary to say that this notion of the shilling arles binding the bargain was a mistake. Under the statute 4 Geo. 4. c. 34, no proceedings could be taken against a servant who refused or neglected to enter upon the service for which he had engaged himself, unless the contract was in writing and signed by both parties, which was very seldom the case. Under the recent statute this has been altered.

The notion itself, as well as the custom of giving arles, may both owe their origin to the practice under the old "statutes," when each servant had to obtain from the high constable of the division a ticket or certificate of liberty before he could offer himself for hire, and for which he had to pay a fee of twopence. When a master hired a servant he would naturally wish to possess himself of the ticket by repaying the fee, and thus practically bind the servant by preventing him hiring to another place. When the ticket was no longer required the payment might continue, and the power of binding the bargain, which arose out of the possession of the ticket, be supposed to attach to the payment.

It is not unfrequently objected to the hiring at statutes that masters have to engage servants without any knowledge of their previous character, but in the great majority of instances this objection does not hold. Though there may seem to be very little care exercised, farmers probably know much more about the character and antecedents of those they hire than do masters and mistresses in a higher station. In a rural district everybody is known to everybody, and as a general rule servants do not go far from homes, or if they do, something is known about themselves or their families, or the master with whom they have lived. Somehow or other a farmer generally knows a great deal about a man he wants to hire, and if he has not been able to learn much about himself personally, he very likely knows something about his name or his birth place, and our Westmorland farmers think there is much in a name, and firmly believe that such things as industry and honesty, and their contraries, run in families. I don't like the name, or his father before him was an idle fellow; or, he comes of a good sort, and the whole family are honest and industrious, and make good servants, are common observations, and exercise their influence upon the chances and the wages of a youngster who stands his first hiring. Nor is this prejudice confined to names or families. Places have their reputation, and there are localities not always or often within the county, from which a farmer would be as unwilling to hire a servant, and especially a woman servant, as were the tradesmen of Newcastle in the olden time to take an apprentice from the debatable land. Nor is this knowledge of previous character confined to masters, servants generally know something of the place to which they hire, and a hard master or a bad place very soon obtains a wide spread reputation.

But however much we may regret the evils that arise out of the "statute hirings" we shall do well to remember that they are the fete days of the neighbourhood. Hundreds attend them, not for the purpose of hiring, but to mingle with their fellows, meet their friends and acquaintances, "to see and be seen;" and in this respect farm servants do but follow the example of those in a higher position.

In the spring of the year there are two days upon which the streets of Penrith are crowded with young people of both sexes. On Whit Tuesday farm servants assemble in large numbers, some to hire, the great majority for a day's pleasure; on the third Tuesday after Whitsunday, locally called little Whitsun Tuesday, there are just as many young people, the sons and daughters of farmers and others in a higher position than farm servants. They go not because they have any business that day which could not be done equally well on any other market day, but because it has been the custom, and on that day they are sure to meet others like themselves. There is not much difference in the amusements offered or the temptations held out, but the dancing rooms are probably not so crowded and there is less apparent excitement and more decorum on the latter day than on the former. I do not know that there is any other place in the two counties where this distinction is made, and at Penrith it most likely arose out of the necessity of the case, or as a matter of convenience, rather than any unwillingness of one class to mix with the other. Servants and sons and daughters could not on the same day well be spared from home and work.

Of late years farm servants have at "term time" had other ways of enjoying themselves than those

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afforded by the statute hirings; but there has been no diminution, but rather an increase, in the numbers attending these half-yearly gatherings. Cheap trips to some large town, of which farm servants avail themselves, are often arranged more to the profit of the railway company than benefit to those whom they convey. It may be well in some respects that country people should see large manufacturing towns, but they do not derive the same benefit from these excursions as townspeople do from a visit to the country, and some of them learn things it would be much better for them not to know.

But then there is but a choice of evils. If they stay at home every village publican contrives something or other to entice them and induce them to spend their money: Races, wrestling, dancing, shooting at a white, and other amusements are provided, all innocent enough in themselves, but fruitful of evil owing to the conditions under which they are available. The following programme of "annual sports" held last autumn at a public house in a neighbouring village, is a fair specimen of its kind:—"A handsome saddle "will be given to trot for, open to all comers; also a "double-reined bridle to trot for, for horses in the "parish of R——. The winner of the saddle will be "debarred from running for the parish bridle. Prizes "will also be given for wrestling, running, leaping, "and other amusements, and a copper kettle to shoot "for. Wrestling to commence at 1 o'clock. A ball "in the evening." These sports are held either the week after the term, when the farm servants are at liberty, or at some vacant time of the year, between haytime and harvest or after harvest, when they can be spared for half a day from their work. The men attend in the afternoon and the young women join them in the evening for the dance, and as the innkeeper's object is to sell as much liquor as he can, the conduct of those present is not always what it ought to be and sometimes most objectionable, and the return late at night, when the young women expect the young men to see them home, is not conducive to morality.

That these "sports" are got up by the publican entirely for his own benefit, there can be no doubt; but the very fact that they are generally well attended and pay may teach us an important lesson. They supply a social want, which neither reading rooms nor parochial libraries nor school teaching can either supply or destroy; and if we wish to lessen the evils of statute hirings and village sports, we must find a substitute for them, and as the lawyers say, it must be *ejusdem generis*.

In rural districts the people want opportunities of meeting each other, and say what you may they will come together somewhere and somehow. And why should they not? One of the best things that could be done for this county would be that each district should have its fete days fixed and settled, when and where the people could assemble, join in such amusements as were provided for them, and return home by daylight.

There might be difficulties, and so long as it depends on local effort these are many and great; but if there was any competent authority to fix the day and place and prepare a programme and exercise proper supervision, the difficulties would all vanish and statute hirings as well as public-house sports would soon cease to be popular, if they did not cease to exist.

Some 12 or 14 years since an attempt was made to have a festival which all classes might attend, and very great success attended the effort. At the village of Reagill (in which, by the way, there is no public-house) a yeoman (Mr. Bland) had a very nice garden laid out in terraces and adorned with statuary and paintings, his own handiwork. Once a year in the month of June a day was fixed upon which anybody was at liberty to go to this garden, a band of music was in attendance, and tea was provided for all who chose to partake of it at 1*s*. each, and during the afternoon and evening the proceedings were varied by speaking, singing, and dancing. This was continued for several years, and on no occasion from the beginning to the end did I ever hear an improper expression, or witness, with one single exception, the slightest misconduct on the part of any one of the many that were present.

Some years afterwards something of the same sort was begun and goes on still at Warcop, with this advantage, that it was grafted upon a custom of long standing, the Warcop rushbearing. On the morning of St. Peter's day (June 29th) the children of the village assemble in front of Warcop Hall, each bearing a garland of flowers. After receiving some refreshment they walk in procession to the church, the garlands are taken and fixed in the accustomed place, where they remain until the following year, and there is divine service. In the afternoon the hall grounds are placed at the disposal of the committee of the Warcop reading room, who charge 1*s*. admission fee, for which they provide tea and music. When first begun there was speaking, the same as at Reagill, but now the only amusement is dancing. Very large numbers attend this annual gathering, and the proceedings are orderly and decorous.

Since I came to Kirkby Stephen we have established shows of flowers, poultry, and dogs, not because we can produce either beautiful flowers or good poultry, but because it is very desirable to bring the people together now and then, and almost anything will do for an excuse. Of course we have a band of music and the people dance on the green sward, but no drunkenness nor incivility in word or act would be tolerated. Probably we owe much of the success of our gatherings to the introduction of a novel feature in the dog show. There are in this district large flocks of sheep, and a number of shepherds' dogs remarkable for their sagacity and the perfection of their training, and not only is there a prize given for the most beautiful, but also for the most accomplished, and they are tried on the field. For this purpose we hire or buy about 40 sheep, and three of these being placed at one end of a long field and the dog and his master at the other, it is the business of the shepherd to direct his dog to fetch the sheep around a post near which he stands and carry them back again, and this without either "hurry or worry." The skill consists in getting the dog well beyond the sheep without alarming them, in keeping them well together, and heading them in the right direction, and in driving without chasing them, and it is difficult to know which most to admire, the skill of the dog or of his master.

But I do not think it much matters what kind of amusements are provided, if only they be innocent. Anything does for an excuse, and so long as you can induce people of different classes to attend, and secure proper supervision, you have done all that is needful; and he who can successfully gather together the people of a district and give them an afternoon's enjoyment, and send them home by daylight pleased with themselves and each other, has done a good day's work, of which he need not be ashamed, whatever his strait-laced friends may say to the contrary.

The greatest difficulty in the way of starting and carrying on one of these holidays is local rivalry. It is just the same as with fairs and markets. If you begin one and it is likely to succeed, another is started at some neighbouring village, and both go on until they destroy each other; so with amusements for the people. If an attempt has succeeded in one place, the neighbouring villages immediately try the same thing and the year following there is a struggle who can secure the most suitable day, or two are held on the same day, and as a consequence the numbers attending are divided, the expenses exceed the receipts, and there is failure and disappointment. Nor will this ever be remedied until the fete days of a district are fixed by some competent authority, as were the statute hirings by the high constables of old.

What we want in country districts are gatherings of the people for amusement and for pleasure under better regulations and apart from evil influences, and until we have such gatherings statute hirings and village sports will continue to be as popular and as much frequented as they are now. I do not think our farm servants and farm labourers care much about

having their hours of labour shortened. They always have been, and I trust always will be, willing and able to do a good day's work, and at a busy season are not particular about an hour or two of extra time; but what they would like, and what they much need, are a few more holidays and some means of rationally and innocently, but thoroughly enjoying them; and their main feature must be that there and then each can meet many others like unto himself.

On this side of the county farm servants have three meals a day in winter, namely, breakfast of porridge, milk, bread, and cheese, and sometimes coffee; dinner of puddings or "dumplings," meat, and vegetables; and supper of bread, cheese and milk, or porridge. In summer an additional meal is given about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, called "drinking," which used to be bread, cheese, and beer, but now tea is sometimes substituted. On the Kendal side they have bread, cheese, beer, or coffee about 10 o'clock in the forenoon as well as 4 in the afternoon, making five meals a day; but I believe they work longer hours than on this side of the county.

The bread used is the best brown wheaten bread, very seldom "barley or booted." Around Kendal oat cake or "hafr bread" is still in common use. The cheese is very seldom home made; the farmers find it more profitable to give the skim milk to the calves and buy Dutch cheese for the use of their households.

But we should form a very inadequate notion of the condition of the agriculturists of Westmorland if we did not take into consideration a numerous, industrious, and most frugal class of men, who, though occupiers of land and their own masters, work as hard as any of our labourers and fare much more frugally than do the servants in a large farmhouse. They occupy farms from 20*l.* to 70*l.* a year rent. Their savings when in service have helped them to stock these farms, and they manage and work them by their own labour and the help of their wives. They can afford no luxuries nor indulgences, and taste fresh or butcher's meat on the average about once a week. Their midday meal is tea and bread, and perhaps a "fried collop" and an egg when eggs are plentiful; their clothing does not cost them much, for they wear what they had before marriage; beer they never use unless it be a five-gallon cask in haytime, and though they generally keep spirit in the house, their stock is usually limited to a single bottle, produced on rare and special occasions. Their families are brought up to work from their earliest infancy, as you heard it said, "from "the time they can crawl," for when they are regularly attending school the boys help their father to do "the jobs" night and morning, such as cleaning the byre, milking the cows, foddering and watering the horses, and the girls assist their mother in the household work. This is the source from which we draw our supply of labour. As the children grow up they go off and hire into farmhouses, and most excellent servants they make. The girls not unfrequently find situations as house servants, and better material out of which to make such servants cannot be found.

You asked if the employment of children interfered with their education. I do not think it does. When employed at all it is only on their father's farm at particular seasons, and their school life is sufficiently long to enable them to be sufficiently educated for their station in life. In this county you rarely meet with a man or woman who cannot read and write. Even out of the few who sign the marriage register with a cross, the majority could write their names if pressed to do so.

But our schools suffer undoubtedly from irregular attendance or rather long absences, and in that as well as some other particulars we find it difficult to comply with the requirements of the Committee of Council. We have not much difficulty in producing the results, as the children are for the most part quick learners and as intellectual as they are strong and healthy; but results, however good, unless attained in the one only way, count for nothing, and as that Procrustean bed they have in "the office" was made to fit towns and populous places rather than rural districts, we very often find ourselves either too long or too short for its dimensions.

It is an easy thing to declaim against the thoughtlessness and selfishness of parents in keeping their children at home to work when they might be at school; but the time a boy is kept at home and employed upon his father's farm at a busy season is not always "time lost." Should he have by his daily labour to earn his daily bread, it needs that he observe and see and learn things that may concern his after-life quite as much as book knowledge. Some years since I had a lesson upon that subject which I shall not easily forget. At a meeting of guardians of the Westward Union a fine strong-looking boy about 14 years of age, who had lived in the workhouse from his infancy, was brought before the board, and it was proposed, if a situation could be found, that he should be sent to a farmhouse and so much a week paid with him. After some discussion as to the amount, I said it was a shame that we should have to pay more than a shilling a week with a boy like that, and if no other place could be found at that price I would undertake to provide him with one. Eventually he was thrown upon my hands, and I directed him to be sent to a farm in which I was interested. A day or two afterwards I had occasion to visit the farm, and the boy, glad, I suppose, to recognize some one he had seen before, ran forward and placed himself in my way, touching his cap and looking much pleased. "Well, my boy," said I, "you have got here." "Yes, sir," said the lad; and wishing to give him a sixpence, I told him to go and get my horse out of the stable and bring him to me. "Yes, sir," said the boy, glad to be noticed, and away he ran. While in conversation with another with my back towards the stable door, my attention was aroused by the loud laughter of the other men, and on looking round I saw the poor lad trying to hold the horse, with the bridle over the head indeed, but the bits not in the mouth, and the saddle set on the wrong side before. This was only one of his many absurd mistakes, and though the others were good-natured with him upon the whole, they could not always resist the fun of allowing him to get into some ludicrous scrape. And yet the boy knew more Bible history, church catechism, and geography, and could read, write, and cast accounts a great deal better than the majority of those who laughed at him for his ignorance of common things and their uses.

When people are poor and old and feeble, and have no near relative to care for them, they are much better in the workhouse where they are kept clean and comfortable; but since my experience of the workhouse boy I have always advocated the policy of keeping children outside its walls, and if they must needs be brought up in the workhouse, then, wheresoever and whensoever practicable, let them go out as much and as often as possible, and see what is going on around them, and learn something of ordinary every day life, and things in common use.

And for somewhat similar reasons I have always been tolerant of absence from school at busy seasons, because though it unsettles your school, disarranges the classes, and is very trying and inconvenient to the master, yet are the boys learning that which is important and useful, and that which a certificated master cannot always teach them, the difference between a *copystyal* and a *cowrak*, and their different uses.

That the agricultural labourers of this county are honest the calendars at the assizes and the sessions bear ample testimony. Of the few persons charged with offences the majority are vagrants.

That they are frugal and save money may be inferred from the deposits in the savings banks, and the fact that out of their savings, when in service, many of them are in the course of a few years able to rent and stock a small farm of their own.

That they are sober may not perhaps be so readily admitted, because whether deservedly or not the county has not in that particular the best of reputations. But as a class I have not the slightest hesi-

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tation in saying that the agricultural labourers are temperate. At term time, that is, twice a year, they may appear wanting in sobriety; but it should be remembered that they are entirely unaccustomed to take beer or spirit; that they are in vigorous health and high spirits, excited by the occasion and the meeting of old friends and acquaintances, and one or two glasses has upon them a much greater effect than upon a well-seasoned toper; and that it is not fair or just to judge them by what you may see at term time. Inquire into their daily life and habits, and calculate how much beer or spirit they consume in a year, and you will find them remarkable for their sobriety.

That there are people in Westmorland who drink to excess there can be no doubt, but they are not agricultural labourers, nor can the farmers as a class be accused of intemperance. They may get a glass or two on a market-day, and walk less steadily or talk more loudly than they ought, but they are not habitual drunkards, and many of them never taste beer or spirit from one market-day until another.

Amongst the most habitual drunkards in the county have been very often found those to whom legacies out of proportion to their position in life have been left. From time to time men have gone from Westmorland (younger sons), succeeded wonderfully in business, and bequeathed their accumulated wealth to their humble relatives at home, and though not many are quite so bad as the man who when he found himself entitled to a legacy of several thousand pounds stayed in bed all day considering what alterations he should make in his mode of life, now that he was a gentleman, and came to the sapient conclusion that he would have port wine to his thick porridge; still they find it difficult to adapt themselves to their changed fortunes in any better way than by frequenting the public-house, standing treat to their neighbours, and being king of the company. The numbers within my own knowledge that have been ruined and destroyed by having legacies left them in this way are not a few; and to their conduct and its sad end the county owes much of its reputation for intemperance.

It is said that the women are "immoral" because a larger per-centage of the children born in this county are illegitimate than in other districts. But surely there are other facts to be considered, quite as important and as necesssary, to enable us to form a just conclusion upon that subject, as the per-centage of illegitimate children. To compare the number of illegitimate births with the number of single women between the ages of 15 and 50 would be much more fair, but even that would not be a safe test unless we also considered the proportion of single women to the population and the lower per-centage of births and marriages as compared with other counties. And in a thinly populated district the children of a man and woman living together as man and wife without being married, or where the marriage is not legal, are registered as illegitimate, whereas in more populous places nothing would be known about the parents or their antecedents, and their children would be reckoned as legitimate. Again, more than one or two cases have come within my own observation in which a woman has had four or five bastard children in as quick succession as if she had been married, and you can only say of her that she is immoral enough to bring shame upon herself and discredit upon all connected with her, but not sufficiently immoral to save the credit of the county in a table of statistics. If before jumping to a hasty conclusion from the large per-centage of illegitimate births men would carefully weigh and compare these and other facts that might be adduced, they would learn that even in this particular the people of Westmorland compare favourably with those of other districts.

It is, however, satisfactory to know that this "immorality," be it much or little, does not arise out of the custom of men and women living together in farmhouses. Since I saw you I have looked into this question more carefully and find that out of 17 cases of bastardy heard before the magistrates of this division in the years 1867 and 1868, there was one only in which the parties had been fellow-servants and lived in the same house, and one other in which the putative father was the master's son, the mother the servant girl, and in neither case was there a word said in evidence that could lead to the inference that there was fault in the sleeping arrangements. You hear people talking continually about what must needs be the consequence when men and women are thrown so much together as are servants in a farmhouse, but as a matter of fact it very seldom happens that a man pays any attention to a woman with whom he is living as fellow-servant; and if it were so, and noticed, the master would take the very earliest opportunity of sending one or both of them away, because, as he would say, they would be "minding "each other much more than their work, and that "did not answer for him."

That "statutes" or "hirings" are full of evil and danger and temptation to young women there can be no doubt, though they are less so since they could go and return by railway, because they have the protection of company. Some years ago we tried to establish a register office with a view of superseding the hirings, but it did not succeed, masters like to see the servants before engaging them, and servants are unwilling to give up a day's pleasure. Good has been done at this place by providing suitable refreshments at a reasonable price, and thus making it less necessary for the women to go to public-houses, and for this movement the Temperance Society deserves credit.

But the greatest mischief arises from the evil custom of "night courting" or "sitting up," and if that could be stopped a great step would have been made in the right direction. When a man in the position of farm servant wishes to pay his addresses to a young woman he goes, after the family has gone to bed, to the house where she lives, knocks at the window of her room, induces her to come down and let him in, and sits with her in the kitchen or the parlour the greater part of the night. The girl is of course most anxious to conceal from her mistress her conduct in "sitting up," consequently she places herself entirely in the power of her lover; and as it not unfrequently happens that men who are unwilling to marry because they would thereby place themselves in a lower position and have to do inferior work, and equally unwilling to restrain their passions, go after girls much younger than themselves for the basest of purposes, take a most cruel advantage of their weakness and want of protection, and ruin them against their will. In a town such men would find other means of gratifying their lusts, and illegitimate children would not be the consequence; or if married men could retain their situations as ploughmen or "topsmen," and wages were paid entirely in money, and cottages could be had, such men would marry and young girls be saved from much temptation.

Taken upon the whole, however, there are few counties of which that can be said, which was reported of the county of Westmorland to the Quarter Sessions in October 1862, by the chief constable:— "It is in my judgment," he says, "worthy of special "mention, that in the superintendent's returns for "the county of Westmorland there is not one person "or house recorded under the respective headings of "'known thieves and depredators,' 'receivers of "'stolen goods,' 'prostitutes,' 'suspected persons,' "'houses of receivers of stolen goods,' 'public-"'houses of bad character,' 'houses of ill fame,' or "'other suspected houses;'" and, so far as I know, this is as true of the county now as when reported. The public-houses are for the most part respectably conducted, and we have very few beer-houses in the district.

Owing to the custom of lodging farm labourers in the farmhouse, cottages are not so much needed, but the great majority of those we have are, so far as I have seen, sufficiently commodious and decent. Rents vary very much according to locality, from 2*l.* to 5*l.*

a year, and there is generally attached to the cottage a small portion of garden ground; but so far as my own experience extends I do not think agricultural labourers care much for cultivating a garden. It used to be the custom for a labourer to plant a "stitch" or two of potatoes in the farmer's field, he finding the seed and the manure, and the farmer carting it for him and ploughing the land; but this is not now so commonly practised. I suppose the farmers do not find it pay.

The yeomen or "statesmen" who farm their own land are rapidly disappearing from the county, and their holdings are passing into the possession of large landowners. There may have been more causes than one for this change, but no one thing has contributed more to bring it about than the Wills Act of 1837. Before the passing of that statute the eldest son of the family looked forward to inheriting the estate, which was generally of customary tenure, and the father had no power to will it from him or charge it with legacies for younger children, except by a troublesome and expensive process to which he would not willingly resort. Should he wish to leave portions to his daughters he had to provide them by his own industry and thrift, and the younger sons had to look out for themselves. As a consequence the yeomen were not only more frugal, as a class, but most of them sent a son either into one of the professions or business; and there is no county that can boast of more successful men than can Westmorland. There youths were honest and industrious, persevering and careful, and at the same time too proud of their family to do aught to disgrace it, and knowing that they must for their success in life depend upon themselves they did well. The eldest son stayed at home, took pride in the estate which would eventually be his own, and followed in the footsteps of his father. Then came the change. The Wills Act was passed, which enabled the Westmorland statesman to cast the burden of providing for his younger children upon his successor. Instead of striving and saving, and doing as his fathers had done before him, and giving his children a fair start in life, he could charge his son's inheritance with the portions of his younger children, and consequently persuade himself that there was no obligation upon him to do this out of his income; and the children, instead of going out into the world and providing for themselves, "sauntered" about home, "living upon expectations." The eldest son, not being sure of the inheritance, felt less interest in the property, and the younger sons could not divest themselves of the hope that they might supplant their elder brother, hence came jealousies and wranglings and divisions amongst them.

Again, in disposing of his property by will, the yeoman generally erred in valuing his land much too high, and made the legacies so large as to leave his eldest son poorer than he intended. Then came the mortgage to pay the legacies, and the first mistake made was in borrowing less than was really needed. This led to the want of capital to manage the farm, buying stock, or credit too dear, and selling under pressure at a disadvantage. Three years soon passed away and then came a renewal of the mortgage and a year's interest added to the capital sum, because the money was needed to pay the attorney's fees, and so it goes on, the farm neglected, the debts increasing year by year, the owner troubled on every side until he is obliged to sell, and it is well for him if he does this in time to save out of the wreck sufficient to enable him to stock a farm of the same size and value as that which was once his own. You hear it said that yeomen often do well as farmers of the land upon which they could not live as owners, but that admits of easy explanation. The payment of interest upon the mortgage and expenses probably amounted to as much as the rent, and over and above the wear and anxiety involved, the owner had very often not sufficient capital to go on with. As it was expressively said of such a one, "he had to hop off one twig on to "another, and never had time to make anything."

It is all very well to talk about the justice of giving a man's children an equal share in his property. It is not a question of justice but of policy, and if it be desirable to prevent large landowners adding field to field, then should small landowners find it as difficult as possible to dispose of their property by will, and especially difficult to burden it with portions for younger children. If the Wills Act of 1837 had never come into operation there would still have been a goodly number of statesmen in Westmorland, and they would have been as industrious and provident and *independent* as their forefathers; their younger sons would have followed the example of their uncles, and gone out into the world and found for themselves a place and a name, and the elder sons would have succeeded to the property unincumbered, and would have been in the forefront of agricultural improvement and progress. As it is, their best friends and wellwishers can but commiserate the position in which, by no fault of their own, many of those who remain have been placed. They must soon cease to exist, and the honest, independent, fine-hearted old greycoats, "Westmorland statesmen," will soon be amongst the things that were.

I have to express my regret that I could not give more time to this subject, and my hope that these remarks may in some small measure help you to form a right judgment of the condition of Westmorland and her people.

Yours very truly,

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq., JAMES SIMPSON.
Assistant Commissioner.

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2. LETTER from Mr. GEORGE BROWNE, of Troutbeck.

SIR, Troutbeck, Dec. 2, 1868.

I AM in receipt of yours of the 20th ult., I have not returned the circular that accompanied your letter, so very few of the questions apply to our system of agriculture in this part of the county; the labourers employed in agriculture are mostly young unmarried men, who are lodged in the farmhouse and live very much like their masters. The married men find it more profitable to work as day labourers at other kinds of work, a great many are employed in the neighbourhood of Windermere village, cutting foundations for new buildings, gas works, bobbin mills, &c.

For a few week in summer married men are employed on the farms during hay time and harvest (the first generally requires much more time), it is usual to hire a man for a month. Last year a good man would get 5*l.* for the month, together with meat and lodging; when hired in this way it is understood that they will have to work longer hours than common labourers at other kinds of work; women and children are scarcely ever employed at agricultural work, except a few fine days during hay time, when a woman haymaker will get about 1*s.* 6*d.* per day, and a boy from 12 to 14 will get about as much. The cottages are generally roomy and well ventilated, most part of them have at some time been farmhouses, and as the land gets into fewer hands some of the old farmhouses are turned into labourers' cottages.

You ask for some information about the "statesmen" of Troutbeck, I find there are only about six who are occupiers of their own land, having no other occupation than cultivating their land; there are one or two who live on their own property, and are also renting more than they own; there are two others who live on small pieces of land of their own, and also carry on the occupation of joiners and wheelwrights. The largest number of acres owned by one person of this class is about 800 acres, and the smallest about 100. The number of persons who are owners of small farms is gradually decreasing. There have been two farms of this description sold within the last three weeks; one farm containing 122 acres, let for a rental of 66*l.*, was sold for 2,588*l.*; and the other, let for 101*l.*, sold for 3,835*l.* These places were sold in several lots, and (with exception of 15 acres) have been added to larger farms.

It seems to have been an invariable custom at one time for the second son to go into the Church; in some

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families two or three sons have been clergymen, this was when they could be educated at Bampton and St. Bees; at the present time it is too expensive for the smaller "statesmen" to make their sons clergymen, It is usual at the present day for the sons to remain at home until they get married, and then for them to take a farm for themselves; sometimes when there are more than one farmhouse and buildings on an estate, at the death of the parents they are divided amongst the sons.

I am, &c.
GEORGE BROWNE.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

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3. LETTER from Mr. THOMAS NICHOLSON, schoolmaster.

SIR, Dufton, B.S., Jan. 2, 1869.

1. I DULY received your note of inquiry respecting the state of elementary education in my neighbourhood, particularly as to the employment of children in farm work during the busy seasons.

2. My abilities as a teacher and my opportunities for forming any well grounded opinion on the subject under inquiry have evidently been greatly overstated to you by a kind friend. Yet I am glad to communicate anything I can for your use.

3. So far as I have been able to learn by reading and conversation with intelligent individuals from other districts of the country I have reason to think that the state of elementary education in the East Ward of Westmorland will bear a favourable comparison with that of any other district in England. The proportion who sign their own names to the marriage register is often mentioned as an index to the state of elementary education, I consider this test a fallacious one, many who are able to write, on account of their timidity, nervousness, caprice, or other cause fail to write their names then.

4. Yet this state, so excellent as I regard it comparatively, is far from satisfactory.

5. One of the leading, but not by any means the only, cause of the imperfect education with which a considerable number of the labouring classes are allowed to grow up is their too early withdrawal from school to assist in farm work.

6. Some of the evils arising from the irregular attendance of children at school are, (*a*) the necessity of repeating the lessons given in their absence to the rest of the class, or of allowing the absentees to go without them; thus (*b*) retarding the progress of the regular attenders, (*c*) the average attendance is kept down, (*d*) a smaller number attain the 200 attendances necessary to qualify them for examination, (*e*) of those who reach the requisite minimum attendance or a little over, there are some who distribute it so irregularly over the year that they are unfit for examination as regards attainments. The three last-named causes tend to reduce the Government grant to a considerable extent. All these causes combined make it impossible for the teacher to be satisfied with himself, if he be a conscientious man; or to satisfy the managers, the inspector, or the parents. Of course the moral character of the children is much impaired both by the actual practice of such irregularity themselves, and by witnessing it in others.

7. Viewing these evils from my own stand point as a teacher, I was at one time prepared to pronounce in favour of compulsory education, but on considering the matter more in its practical bearings I am now scarcely prepared to go so far.

8. The parents in deciding between the immediate gain likely to result from employing their children at home when they ought to be at school, and the prospective distant and somewhat uncertain gain they expect from a good education are greatly influenced by the principle briefly expressed by the old proverb "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

9. Some of the irregularity is, in my opinion, attributable to the schoolmasters themselves. Several have certain fixed periods, as quarters, and if a child attend but a week or two at the close he is charged for the whole quarter. Frequently the scholars miss a few weeks solely for this reason. If occasional holidays were given only in cases of absolute necessity the attendance would be more punctual. When parents and children see that trivial causes form excuses for the master's absence they readily follow his example.

It is almost useless to insist upon a higher morality in the children than they see exhibited in the teacher's conduct. Irregularity in teacher produces irregularity in scholar. When the villagers are persuaded that they have an earnest and efficient teacher, who takes an interest in their children's progress and welfare, I believe that unnecessary absence from school will be very small.

On first reading my views may appear scarcely reconcileable, but after minute and careful inquiry I believe you will find them fairly correct. At least I consider them so with my present limited means of deciding. Wider information might modify them. If I can give you any farther assistance, I shall be glad to do so.

Many of the thoughtful part of the community in this district I find are in favour of a compulsory system. I think it ought to be reserved as a last resort. Every possible reform and improvement of the teaching organization should precede.

I am, &c.
THOMAS NICHOLSON.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

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4. LETTER from Mr. CRAYSTON WEBSTER, Kendal.

DEAR SIR, Kendal, May 28, 1869.

I HAVE pleasure in sending you a few remarks upon the condition of the agricultural labourers in this my native county of Westmorland, and will take the points raised by you *seriatim*.

1. Excepting at the seasons of haytime and harvest, females are not employed out of doors to any considerable extent. In the great majority of cases farming servant men, boys, and maids are hired half-yearly and live in the farmer's house, often sitting at his table, and forming for the time part of his family. Servant girls are a good deal employed in the outbuildings, in milking and attending to the live stock, but are rarely seen working in the fields. As an exception it may amuse you to know that a widow farmer of my acquaintance used to do her own *ploughing* with two horses herself, and a very good hand she was!

Near towns and villages it is not uncommon for women and girls to be employed in weeding or thinning turnips by the row or day. This of course is only for a very short period and at a pleasant time of the year. On the whole I do not think that the employment of out of door female labour is carried to an undue extent, but is often a means of a very welcome and needful addition to the poor man's income, enabling him perhaps to rub off his arrears of rent or to procure himself a new suit of clothes or a pair of boots. There may be too much squeamish delicacy in interfering with female labour.

2. The "public gang system" is unknown here. You remember telling me you had unexpectedly discovered a case near Penrith, but I don't know whether or not it was in this county, the boundary of which runs close up to that town in Cumberland. You will observe in my report to the Royal Agricultural Society that the agricultural customs vary remarkably, those on the northern side assimilating to those of Cumberland. I can only say that in my constant professional excursions to and fro in every parish for many years I have never met with anything of this character.

3. Turnips are generally singled or thinned by the hand or hoe.

4. The great drawback of small farmers of, say, from 30*l.* to 60*l.* rent is insufficiency of capital, but indeed the same remark applies to nearly all our farmers. It is very common for a "servant man" and his fellow servant girl or small farmer's daughter

to marry, both possessing only a trifle of cash, but with character and credit to borrow a little more, and so manage to set up housekeeping and farming in a humble way, when by the most self-denying thrift and industry they contrive not only to pay the rent, but to manage the land satisfactorily and bring up their children respectably, though "hardfully," and by degrees attain to a larger farm. I am of opinion that to absorb all these small holdings in large ones (notwithstanding more expense in keeping up the homesteads) would be ultimately found to be unwise and impolitic. There are many advantages in moderately sized (not too small) farms. Higher rents are obtainable, more attention is paid to the production of butter, eggs, poultry, honey, and other useful minutiæ which the large farmer deems beneath his notice, and they are the best producing grounds for relays of well brought up and efficient servants and labourers. I know many who, with very small beginnings indeed, have progressed from less to more and filled in their way respectable social positions. Many years ago I had a day labourer in my employment who, on the strength of his small savings and a loan, married and scraped up as much as enabled him to take a small farm under my agency, which he has cultivated almost like a garden, and after rearing a large family, now mostly gone to service, he is looking out for a larger farm. Now if there had not been in his own neighbourhood and within his limited reach a farm small enough, he must have remained a labourer all his life, with perhaps only the prospect of the workhouse in his old age. I look upon this class as one of the groundworks of our national stability. Neither do I condemn the arrangement of large farms under proper circumstances. I think a mixed system is the most advisable.

5. It must be admitted that small farmers do employ their children, somewhat to the detriment of their education, but I think this is improving, and will improve by degrees as the schools and other educational facilities improve, and as public attention is directed to and legislative action taken on that most important point.

6. It cannot be doubted that in very numerous instances (as to my own knowledge) there are old fashioned farmhouses wherein defective bedroom arrangements conduce to the unfortunate notoriety of our county for an undue percentage of illegitimacy; but there are other causes which do not lie on the surface, and if these were all rigidly investigated I believe this stigma would be materially lessened. It is a delicate question which we can only leave to the good sense and advancing intelligence of the people. It would be well, however, if the general feeling were more strongly pronounced and more social dishonour and loss of caste attached to both parties guilty of this evil; and, further, every landowner may well consider whether any share of the blame and responsibility lies at his door.

7. I certainly do not see my way to the abandonment of keeping farm servants in the house. Whenever you wish suddenly to change ancient custom you always find deep-rooted, obstinate, and widely ramified obstructions. One great difficulty would be the want of suitable extra dwellings on our comparatively small and poor farms. It is most desirable and necessary that more and better cottages be provided for the labouring poor. There has long been culpable neglect in this respect, and in no case is the breeches pocket more carefully buttoned than when any outlay is called for to rebuild or repair the ancient cottages. Consequently the poor are driven into towns and villages where they and their children fall under debasing influences, and drift into other employments and unsettled habits, to their moral and physical deterioration. So now we have the universal outcry that farm men servants, girls, and day labourers, are not only scarce and consequently dear, but idle, careless, and inefficient. I am certain that the erection of suitable cottages, each with its nice garden plot, although perhaps not directly remunerative, in the hard, selfish, business point of view, would ultimately be the best investment any large landowner could make, irrespective of any moral obligation, as providing plenty of efficient servants and labourers, attaching them to the soil and parishes, and facilitating kindly sympathies and elevating influences.

I am, &c.

CRAYSTON WEBSTER.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq.,
Assistant Commissioner.

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5. LETTER from Lieut.-Colonel RIGG, Morland.

DEAR SIR, Crossrigg Hall, June 14, 1869.

I HAVE much pleasure in writing you a few particulars as to the wages I give for labour in agriculture.

For a married man, who is allowed a cottage and garden rent free, 15*s.* a week the year round, and 1*l.* extra for hay time.

Men on regular wages paid fortnightly, whatever the weather may have been:—

	£	s.	d.
Martinmas and Candlemas	0	15	0
February to May	0	16	6
June	0	18	0
July, four weeks hay-time	1	5	0
August, four weeks harvest	1	0	0
September and October	0	16	6

For women, according to season, as follows:—

	s.	d.	
Early spring, gathering stones	1	0	a day.
Turnip-sowing time, gathering twitch, and spreading manure	1	2	„
Haytime and turnip-hoeing	1	6	„
Harvest	2	6	„
Autumn, pulling turnips	1	0	„

When there is any extraordinary job in land improvement which cannot be done by piece, such as digging the furrow after the plough, and getting out earth-fast stones, &c. by choosing a comparatively slack time of year in spring or autumn and by making it known a week beforehand, I can get together from 20 to 40 ordinary good men on 3*s.* a day, working weather; no pay if it is too wet to stand out.

Piecework, and above everything draining, is what the men like best and is most satisfactory to the employer. A good man earns a guinea a week at this, and superior hands more. In one drain you may see a couple of powerful men in the prime of life, and in the one next to it an old man and his grandson; both parties equally satisfied that their earnings are measured by their abilities. To the casual observer it appears a very hard life to labour in the wet miry field with clothes plastered by clay from the sides of the narrow drains, but when a man has once taken to this kind of work, if he can find enough of it, he will never go to any other.

Our working day is from 7 to 6, with an hour for dinner at noon. I never pay for over-time, holding that if a man works honestly for ten hours he ought not to do more. In haytime and harvest I give no food, only beer.

A very great disparity will be noticed between the earnings of the casual worker and the man with a cottage and regular engagement for a year. I can only say that those who live out in the villages are constantly catching at any pretence to demand an increase of wages. Whilst on the other hand I am just completing the converson of an old barn into comfortable cottages, and there is great competition for them.

I have one ploughman and one cowman, wages 27*l.* and 21*l.* per annum respectively, boarded with the bailiff. They are very troublesome, and from the insight I have had at petty sessions to this kind of service I am determiued to have as little to do with it as possible.

As for a farm servant girl the bailiff's wife tried having one, but gave it up after the first half year, saying she had rather do all the work of the house herself than be troubled with a lass! Of course mine is not a dairy farm.

My opinion is that a farm house ought to be the best place of training for the young people of both

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sexes, but that from inadequate sleeping apartments and from laxity on the part of employers as to the moral conduct of those who are inmates of their houses, a great deal of immodesty prevails amongst farm servants, which renders them unsettled and bad to manage, whilst it swells the Registrar-General's returns of illegitimate births; but further allusion to this subject would lead to a question apart from the one with which I started.

I am, &c.

J. H. Tremenheere, Esq., Assistant Commissioner. H. Rigg.

6. Farm Bailiff's Schedule of Wages paid on the Langton Field Farm.

1868.		£	s.	d.
January 4	Paid Farm Bailiff's Schedule	6	8	7
„ 11	„ „	6	18	0
„ 18	„ „	6	7	10½
„ 25	„ „	6	4	9
February 1	„ „	5	7	11
„ 8	„ „	5	3	5
„ 15	„ „	5	8	1
„ 22	„ „	5	0	3
„ 29	„ „	5	2	0
March 7	„ „	4	18	1
„ 14	„ „	5	5	6
„ 21	„ „	5	10	0
„ 28	„ „	5	19	0
April 3	„ „	5	13	0
„ 11	„ „	5	8	8
„ 18	„ „	5	10	11
„ 25	„ „	5	11	5
May 2	„ „	5	13	0
„ 9	„ „	5	8	0
„ 16	„ „	5	14	0
„ 23	„ „	5	14	0
„ 30	„ „	5	10	0
June 6	„ „	5	10	6
„ 13	„ „	5	11	0
„ 20	„ „	6	2	6

1868.		£	s.	d.
June 27	Paid Farm Bailiff's Schedule	8	10	8
July 4	„ „	8	16	6
„ 11	„ „	8	9	0
„ 18	„ „	9	4	11½
„ 25	„ „	8	17	1½
August 1	„ „	6	18	3
„ 8	„ „	11	4	6
„ 15	„ „	23	4	6
„ 22	„ „	19	17	6
„ 29	„ „	7	14	10
Sept. 5	„ „	7	5	6
„ 12	„ „	6	3	0
„ 19	„ „	5	19	2
„ 26	„ „	5	15	1
October 1	„ „	5	7	3
„ 10	„ „	5	8	3
„ 17	„ „	5	3	0
„ 24	„ „	5	5	8
„ 31	„ „	4	18	5
Nov. 7	„ „	4	14	7
„ 14	„ „	5	3	6
„ 21	„ „	6	5	0
„ 28	„ „	5	7	6
Dec. 5	„ „	5	14	0
„ 11	„ „	5	4	1
„ 19	„ „	5	12	4
„ 26	„ „	5	1	8

Add Salaries for one year.

	£	s.	d.
Farm Bailiff - - -	80	0	0
Head Shepherd - -	55	0	0
Assistant „ - -	40	0	0
Leading Ploughman - -	50	0	0
Stocksman - - -	40	0	0
Hedger - - -	40	0	0
Labourer - - -	30	0	0
Incidental labour - -	16	13	8½
Total labour -	£700	0	0

7. Table of Returns from 29 Schools in Cumberland and Westmorland showing the effect of Employment in Field Labour upon the attendance for six months in the year.

Name and Description of School.	Number of Books.	Average Attendance in April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.
Clifton National - - - -	185	85·3	85·1	82·3	80·9	72·4	85·3
Howbeck Parochial - - - -	112	71	63	72	51	59	51
Maryport National, Boys - - -	178	126	128	114	101	116	113
Bongate „ - - - -	132	98	106	96	84	100	110
Longtown United - - - -	175	117	109	103	104	97	121
Stapleton National - - - -	60	37	—	—	—	—	—
Kirkby Lonsdale National - - -	135	89·1	109·5	112·2	110·8	114·7	116·1
Aspatria National - - - -	148	69	67	81	83	75	83
Burton „ - - - -	116	53	62	54	53	54	64
Melmerby Mixed - - - -	60	45	40·7	38·5	28·8	18·75	38·9
Irton National - - - -	72	47	53	57	49	—	58
Scaleby „ - - - - -	38	32·6	30·6	28·6	22·6	—	23·2
Grasmere Mixed Elementary - - -	66	44	48	37	31	25	35
Beckennet National - - - -	72	59	61	65	63	61	64
Dufton British - - - - -	85	71	72	73	48	63	76
Windermere National - - - -	100	81	77·7	71·6	—	83	69·8
Cockermouth „ - - - -	211	150	144	113	125	148	156
Gosforth High - - - - -	56	56	50	47	48	39	48
Wigton National - - - -	202	139	141	138	137	125	133
Carlisle Christchurch National - - -	683	438	491	465	477	473	576
Uldale National - - - -	46	36	32	30	25	24	—
Nether Denton Parochial - - -	35	32	26	20	20	22	30
Crosby Church of England - - -	99	82·5	96	84·4	80·5	75	94·6
Hensingham National - - - -	219	143	148	122	158	171	186
Long Marton „ - - - -	40	36	39·7	34·2	—	34·5	35·8
Kirkoswald „ - - - -	100	—	59	60	60	70	75
Lazonby „ - - - -	78	—	—	30	32	40	45
Penrith „ boys - - -	186	—	—	72	81	92	100
Brampton „ „ - - -	167	136	120	127	100	94	84

8. RETURNS relating to the Condition of COTTAGES in 92 Parishes and Townships of WESTMORLAND and CUMBERLAND.

Name of Parish or Township.	State of Cottages.
WESTMORLAND.	
Bongate	A great want of cottages, far from sufficient for the farm labour, separation of the sexes not popular or generally practised.
Grasmere	Cottages sufficient and not overcrowded.
Hutton Roof	Fairly sufficient but not well ventilated.
Brough	Cottages bad, insufficient in some, and insufficient to separate the sexes properly.
Crosby Ravensworth.	Cottages fairly good, but not so well ventilated as they should be.
Middleton	Cottages very inferior, ventilation defective.
Kirkby Thore	Cottages good.
Whittington	Tolerably good but ventilation might be improved.
Morland	Generally good but ventilation might be improved.
Shap	Cottages not good, for the most part small, and often only one sleeping apartment, ventilation generally very bad.
Kirkby Lonsdale	Cottages not very good and not well ventilated.
Heversham	Cottages in fair condition but not nearly sufficient for the supply of labour; not well supplied with water.
Beetham	Cottages pretty good, but overcrowded, seldom more than two bedrooms, and occasionally only one.
Applethwaite	Cottages bad, not near enough of them, not conveniently situated, often overcrowded, bastardy and ante-nuptial fornication very prevalent, very badly supplied both with air and water.
Brougham	Cottages good, but not sufficient for the labour.
Kentmere	Cottages good in every respect.
Burton	Cottages upon the whole good and tolerably ventilated.
Orton	Cottages generally good and sufficient for the population.
Casterton	Cottages very good in all respects.
Clifton	Cottages in fair condition.
Warcop	Cottages rather small.
Long Marton	With some exceptions the cottages are in good condition.
Ormside	Cottages sufficient for the present, but not enough to allow of any increase of population.
Lowther	Cottages generally clean and comfortable, sufficient in number, and generally well ventilated.
CUMBERLAND.	
Bassenthwaite	Cottages generally good, but few have gardens.
Holm Cultram	Cottages rather above the average and not much overcrowded.
Great Salkeld	With few exceptions cottages in a good condition and sufficient for the supply of labour, the ventilation fair.
Millom	Cottages are of all conditions, but sufficient.
Keswick	There has been a considerable increase in the number of cottages of late years, but the ventilation is imperfect and they are often overcrowded, to the moral injury of the occupants.
Bootle	Cottages bad, and generally only one convenience to several cottages, and some have no access to any.
Scaleby	The condition of cottages is better than their outside would indicate, as mud and thatch make very dry and warm houses, but there is great room for improvement.
Kirkoswald	Many very bad cottages, "bad as they need be."
Nether Denton	Cottages good and sufficient.
Ireby	Cottages fair for a country village.
Farlam	Cottages fairly good, sufficient for the supply of labour.
Hutton	Cottages good and sufficient.
Dacre	Cottages good and enough of them.
Irthington	Cottages want improvement, too small and deficient in the most necessary conveniences; they are overcrowded and illegitimacy frequent.
Brampton	Cottages badly ventilated and overcrowded.
Sebergham	Many cottages empty and many in ruins, those occupied capable of great improvement as they are constructed without any regard to morality.
Stapleton	Cottages sufficient in number but not nearly large enough; in some a whole family live (cook, eat, and dress) in one room, very few have more than two, privacy is unknown in many, morality suffers in consequence, ventilation generally most imperfect.
Cleator	Cottages generally speaking sufficient, but the tendency is to overcrowd them and the result is to reduce the moral status.
Wetheral	Much required to be done to cottages, more are required, and it would be a benefit to the farmers to have them built on their farms, few have more than two rooms, the family all sleeping in the same room in a couple of beds.
Holm Cultram	Cottages in good average condition, but scarcely sufficient for the labour required, more accommodation to be desired, occasional evil results to morality traceable to this cause.
Embeton	Cottages bad, insufficient for the supply of labour, in a few instances overcrowded; ventilation bad.

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Name of Parish or Township.	State of Cottages.
Walton	Cottages some good, some very bad.
Egremont	Cottages in good condition generally.
Kirklinton	Cottages generally good.
Edenhall	Cottages generally good.
Alston	Cottages superior to those of the southern counties, but far from being as good in their accommodation as they ought to be.
Uldale	Cottages generally good, and sufficient for the supply of labour.
Grimsdale	Cottages insufficient in number.
Ainstable	Cottages in good condition.
Plumpton	Cottages sufficient.
Cumwhitton	Cottages tolerably good but not enough of them.
Gamblesby	Cottages generally good and quite sufficient.
Irthington	Cottages have only two rooms.
Castle Sowerby	Cottages generally good.
Croglin	Cottages much improved but several empty.
Ousby	Cottages for the most part good.
Upperby	Cottages capable of great improvement, frequently overcrowded, and many without any conveniences.
Westward	Cottages mostly good and sufficient, many being the houses belonging to small farms which have been joined with other farms.
Caldbeck	Cottages comfortable and large enough.
Bewcastle	Cottages generally good and sufficient in number.
Isell	Cottages in good condition.
Wreay	Cottages pretty good, but difficult to prevent lodgers being taken.
Camerton	Cottages pretty good, but badly supplied with water.
Hayton	Cottages good.
Bridekirk	Cottages fairly good.
Kirk-Andrews on Eden.	Cottages indifferent.
Beaumont	Cottages indifferent.
Ireby	Cottages old but of a fair quality.
Wigton	As a rule cottages good.
Allhallows	Cottages generally good but quite as full as either health or decency will permit.
Irton	Cottages generally good.
Burgh by Sands	Cottages in average condition but inadequate in number, generally overcrowded in regard to health and decency, bedrooms especially ill ventilated, in fact no window ventilation.
Kirk-Andrews on Esk.	Cottages much improved.
Flimby	Cottages require improvement in every respect.
Lanercost	Cottages above the average, but insufficient in number; want of cottage accommodation greatly felt.
Crosby on Eden	Cottages generally small, consisting only of two rooms, consequently often overcrowded and not sufficiently ventilated.
Torpenhow	Cottages generally small; requiring ventilation, and often without conveniences.
Crosscannonby	Cottages far from good and overcrowded; neither well supplied with water nor well ventilated.
Greystoke	Cottages much improved, many new ones built.
Ravenglass	Cottages very bad, overcrowded, badly supplied with water, and not ventilated.
Hesket	Cottage accommodation bad; windows not made to open.
Arlecdon	As a rule cottages not adequate in size for their numerous occupants and but indifferent supply of water.
Castle Carrick	Cottages pretty fair.
Silloth	Cottages not of a first-class and not properly ventilated.
St. Bridget	Cottages good and sufficient.
Addingham	Cottages comfortable and good, only overcrowded where there are large families of children.
Aikton	The condition of cottages bad, and not a sufficient supply.
Gosforth	Cottages good but very few of them, ventilation generally by doors not windows.

Evidence accompanying Mr. J. HENRY TREMENHEERE'S Report on the NORTHERN PART of LANCASHIRE.

Contents.

Nos.
1. George Drewry, Esq., Holker, agent for the Duke of Devonshire.
2. Rev. T. Rigg, incumbent of Flookborough.
3. Mrs. Butler, Flookborough.
4. Mr. Burrow, Flookborough.
5. Rev. John Macaulay, rector of Aldingham.
6. Mr. Richard Presow, farmer.
7. Mr. Malachi, Cranke, farmer.
8. Rev. Canon Hubbersty, vicar of Cartmel.
9. Mr. J. Lethbridge, land steward.
10. Rev. E. F. Manby, rector of Poulton-le-Sands.
11. Rev. C. T. Royds, rector of Heysham.
12. Rev. R. Gibson, vicar of Bolton-le-Sands.
13. Rev. J. Banister, vicar of Pilling.
14. Rev. W. Pedder, vicar of Garstang.
15. Mr. George Hunt, land agent.
16. Mr. Jonathan Butler, solicitor and land agent.
17. Mr. G. H. Porter, master of the endowed school, Poulton-le-Fylde.
18. Rev. G. W. Osborne, perpetual curate of Fleetwood.
19. Mr. Richard Cookson, farmer.
20. Mr. W. Knowles, farmer and innkeeper.
21. Mr. Robert Hunt, farmer.
22. Rev. R. B. Robinson, rector of Lytham.
23. Mr. James Fair, land agent.
24. Rev. James Mc Ilwaine, curate of Hambleton.
25. Rev. W. Stratton, vicar of Gressingham.
26. Mr. T. Wilkinson, farmer.

1. *Mr. George Drewry*, Holker, agent to the Duke of Devonshire.—Women are only occasionally employed in this part of Lancashire in agricultural labour. Wages are generally so high that no necessity exists for the wives of labourers to seek such employment, and it is only in hay and harvest time that their services are to be had. The labour of children is in request, but not to such an extent as to interfere much with their education. They are employed in preparing peat, in barking, and in the turnip and hay seasons, but seldom under 11 or 12 years of age. They work generally under the superintendence of their parents. We have no gangs.

Wages are high; varying from 16*s.* (the lowest) to to 25*s.* a week. On the duke's estate day labourers are employed; they live in cottages, for which they pay 2*s.* a week, and the accommodation is all that can be desired. The farms in the Furness district vary in size from 50 to 500 acres. There are many small holdings, and I should say that their occupiers contrive to make a living out of them, and on the whole do justice to the land.

This district is much affected by the iron mines, which give employment to a large population and raise the rate of wages.

If we build cottages for agricultural labourers they are certain soon to turn miners. Farmers have no alternative but to board and lodge their men; it is expensive, but it cannot be avoided. There is no part of England in which the labouring classes are so well off as in this part of Lancashire. Labour is scarce, and the sands of Morecambe Bay afford a lucrative employment for hundreds in gathering cockles for the manufacturing towns of Lancashire.

2. *Rev. T. Rigg*, incumbent of Flookborough.—This is one of the principal villages on the shore of Morecambe Bay, and is inhabited chiefly by fishermen and by a class of people called "cocklers." At least 100 boys, girls, and women go on the sands daily, and sometimes twice a day, to collect cockles for the supply of the manufacturing towns of Lancashire. The system is this:—Some person who has, perhaps, himself been a "cockler" forms a connexion with a dealer, say, in Manchester or Preston, and undertakes to supply him daily with fresh cockles, which he purchases from the people who go upon the sands, and sends them off in bags by rail. The occupation is a lucrative one, and a man and his family sometimes earn as much as 12*s.* a day. The children employed go upon the sands as young as 7 or 8, consequently they get no education whatever, rarely even going to the infant school. The occupation is continuous throughout the year. One of the principal cocklers of this place has seven children of from 8 to 17 years of age, not one of whom has received any education. The children and young persons engaged in this business are in a very demoralized condition; they never enter a place of worship, and their language when idling about the streets is disgusting. At 14 boys and girls become so independent that they often leave their parents and lodge with strangers, spending their earnings in drunkenness, even at that early age. It is very desirable that some restriction should be imposed by law on the age at which children are allowed to "cockle." I think none should be allowed to go before 11 years of age. Taking the eight or nine villages on the shores of Morecambe Bay there must be several hundreds of children who, owing to this cockling business, are growing up in a state of heathenism. Quite as much necessity exists for putting this system under regulation as in the agricultural gangs of which I have read. Boys, girls, young men, and women are out for hours together on the sands without the slightest control, and the results to morality may be imagined.

3. *Mrs. Butler*, Flookborough.—I have three girls now on the sands. They are generally absent from home 10 or 12 hours together; in spring tides they have to walk five miles to the banks, which, with a mile to the shore, makes 12 miles going and returning, besides cockling for five hours. They are a bit tired when they come home, and are quite ready for a meal; they have nothing when on the sands but a piece of bread, of which they eat a little bit now and then just to keep off hunger. It is a slavish life, but what are poor people to do? My girls went to the infant school until they were 8, but they have not been to any school since; they cannot read.

4. *Mr. Burrow*, Flookborough.—I have four boys on the sands to-day; they went at 4 this morning, and will return at 4 this afternoon. They have never been to school. For cockling children must begin early; little things 5 years old go out to help a little and to learn. They get a lift in the carts. A good bit of the work is walking. The children live chiefly on tea and bread.

5. *Rev. John Macaulay*, rector of Aldingham.—Women and young children never work in the fields in this part of Lancashire. It is exceedingly difficult even to get a few women to help in hay-making or in

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following the reaping machines to bind up the corn. The wages of the married men, who almost all work in the iron mines, are so high, averaging 5*l.* a month, that their wives see no necessity for going out to work. Those married men who do not go to the mines are fishermen, and their wives are occupied in gathering shell fish on the sands.

Day labourers are very little employed in this part of the county. The farm servants are hired by the year, and are lodged and boarded in the farmhouses. Boys are employed as early as 12 or 13 generally, and sometimes at an earlier age for light work, such as taking cows out and home to pasture and to water, and in hoeing, &c.

There is one employment for children which is very general on the coast of this part of Lancashire, viz., cockling. I may say that all the children of the fishermen and labourers who reside near the shore are employed in this way from an early age. They are generally accompanied by their parents, or by one of them, and the earnings are so considerable that it would be almost too much to expect the parents to resist the temptation to employ their children in this manner. A women and three or four children can sometimes earn 12*s.* a day. In my parish there may be about 30 children thus employed, and they get no education, but only a little instruction at the Sunday school, and not all even that. They begin to work at 7 or 8 years of age, and they consequently grow up in entire ignorance. They become very rough in their manners, and their language is very coarse. I do not think that the practice of cockling leads to positive immorality; for the work is carried on by daylight and on the open sands; but the constant association together of boys, girls, and young women have a bad effect upon their characters. It would be very desirable, if possible, to enforce school attendance upon these children up to a certain age.

6. *Mr. Richard Presow*, Sunbrick, Ulverstone, farmer.—We cannot get women to work out here; their husbands are too well off. We are obliged to get all our work, even weeding, done by our farm servants. The children make more by cockling than they could by working in the fields.

Everybody in this part of Lancashire is well off. Wages are high and employment regular. There is no poverty.

7. *Mr. Malachi Cranke*, farmer, Urswick.—I rent and farm an estate of 300 acres chiefly arable land. I keep 10 farm servants, whom I board and lodge. All the work of the farm is done by them, and it is the only way in which agricultural labour can be obtained. Almost all the cottages here are occupied by miners, and if more cottages were built and agricultural labourers were put into them they would in a very short time turn miners. The mining of this district is not deep mining, but quarrying, and therefore almost any intelligent labourer can quickly learn it.

Our farm servants are difficult to manage; they are very independent, knowing that if they quit one place they can get another directly. I pay my head man 27*l.* a year, with his board. The other servants are paid according to their age and qualifications. They live exceedingly well, meat twice a day. I don't think they save as much money as they ought, and the higher their wages the more inclined they seem to spend them.

8. *Rev. Canon Hubbersty*, vicar of Cartmel.—There is nothing to complain of in the school attendance of the children in this district generally, and the schools are good. The only drawback is the practice of small farmers in withdrawing their children from school at too early an age, and the result is that in a year or two they lose almost all that they had acquired. This is also very much the case with such of the boys as enter farm service at 12 or 13. They have little or no means of keeping up the knowledge they have acquired, for the distance of the farmhouses generally from any town or village is a bar to their attending night schools. Farm servants seldom read anything but the local newspaper. Some years ago I was the incumbent of Allithwaite, a village on the coast, and I saw much of the system of "cockling." It is the only abuse of children's labour that we have to complain of in this district, and I am of opinion that in any scheme for the enforcement of a certain amount of education this class cannot consistently be omitted. In fact they get no education at all, with perhaps the exception of a little at the Sunday school. It was the practice of the parents at Allithwaite when they left the house for the sands to turn such of their children as were too young to be thus employed into the streets to take care of themselves, locking the door of the house and taking the key away in their pocket.

The wages of an ordinary day labourer in this parish are 18*s.* a week, with the privilege of planting potatoes on his employer's land. There is a piece of land laid out in allotments of the twentieth part of an acre each. They are much sought after and appreciated by the agricultural labourers, which I attribute to the smallness of the allotment, being in fact only a small garden (few of the cottages here have any attached). A man who is paid good wages is generally disinclined to serious work in the evenings, but he likes to amuse himself, and on a small allotment he can entertain himself by cultivating a few vegetables, such as early potatoes, lettuce, peas, &c. I attribute the success of allotments here to the fact of their not being large, and being near to the labourers' dwellings.

9. *Mr. J. Lethbridge*, land steward to John Foster, Esq., Hornby Castle.—The whole of the valley of the Lune is purely pastoral. The farms are, with scarcely an exception, grass farms, and therefore very little labour is required. For a farm of 600 or 800 acres a man or two, just to look after the stock and see that the fences are kept in good repair, are all that is required. Under these conditions the labour of children is not needed, and that of women only in a slight degree in hay-making. Wages are 18*s.* a week for a common day labourer, or 15*s.* if employed throughout the year, wet or dry. Farm servants get 28*l.* or 30*l.* a year, but the custom of boarding and lodging men in the farmhouses is not general here. Wages are so high and labour so scarce that we anxiously look to every improvement in machinery. We could not possibly save our hay without machines. Being myself a native of Devonshire, I tried to induce some labourers from the county, who were only receiving 9*s.* a week, to settle in this neighbourhood, where they received nearly double those wages; but after having been a few months in the county they all returned to Devonshire. They missed their cider, and said they could not understand the Lancashire people, nor the Lancashire people them. Almost all our boys go off to the manufacturing districts when they are 12 years of age or earlier, but they get a fair amount of education before that, as there is nothing to interrupt it in the way of early labour. The school of this parish is a private one, supported by Mr. Foster, and is well attended. There is scarcely a child in the parish who does not get a good education. The valley of the Lune is of wonderful fertility, a rich loam in some places 10 feet deep. It is capable of growing anything, but it is most profitable to leave it in pasture. If we wished to grow wheat or anything else, we could not do it for want of labour. The rent of farms varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* an acre.

The small population is collected in villages. The cottages are very indifferent, but improvements are in progress.

10. *Rev. E. F. Manby*, rector of Poulton-le-Sands.—This is a rather remarkable district, from the very high rent of land of a certain description and the amount of employmentwhich collecting cockles and other shell fish affords to the population, particularly to the children of the labouring classes. The state of education is consequently very unsatisfactory, many children not getting any instruction whatever. Early potatoes are grown here to a great extent, and the people who cultivate them pay a rent for the land at the rate of from 15*l.* to 16*l.* per acre. The soil being light, and the

almost total absence of frosts in spring, this vegetable is produced earlier than in almost any other part of England. Children are employed both in planting and taking up potatoes, of which many hundred tons are despatched by railway to the manufacturing towns.

But the employment which interferes most with the education of children is cockling and collecting mussels. Many are employed as young as 7, the parents being often able to make 1*s.* a day by their labour even at that age. Many much younger children here are employed for the greater part of the day in picking shrimps. You may see in many houses mere infants seated at a table and thus employed for hours together. The shrimps are prepared for potting or tea parties, and children 4 years old can earn in this way 6*d.* or 9*d.* a day. The money made by many people here is extraordinary. 12*l.* a month is quite a common thing, but they get it out of their children's labour, to the injury of their education.

11. *Rev. C. T. Royds*, rector of Heysham.—No women are employed in this part of Lancashire in agriculture, and boys only to a limited extent. Some find employment on the beach in gathering mussels, but it does not in this parish interfere with their education, the children attending school being in the ratio of one-sixth of the population. Our educational state is satisfactory. Wages are high, averaging for day labourers 18*s.* a week. The cottages are good; most of them with sufficient gardens; they grow potatoes chiefly for sale, this being a peculiarly favourable district for their cultivation. For this reason allotments are in request, and I have a considerable piece of ground let off in portions of about a twelfth of an acre. The farms about here are small, none exceeding 200 acres, but they are well managed. There is a fair supply of day labourers from the village. Detached cottages are rare.

12. *Rev. R. Gibson*, vicar of Bolton-le-Sands.—The farms in my parish are small, none exceeding 120 acres, consequently there is little employment for women in out-door labour. The greater number of the children in my parish are engaged in "cockling," for which they are made use of by their parents from 8 years of age or younger. The occupation being almost continuous throughout the year, they get no education whatever; for those who attend the Sunday school, being unable to read, derive little benefit from it. It would be very desirable to bring this class of children, of whom there are some hundreds in the villages around Morecambe Bay, within the provision of some law for the regulation of juvenile labour where the young cannot protect themselves. The parents are generally improvident, and I have known some make as much as 4*l.* a week by their own and their children's earnings. The children and young persons of both sexes work together in groups, and their language and manners are very bad. Boys are hired into the farmhouses as farm servants at an earlier age than they were formerly. The age is now frequently 12 instead of 14, consequently what with the irregularity of attendance while at school, and the early age at which they leave it, the education they have received is of course soon forgotten. The high price of labour has caused the services of boys to be more sought for, particularly in districts where women are not employed in agriculture.

13. *Rev. J. D. Banister*, vicar of Pilling.—This part of Lancashire strongly resembles the fens of Lincolnshire; it is reclaimed moss, and is now highly productive, growing potatoes, oats, wheat, and beans. Perhaps there is no part of the kingdom where the area under potato cultivation is so large in proportion to its extent. Women are scarcely at all employed in outdoor work, but boys are required, chiefly for planting and gathering potatoes and in wheeling turfs to the carts for stacking. The moss provides most of the fuel of the district. The school attendance is very good, one-seventh of the population being under education. The employment that boys get is no more than is good for them. In the winter months the school is very well attended, and at no season do we allow any child to continue absent without a satisfactory cause being shown. If a child should be absent for any considerable time without a sufficient excuse, it would not be allowed to return; this regulation acts very beneficially upon the parents.

Cockling was formerly carried on from this place to a great extent, but the cockles have disappeared, to the great benefit of the parish, morally and intellectually.

The wages of a day labourer are 18*s.* a week, or, if employed throughout the year, 15*s.* The labouring classes are remarkably well off, and there is no poverty. The farms are small, rarely amounting to 120 statute acres. There were many small proprietors, but they have mostly disappeared.

14. *Rev. W. Pedder*, vicar of Garstang.—There is very little employment of female outdoor labour in this parish. I do not think that there is a single girl thus employed, except occasionally to stack turf; neither are women employed, except occasionally in weeding. Even in the hay and corn harvests women are now very rarely employed, nor are boys employed to an extent that affects their education. Planting potatoes and wheeling turves from the moss are their chief occupations. The causes of non-attendance at school are not early labour, but the neglect or indifference of parents. The rural population in this part of Lancashire is diminishing. Wages have risen considerably within my recollection. A day labourer employed throughout the year, "wet or dry," receives 15*s.* a week, and a labourer whose employment is not so regular 18*s.* Cottages are being rapidly improved. I invariably require those built under my direction to have three bedrooms; but it will be long before this is universal, and it is difficult to prevent tenants from taking lodgers, even when they have got only two bedrooms. I would suggest that all cottages with only three bedrooms, in which the family occupying them consists of male and female children, should not be allowed to take in lodgers. Gardens are much appreciated and well cultivated, and they are generally of a good size. The labouring population generally are in a very satisfactory condition.

15. *Mr. George Hunt*, land agent, secretary of the Royal North Lancashire Agricultural Society.—There is very little in the county of Lancashire to which the Commission on the employment of children, young persons, and women in agriculture can have any application. Neither public nor private gangs are to my knowledge used in any part of the county. The light work done by boys is not injurious to them, but they are perhaps taken into farmhouses as farm servants rather too young; 12 is not now an unusual age, whereas it was formerly 14. The change is to be regretted. The practice of boarding and lodging labourers in farmhouses prevails to a considerable extent, but I frequently hear wishes expressed that day labourers could be procured instead, and I am often pressed to build cottages to encourage a settled agricultural population. I think the system of farm servants, although in favour with some farmers, under the impression that they can get more work out of their men, will be gradually abandoned. The farmers have great trouble with their men, and the men are so independent that they will not brook control. A labourer settled with a wife and family in a cottage is much more tractable, and you have a security that he will not capriciously absent in his employer and emigrate to another locality. The great question now, morally and economically, is how to supply a sufficient number of good cottages for the agricultural population.

16. *Mr. Jonathan Butler*, solicitor and land agent, Poulton-le-Fylde.—The only women employed in agriculture in this district are Irish; a few of whom have settled permanently in this parish, and others come in April and leave in September, after the harvest. They are well conducted, and work generally in company with their husbands. A man contracts to do a piece of work and others join him, receiving a certain sum per day. The scarcity of native labour here is so great that farmers could not get their work done without some such assistance. Children work a good

Lancashire.

Mr. Henry Tremenheere.

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deal at certain seasons of the year, but not in gangs, generally going with their parents to plant and gather potatoes, weed, &c. Plough-boys are used, the land being heavy; three and sometimes four horses are required to get the plough through the stiff soil. A boy of 12 years old is generally competent to drive a team of horses. They are seldom at school after that age, and often leave it younger. There is no "bird-keeping," but plenty of other employment for young boys.

The wages of an agricultural labourer do not here exceed 12*s.* a week the year round, and out of that he has to pay rent for a cottage. Most of the farmers have labourers boarding in their houses, but they do not depend entirely upon them. A farm servant gets from 15*l.* to 25*l.* a year, according to his qualifications. Land in the Fylde is generally high-rented, being very fertile. From 3*l.* 10*s.* to 4*l.* per acre is not an unusual rent.

17. *Mr. G. H. Porter*, master of the endowed school, Poulton-le-Fylde.—I have 80 scholars on my books, but the average attendance does not exceed 40, and half of the school are away for five or six months. None stay longer than 12, and many leave before 11. There is no payment, the education being given gratuitously, and my opinion is that on that account it is not appreciated. People think that what costs nothing is worth nothing. Quite one-third of the children in this parish do not go to school; the parents are so indifferent about it, and those who do attend school leave so early and are absent for large a portion of the year that they do not derive any benefit from it.

18. *Rev. G. W. Osborne*, perpetual curate of Fleetwood.—The only way in which children are employed in this place to the neglect of their education is in "cockling." There are from 30 to 40 children thus occupied for a considerable portion of the year. They are chiefly the children of Irish who here engage in this business. Their children are taken on the sands at about 7 or 8 years of age, and as they have received no education before that age, they certainly get none afterwards. None of them attend Sunday schools, and they grow up heathens. The language habitually used by these children proves them to be in a very degraded condition. As the sands are not resorted to in bad weather or regularly in winter, there is time enough left for some education.

19. *Mr. Richard Cookson*, Layton Hanes, Poulton-le-Fylde.—I farm an estate of 400 acres. There is very little female outdoor labour employed in this part of Lancashire. A few women may go out hay-making and harvesting, but not to any extent. I employ boys of from 9 to 13 years of age from March to September in occasional jobs, but there is plenty of time left for their education if their parents would take care they went to school. There is an endowed school, where they can get a gratuitous education for their children, but they are too often quite indifferent about it. I have six farm servants, whom I board in my house. The highest wages that I pay is 16*l.* a year, with meat. I pay day labourers 12*s.* a week, giving them work the year round. I prefer day labourers to farm servants, if they can be got, but there is a scarcity of labour. All my farm servants are Irish.

Boys enter farm service at 12 or 13. At that age they are only fit to do little odd jobs about the farm and learn, but we are obliged to get them young, or we should not get them at all. My farm servants live very well; five meals a day, and fresh meat twice a day. No beer is given, but only milk or buttermilk. The Irishmen prefer buttermilk if they can get enough of it. The people here are very well off for gardens and cultivate them carefully. They have no need of allotments. Cottages are being gradually improved. I know of none with fewer than two bedrooms, and many have three. There has been a great improvement in that respect of late years. The immorality in the parish of Great Marton, of which this is a township, was a few years ago very great. I have known as many as 38 bastardy cases heard at the petty sessions in one day; but since the improvement in cottages there has been a marked change for the better. I can speak with authority on this subject, being a poor law guardian.

We have no agricultural gangs in Lancashire. A few children may work together at times, but always under their parents.

20. *Mr. W. Knowles*, Lytham.—I rent and farm an estate of 250 acres in the Fylde. The employment of women in field labour is scarcely known in this part of England, and boys are only occasionally employed, as in potato setting and wheeling turves to the stacks, a short period in the spring and summer, leaving plenty of time for their education, for which the means are ample. The schools are generally endowed or supported by the funds of wealthy landowners, and the education given is almost gratuitous. There may be a few instances of neglect on the part of parents in availing themselves of these advantages for their children, but not many.

The scanty population in this district (the Fylde) places farmers under great disadvantages, and but for the assistance of Irish it would be impossible to farm at all. The wages of a native agricultural day labourer are 3*s.* a day, but few can be got. I pay my Irish labourers 2*s.* a day, and the work of my farm is almost entirely done by them for half the year. There are some thousands of these men, who take up their residence in the Fylde for a portion of the year. They are most efficient labourers, always cheerful and willing. "Pat.," I said to one of my men the other day when I wanted a little extra work done, "suppose "you work a couple of hours longer this evening "for an extra quart of buttermilk." "Anything to "please your honour," he replied; "I will work "all night if your honour likes, and take nothing for "it."

21. *Mr. Robert Hunt*, farmer, Bispham.—When I first came to this country 14 years ago, women could be got to work out; now you cannot get one, unless occasionally, and she will ask 2*s.* a day and her food. I rent and farm about 90 acres. Farms are generally small in the Fylde. I hold mine under six different proprietors. I have two farm servants living in my house; to one of whom, a lad of 14, I pay 6*l.* a year; to the other, who has been with me for several years, 16*l.*, with his board. My day labourers are Irishmen, of whom I employ four for six months in the year, and I pay them 2*s.* a day. They provide their own food, but are allowed a quart of buttermilk a day, and this with wheaten bread is their sole diet. They sleep in the barn upon straw. They are well-conducted, hard-working men, and I could not desire better labourers.

There are no cottages in this neighbourhood except in the villages, which are small, we are therefore obliged to hire farm servants. I should prefer day labourers if they could be had near, but not if they had to come from a great distance to their work. The landed proprietors generally are too poor to build cottages; it is only great landlords who can do that. Boys go out to service at 12 or 13, but they can get a fair education before that; if they do not it is the fault of their parents.

22. *Rev. R. B. Robinson*, vicar of Lytham.—There is no such demand for the labour of children in agriculture in my parish as to interfere with their education. The little employment they get in the potato season and in wheeling turves is no more than is good for them. The schools are well attended, and being almost entirely supported by private contributions or by endowments, the education is given almost gratuitously. There is no poverty, and owing to the sparseness of the population in the Fylde employment is always to be found at good wages. It is not the custom for women to "work out," except at hay-making and harvest, which they regard as holidays. Working in gangs is entirely unknown.

23. *Mr. James Fair*, land agent, Lytham, and manager of the estates of Col. Clifton, of Lytham Hall.—I have had nearly 48 years' experience of the part of Lancashire in which I reside, namely, the Fylde. It is a tract reclaimed almost from a state of nature within the present century, consequently the population is very scanty. There is a great dearth of

labour, and much of the land is therefore thrown into dairy farms. Land which 30 years ago brought only 5*s.* or 7*s.* 6*d.* per acre now lets for 30*s.* or 35*s.* Wages are from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, but a great deal of the work is done by Irish labourers who now receive 2*s.* a day. I remember the time when 1*s.* per day was the common rate of payment. They live chiefly upon bread and butter milk, the latter supplied gratuitously by the farmers. When I first came into this district few of the townships possessed either churches or schools, now they are general. A great many of the schools are endowed or supported by the contributions of resident proprietors, of whom Col. Clifton is an example; education in this district therefore is almost gratuitous. The old class of schoolmasters is gradually giving place to certificated masters, and the state of education may now be considered as decidedly satisfactory.

A great improvement is being gradually effected in the cottages of this district, the want of which has been long felt. The old cottages, of which many still remain, were built of mud and thatched, and few had more than two rooms. Those now building by Col. Clifton (who owns 40,000 acres in the Fylde) and the Earl of Derby have all three bedrooms, and slated roofs.

24. *Rev. James McIlwaine*, curate in charge of the parish of Hambleton, Poulton-le-Fylde.—There is at the distance of a little more than three miles from this parish a considerable extent of moss land, out of which a large quantity of peat fuel is dug early in the spring, and again about the end of summer. All the farmers in this parish, and many of the better class of labourers, have allotments of this moss, and some cart a large quantity of peat fuel for sale to the neighbouring towns. Part of this moss land having been drained and otherwise reclaimed, is now let to small farmers and others in this and neighbouring parishes, and grow annual crops of corn and potatoes, a large quantity of the latter being grown in this district. Boys are employed in agriculture in this parish at certain periods of the year from 7 years old and upwards, and about 20 girls from 8 to 16 years of age are employed in spring, summer and autumn in placing peat fuel to dry after being dug, making the squares into which the fuel is cut into small stacks and frequently turning them; and in weeding corn and potatoes. About a dozen women are also employed in the same occupations as girls.

I should be very glad, were it possible, if boys were not permitted to work until they are 12 years of age, and girls until they are 15.

There are two schools in this parish; a Church of England school, and a private industrial school, the payments at both of which are very trifling; but advantage is not taken of these schools to near the extent that it might be, which may be accounted for in some instances by the ignorance of the parents themselves, or by their apathy or negligence, and in not a few cases by the dislike of the children to learning, often caused by being put to labour too soon when they acquire a fondness for riding in carts when going and returning from work and to the conversation and companionship of grown-up people.

The cottages in this parish are chiefly of clay and thatched, and as a rule are in tolerably good condition, but they contain too few rooms and are overcrowded, and various cases of immorality have come under my notice in consequence. The ventilation of most of them is very imperfect. They have in general fair sized gardens which are well cultivated.

25. *Rev. W. Stratton*, vicar of Gressingham.—The state of the labouring class in this valley (the Lune) and neighbourhood is enviable, especially in this part of it, for the farmers are in want of labourers they can rely on. In this part of Lancashire the parishes which are purely agricultural are better off than any that I have seen or heard of. In many there is hardly a person receiving parish relief. In this union (Lunesdale) the rate is at present 1*s.* in the pound. The moral standard is peculiar. If a young unmarried girl has one child her character hardly suffers; if more than one it does. [This parish is on the border of Westmorland.] Again, men paying high rents, and most honest men, at the last election voted with their landlords, some openly expressing a difference of opinion, and not deeming they had a grievance.

In the vale of the Lune it is the exception to find women and girls employed in outdoor work; there is a great demand for them as house and farm servants, and wages are high.

Boys of 14 going to a farm can get their 7*l.* or 9*l.* wages. I find from my general observation that boys of 13 go to work with every advantage. The control of the master is good for them, and they are under a stricter discipline than at home. In my parish most of the young children (that is, under 13) are employed at home looking after the gardens or cows of their parents, and thus are getting some practical training without hard labour.

My own wish would be to see the employment of females in agriculture so restricted, that no woman or girl under 21 should go out to such work. But if the employment of females is inevitable there must be some other restriction than that of age. Females differ so much in constitution, that one is more fitted than another to labour. Could not the medical officer of the union examine and give or withhold permission for any female to work?

Parents are somewhat indifferent about education here; children are kept at home for any trifle, not because they are wanted for early labour.

The cottages are in very fair condition, especially those occupied by agricultural labourers. The great desideratum is cleanliness in the people. During the late cattle plague the inspectors had great power to compel cleanliness in the stable, and therefore I suggest that power to inspect not only cottages but small farms would be of advantage, even if there were no power to impose a fine. The visit and report of an inspector would spur the inhabitants to keep their homes clean and ventilated.

In this neighbourhood there are so many schools that if a boy cannot read and write it must be from his dulness or the neglect of his parents.

26. *Mr. T. Wilkinson*, farmer, Gift Hall, Garstang.—The wages I give to my men are as follows:—One man 22 years of age I give 22*l.* a year, and one old man I give 18*l.* a year; both of whom have board and lodging; two other men have in money 14*s.* a week each, with perquisites worth from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, thus making their weekly wages equal to 16*s.* 6*d.* or 17*s.* Two or three other men I employ occasionally have 22*s.* a week in hay and harvest time; at other times they have 12*s.*, with the liberty of going off in turf and potato-getting times. These are about the average wages given in this part of the county at present.

The supply of labour at some seasons is not equal to the demand. The labourers, with very few exceptions, are well-housed, have good gardens, and may be said to be well-off. When I first came into Lancashire, in 1851, the best yearly servants were getting only from 12*l.* to 15*l.*, with board and lodging, and married men, finding themselves, were earning from 11*s.* to 13*s.* with no additional privileges.

The agricultural value of land varies from 25*s.* to 45*s.* an acre, averaging about 35*s.* There is nothing of the agricultural gang system in this county, neither are women or girls employed much in out-of-door work. In turf and potato-getting times the father of a family generally takes his children to assist in dressing the turf and gathering potatoes.

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